

Property Code Enforcement

Prince William County
**Neighborhood
Services**



Working with you for a better community!

➤ Neighborhood Services Team

- 1 -Division Chief
- 3- Chief Inspectors
- 15 – Inspectors
- 2 – Technicians (Intake Staff)
- 2 – Administrative Staffers
- 1 – Business Services Analyst
- 1 – Senior Education & Outreach Instructor

What do we enforce?

Prince William County Zoning Ordinance (All of Chapter 32)

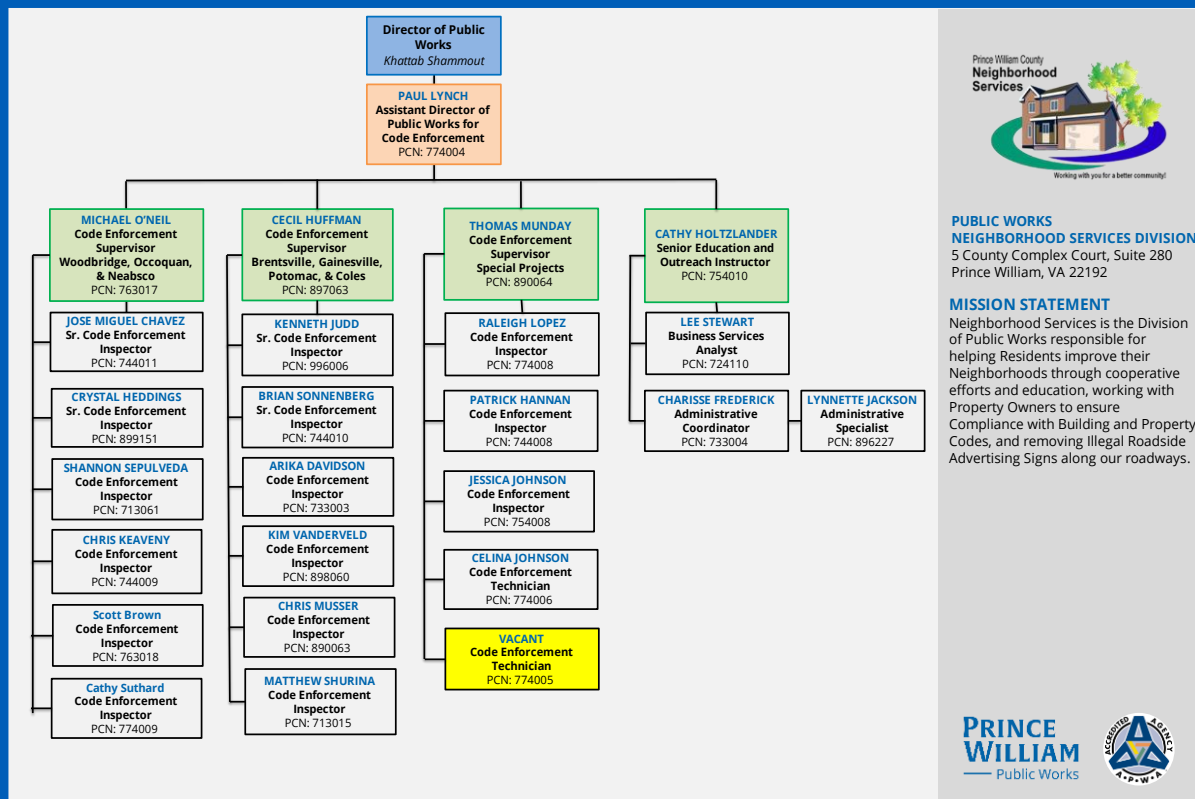
Virginia Property Maintenance Code (VA Building Code -(regulate safety & structural elements of existing structures).

Prince William County Graffiti Ordinance (Chapter 16-56).

Virginia State Code 33.2-1224 Illegal signs within the VDOT right of way.

*Issue Violation Notices / Violation and Correction Order Notices (VNCO)

*Court Action



Our Mission

Maintain a Safe, Clean, and Healthy Community through education, community support, and enforcement of codes.

It is our division's goal to achieve voluntary compliance on every case. Inspectors are to issue Correction Orders and Violation Notices in a timely fashion and attempt to contact the property owners and other responsible parties to gain voluntary compliance. Court action is a result of failure to comply with appropriate corrective actions after a reasonable amount of time is allowed to correct the violation.



The goal of Zoning Enforcement is to ensure properties in PWC are maintained and used in accordance with the County's adopted land use requirements.

Complaint Based Division

Intake Phone 703-792-7018

Email – NSD@PWCGOV.ORG

<https://www.pwcva.gov/department/neighborhood-services/report-problem>

Who Reports Complaints?

