





## **NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION ENFORCEMENT POLICY**

### **Policy**

It is the intent of the City of Camas to preserve and promote the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of this city. Part of this responsibility includes protecting neighborhoods from blighting and deteriorating conditions that have a negative impact on families, encourage social disorder and crime and decrease area property values. This is achieved through ordinances and by establishing a policy to guide enforcement of the ordinances.

The City of Camas residents are encouraged and supported in their efforts to maintain the physical environment of their neighborhoods through standards set in local ordinances and by the assistance of neighbors. To assist in this endeavor, the following code enforcement policy provisions have been established to guide the city in addressing properties with code violations.

### **Designation of Code Enforcement Officer**

An employee shall be appointed pursuant to Camas Municipal Code 8.06.030 to inspect for code violations, issue violation notices, and otherwise enforce the terms of the Camas Municipal Code relating to public nuisances.

## **Enforcement Procedures**

When a complaint is received, the following actions will be taken for first time offenders under two (2) different categories:

### **1. Public Health, Safety and Welfare Hazard**

Within 48 hours of receiving a complaint, the Code Enforcement Officer will issue a violation notice to the owner, agent, and/or tenant stating that a complaint has been received; that code enforcement has confirmed the complaint; and that an inspection will be conducted within 10 days from the date on the letter to confirm abatement, or plan of abatement, of the given nuisance.

### **2. Non-Hazard**

Within one week of receiving a complaint, the Code Enforcement Officer will issue a violation notice to the owner, agent, and/or tenant stating that a complaint has been received; that code enforcement has confirmed the complaint; and that an inspection will be conducted within 10 days from the date on the letter to confirm abatement, or plan of abatement, of the given nuisance.

At the discretion of the Code Enforcement Officer, the original 10 days may be extended no more than 4 days, for a total of 14 days.

### **Contents of a Violation Notice**

1. A notification that a violation has been discovered;
2. A description of the corrective action which is required;
3. A notice that only one official notice of violation will be sent;
4. Failure to abate will result in legal action;
5. Future offenses may result in immediate legal action, without prior notice.

A brochure listing the most common blighting violations will also be included with the violation notice.

### **Assistance from Other Organizations**

For nuisance violations with extenuating circumstances (e.g., the violator is physically disabled or frail elderly), the City encourages the cooperation of the United Camas Association of Neighborhoods (UCAN), the appropriate neighborhood association(s), or homeowners association(s) in order to bring the violation(s) in conformance to the relevant codes or written instruction from the Code Enforcement Officer.

In the event a dispute - between neighbor/neighbor, neighbor/neighborhood association, or neighbor/homeowners association - cannot be resolved, the parties may ask Clark County Mediation Services to participate in an attempt to resolve the dispute.

This cooperation or participation does not obligate UCAN, Clark County Mediation Services, or other parties, excluding the City, to bring the violation into conformance.

### **Infraction or Civil Proceeding**

Owners, agents, and/or tenants failing to comply will be subject to the penalties set forth in Camas Municipal Code Chapter 8.

- Day 1 through 10 clean up period (discretionary 4 day extension);
- Day 11 through 13 - fine \$100.00 per day; (Max.)
- Day 14 through 17 - fine \$200.00 per day; (Max.)
- Day 18 through 21 - fine \$300.00 per day; (Max.)
- Day 22 and up - fine \$500.00 per day (Max.)

### **Tenant Residents**

In the case of properties which are not owner occupied, the following general guidelines will apply:

1. Occupants will be responsible for routine maintenance and personal items;
2. There will be one notification letter sent to the tenant and the property owner or agent by regular mail and one letter by certified mail;
3. When tenants fail to comply owners/agents may also be held accountable;
4. Unoccupied properties are the responsibility of the owner/agent.

### **Recidivists**

The recidivist process is designed to provide relief, via an expedited enforcement process, for neighborhoods experiencing problems with residents who repeatedly violate city ordinances and who have demonstrated an inability or unwillingness to remain a good neighbor by maintaining their respective property.

- A. The recidivist procedures will be utilized when an owner/agent or tenant commits:
  - 1. The same violation;
  - 2. On the same property; and
  - 3. Within the previous 24 months:
    - A. A civil infraction was filed; or
    - B. A criminal prosecution was filed.
- B. The 24 month period will commence on, the latest date:
  - 1. A civil infraction procedure is concluded; or
  - 2. A criminal action is concluded.
- C. Recidivists will proceed through a legal fast track
- D. The discovery of a repeat offense will be cause to:
  - 1. Issue an immediate civil infraction; or
  - 2. Commence immediate civil proceedings to abate.

### **Inspection and Enforcement**

Violations will be enforced in a timely manner. This is designed to encourage citizen, Neighborhood Associations, Block Watch, or other city department participation in the enforcement process.

### **Annual Review by City Council**

To ensure effective, efficient, and fair implementation, this enforcement policy shall be reviewed annually by the City Council.