

Neighborhood Inspections, a section of the Working In Neighborhoods Department, enforces nuisance and zoning ordinances to help prevent deterioration of neighborhoods and to help maintain the highest safety and health standards for the many residential, non-residential and vacant properties in the City of Tulsa.

Yearly, Tulsa Neighborhood Inspectors investigate approximately 22,000 violations of nuisance and zoning ordinances identified through more than 14,500 complaints.

Violations can be reported [online](#) or by calling the Customer Care Center at (918) 596-2100. Be prepared to give a physical address and your name (will be kept confidential.)

Process for a complaint:

- A call or online report is received by the Customer Care Center and a complaint case is opened.
- Once a case is assigned to the area inspector, the inspector conducts an onsite investigation of the alleged violation(s). If violations are present at the time of this inspection, a legal notice is mailed to the property owner and other interested parties giving them 10 days to comply with the notice requirements. The property owner can purchase up to two (2) extensions of time for \$32 each. Each extension will give the property owner 10 additional days to comply. Extensions are not available for all violations, i.e. unsecured structures, chronic violators, etc.
- Failure to comply with the order will result in the City contractor abating the nuisance. If the City abates, the property owner will be charged for the abatement cost, plus a \$300 processing fee.

Note: Emergency abatements are performed without prior notice where imminent dangers are present and condition require an immediate response.



Top 10 Most Common Code Violations

Yard/Lot Maintenance Standards

Yard/Lot Maintenance standards are the responsibility of every property owner/resident and include the maintenance of plant material in any right-of-way abutting the property. Grass type ground cover cannot be over 12 inches in height, except healthy trees, shrubs, or produce for human consumption grown in a tended and cultivated garden. Weeds, poison ivy, poison oak, or poison sumac must be removed. Vegetation and trees must be trimmed so as not to impair vision or obstruct the travel of motorists.

Trash, Junk and Debris

Trash, junk and debris cannot be left in the yard and must be disposed of properly. This includes junk such as auto parts, appliances, furniture, building materials and tires; trash such as paper, cardboard, plastics, etc. and debris such as tree trimmings and limbs. (NOTE: The City of Tulsa provides services to help you dispose of some items. Please contact Bulky Waste Pickup at (918) 596-9511 for assistance with larger items.)

Inoperable Motor Vehicles

Inoperable motor vehicles must be stored in a fully enclosed structure. A vehicle must appear to be operable and capable of being legally operated. Signs of inoperable vehicles are flat tires or missing parts. These vehicles cannot be used for storage or be stored in the yard, street or driveway.

Parking

Parking is permitted on residential lots only on a legal driveway or in a garage. A driveway or parking area must be made with approved all-weather surface material (asphalt or concrete) to meet city standards. In certain zoning situations, there are limits to the amount of yard area that can be used for a driveway or parking. Check with INCOG at (918) 584-7526 for more information about legally recognized parking areas.

Note: Vehicles parked in the street must be operable and may not remain parked in the same space for an extended time. Violations should be reported to the Customer Care Center at (918) 596-2100. Please note the closest address, the color, model, and tag number of vehicles when reporting a street parking violation. These violations are handled by the Tulsa Police Department. This is not a code violation.

Outdoor Storage

Outdoor storage is prohibited on residential property. Generally, any equipment, materials, or furnishings that would ordinarily not be used outdoors may not be stored outdoors. For example, you may not keep indoor furniture, household appliances or auto parts outside. You may store building materials outside if they are neatly stacked. You may store firewood, grills, lawn furniture, hoses, tools, play equipment for children, or a lawn-mower outside.

Vacant, Unsecured Structures

The maintenance of a structure is the responsibility of the property owner. The property owner is responsible for maintaining secure windows, doors, or other openings that cannot be readily opened from the outside. An owner may need to board up a vacant structure if a break-in or fire occurs. These structures are a very real problem for neighborhoods. They have become a target for vandals, criminal activities, and a general nuisance for adjacent properties and values. If the building has deteriorated to a condition that meets the criteria of health and safety risks for the public, it can be considered for demolition.

Illegal Business

Home occupations and cottage industries have sprung up throughout neighborhoods across the country. Some occupations are permitted by right and others are permitted by special exception. Most businesses are not allowed to operate in residential areas. Examples of illegal businesses would include auto repair and ongoing sales. For more information, you can refer to Title 42; Section 402 B.6.a, or call INCOG at (918) 584-7526.

Commercial Equipment and Recreational Vehicles

Commercial equipment and commercial vehicles may not be parked in a residential area unless they are within a fully enclosed structure. It is illegal to park any vehicle not customary to residential use (such as box vans, dump trucks, semitrailers, etc.). Recreational vehicles have specific conditions for parking in residential neighborhoods. Please contact the Neighborhood Investigations office or see Title 42; Section 402; 7 to review these requirements.

Illegal Fencing, Screening, Walls

Fencing in a front yard may not exceed four (4) feet in height and side and backyard fencing may not exceed eight (8) feet. INCOG Land Development Services staff can discuss the allowed heights for fencing. The City of Tulsa requires a building permit to build retaining walls. Screening fences are required between residential and commercial/industrial areas in some cases. For more information, contact INCOG at (918) 584-7526.

Dead Trees

Trees damaged or dead to the extent that a limb, tree or part could fall and pose a hazard to the public are a violation of the codes.

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Quick Links

I want to:

Customer Care Center
(918) 596-2100



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