Residents

Board of Supervisors

State Agencies

PWC Agencies

Businesses

Tenants

The screenshot shows the 'Report a Problem' page on the Prince William Virginia website. The page has a dark blue header with the logo and navigation links: MY GOV, INFO & SERVICES, GET INVOLVED, and NEWS & SOCIAL MEDIA. The main heading is 'Report a Problem' followed by 'Complaint Form for Property Violations'. Below this, the 'INSTRUCTIONS:' section lists five bullet points: 1. Please use this form to report a neighborhood issue or complaint covering any of the issues listed below. 2. For instances where graffiti or overcrowding are the ONLY issues you have observed please use the separate graffiti and overcrowding forms. 3. If the specific issue is not listed, please enter that under "If other, enter violation:" and provide specifics. 4. Please enter the precise address where the issue is occurring. We cannot begin a case for investigation without a precise address. 5. If you are having difficulty determining an exact address for your reported concern try using the County Mapper program available to all citizens. Type in the name of a nearby street and use the 'hand' symbol on the map that appears to pan the view to a spot near the precise location where you spotted the violation. The Mapper program will display a valid address which you can then enter on this form. Thanks for your effort! Below the instructions is a note: * NOTE: Pursuant to Va. Code § 2.2-3705.3.8, "the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of complainants furnished in confidence with respect to an investigation of individual zoning enforcement complaints or complaints relating to the Uniform Statewide Building Code (§ 36-97 et seq.) or the Statewide Fire Prevention Code (§ 27-94 et seq.) made to a local governing body" are exempt from mandatory disclosure under FOIA. The form itself is titled 'Complaint Form For Property Violations' and includes a section 'Furnished in Confidence*' with a list of violations to select: 1. Select Violations: * - Outside storage - Things that are normally stored indoors are stored in the public view - Dump heap - Trash - Tall grass - Most of the lawn is over 12 inches tall

PRINCE WILLIAM
VIRGINIA

MY GOV INFO & SERVICES GET INVOLVED NEWS & SOCIAL MEDIA

Report a Problem

Complaint Form for Property Violations

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Please use this form to report a neighborhood issue or complaint covering any of the issues listed below.
- For instances where graffiti or overcrowding are the ONLY issues you have observed please use the separate [graffiti](#) and [overcrowding](#) forms.
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Complaint Form For Property Violations

Furnished in Confidence*

1. Select Violations: *

- ☐ Outside storage - Things that are normally stored indoors are stored in the public view
- ☐ Dump heap - Trash
- ☐ Tall grass - Most of the lawn is over 12 inches tall

Common Complaints

- Overcrowding/ Occupancy
- Trash Cans & Outside Storage
- Building Maintenance Issues
- Inoperable Vehicles, Commercial Vehicles
- No Zoning Approval
- Home Based Businesses
- Illegal Signs
- Graffiti



Outside Storage

Outside storage shall mean the keeping of goods or materials, excluding junk, outside of a fully enclosed building, and which shall be considered as an accessory use, unless specifically enumerated as a principal use (such as a contractor's storage yard or building material sales yard).



Outside Storage

* Sec. 32-300.02. - Accessory uses.



Accessory uses shall be permitted in all agricultural and residential districts, subject to the following limitations:

13. Outside storage, including but not limited to refuse removal areas, shall be permitted only behind a solid, uniformly colored fence of sufficient height to block the stored material from view. Notwithstanding the aforementioned provision, the storage of debris, appliances and trash on open porches and within carports shall not be permitted. In no case shall outside storage occupy more than 25 percent of any yard area. Trash or garbage containers may be stored in the rear or side yards only, in accordance with the requirements of this subsection, or may be effectively blocked from view by vegetation; otherwise, such containers shall be stored within a principal or accessory structure. When provided, dumpsters shall be located within a screening enclosure, constructed as required by section 800 of the Design and Construction Standards Manual.

Dump Heap

Sec. 32-300.12. - Dump heap prohibited.

Keeping or maintaining a dump heap, as defined herein, shall be prohibited on property in all agricultural or residential districts.



Refuse Code – Allows for Public Works to remove the hazardous conditions, in conjunction with the Health Department.



Inoperable Vehicles

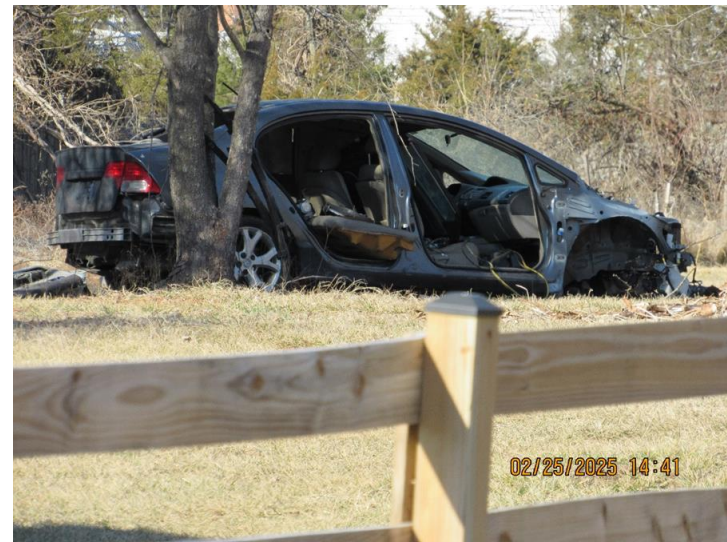
One of our most common complaints.

In a lawful motor vehicle graveyard; or

In a lawful licensed vehicle impoundment yard for a maximum of 90 days; or

Secondary to a lawful motor vehicle repair facility for a maximum of 90 days; or

An accessory use to a lawful residential use for up to four inoperative vehicles. Inoperative vehicles shall be stored in a fully enclosed building or shall be fully screened from view from abutting property and streets, in an approved parking area.



Parking on Unimproved Surface

Commonly reported violation.

32-250.61, Agricultural or Residential Zoned Lots

Excerpt. Location and area of vehicle parking and storage on lots less than one acre. All vehicles that are permitted to be parked or stored on residential properties of one acre or less shall be parked or stored only on areas that are improved in accordance with section 600 of the Design and Construction Standards Manual.



Prohibited Vehicles

Sec. 32-300.02. - Accessory uses.

Accessory uses shall be permitted in all agricultural and residential districts, subject to the following limitations:

- 1(e) Prohibited vehicles regardless of weight. Except as permitted by [section 13-327](#) of the County Code and subsections (g) and (h) below, the following types of vehicles shall not be parked or stored in any residential district or residential portion of a planned district, or on lots of less than ten acres in agricultural districts: (1)Cement-trucks.(2)Construction equipment.(3)Dump trucks.(4)Garbage, refuse or recycling trucks.(5)Passenger buses (excluding school buses).(6)Tractors or trailers of a tractor-trailer truck.(7)Tow trucks.



Prohibited Vehicles

Sec. 32-300.02. - Accessory uses.

Accessory uses shall be permitted in all agricultural and residential districts, subject to the following limitations:

1(f) Prohibited vehicles. Except as permitted by [section 13-327](#) of the County Code and subsections (g) and (h) below, the following vehicles registered with the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles or any other state or government agency as having a gross vehicle weight of 10,100 pounds or more, shall not be parked or stored in any residential district or residential portion of a planned district, or on lots of less than ten acres in agricultural districts: (1) Box trucks. (2) Flat bed trucks. (3) Stake bed trucks. (4) Step vans. (5) Trailers.



Prohibited Vehicles

Sec. 32-300.02. - Accessory uses.

Accessory uses shall be permitted in all agricultural and residential districts, subject to the following limitations:

11(g) Construction equipment. Construction equipment and construction-related vehicles shall not be parked or stored in any agricultural, residential, or residential portion of a planned district except during the tenure of construction, and only when being used for construction purposes on the lot where parked or stored. Valid building and/or site development permits and continuous pursuit of completion of the permitted construction or development shall be required to demonstrate the existence of bona fide construction activity.

(h) Agricultural uses and service to residential properties. The provisions of the foregoing subsections 1(a) through (f) shall not be construed to prohibit the parking in any agricultural district of any vehicle or equipment used in bona fide agricultural operations, nor shall the provisions be construed to prohibit the use of any vehicle for deliveries or pick-ups of goods or intermittent home services in residential or agricultural districts.



Prince William County Zoning Ordinance 32 -PART 100. - DEFINITIONS

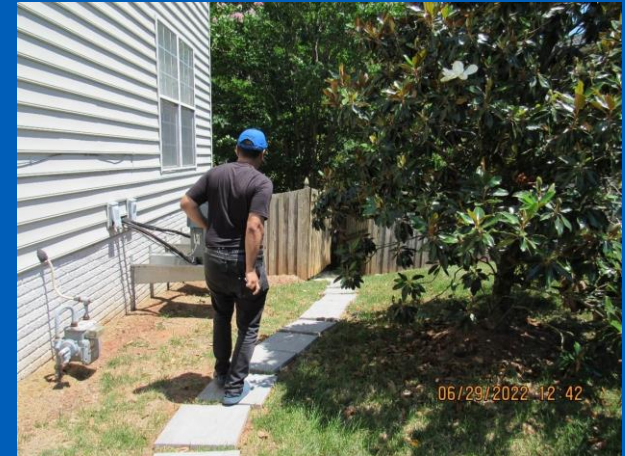
Commercial vehicle shall mean *Commercial vehicle* shall mean any vehicle with a gross vehicle weight registered with the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles or any other state or government agency as 10,100 pounds or more and used for commercial purposes, or any vehicle, regardless of capacity, which displays advertising thereon or which is licensed as a "for hire" vehicle, or any limousine used as a common or contract carrier. For the purpose of this chapter, commercial vehicles shall not be deemed to include any of the following: police vehicle; emergency vehicle, commuter van, farm vehicle or farm equipment located on property used for agricultural purposes; motor home, camping trailer, tent trailer, boat trailer, horse trailer or similar recreational equipment used as personal property and not for hire; school van or bus.

Not considered a commercial vehicle:



Overcrowding

- Multiple Vehicles Associated with the Residence
- Parked Vehicles in the grass areas
- People seen coming and going from home who are not family members
- Excessive Trash
- Multiple Entrances and Exits being used



Overcrowding can be based upon Square Footage per the Zoning Ordinance.

<u>Total Finished Square Feet of Area</u>	<u>Total Number of Adult Occupants</u>
- of up to 1000 square feet	3
-from 1001 to 1500 square feet	4
-from 1501 to 2000 square feet	5
-from 2001 to 2500 square feet	6
-from 2501 to 3000 square feet	7
-from 3001 to 3500 square feet	8
-from 3501 to 4000 square feet	9
-over 4000 square feet	10



Overcrowding

The Zoning Ordinance of Prince William County governs occupancy issues in residences. The Zoning Ordinance allows for the following:

- ✓ One (1) person or two (2) or more persons related by blood or marriage with any number of offspring, foster children, stepchildren or adopted children subject to the maximum occupancy limitations (see the chart below) and not to exceed two (2) roomers or boarders; or
- ✓ Two (2) single parents or guardians with their dependent children including offspring, foster children, stepchildren or adopted children living and cooking together as a single housekeeping unit; or
- ✓ A group of not more than three (3) persons not related by blood or marriage living and cooking together as a single housekeeping unit.



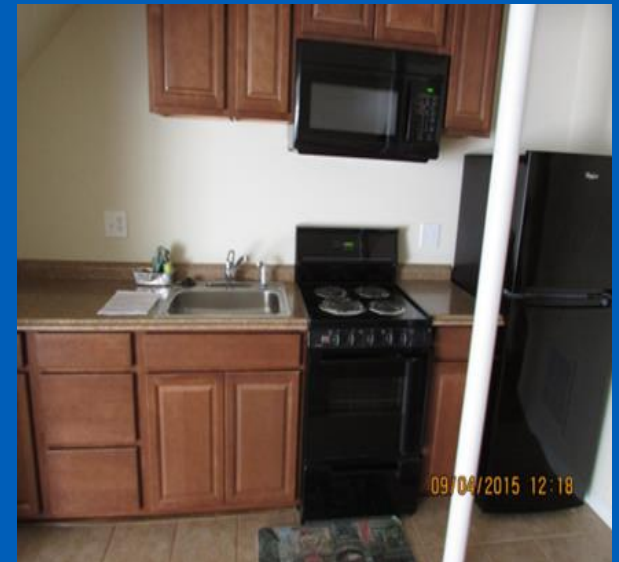
Second Kitchen Violations often become an issue with overcrowding violations.

Sec. 32-300.02. - Accessory uses

Accessory uses shall be permitted in all agricultural and residential districts, subject to the following limitations:

Secondary food preparation areas may be permitted in single-family detached dwellings by the Zoning Administrator when the following conditions are met and subject to criteria available from the Planning Office:

- (a) Secondary food preparation areas shall be contained within the principal dwelling unit or within an attached addition; and
- (b) The addition or portion of the dwelling containing the second kitchen shall not be used for commercial rental or other commercial purposes; and
- (c) Secondary food preparation areas shall be located for the convenience and use by all residents of a dwelling and shall not create separate or private living areas.



Overcrowding per VA Property Maintenance Code:

- ✓ Habitable space shall have at least 1 openable window of approved size facing directly to the outside or court.
- ✓ Habitable room, other than kitchen, shall be a minimum of 7' in any direction.
- ✓ Living room must contain 120 sq feet. Bedroom must contain minimum of 70 sq feet (plus additional 50 sq' for each occupant).
- ✓ Can't sleep in kitchen and non-habitable spaces.
- ✓ Bedrooms must meet emergency escape requirement, have smoke detector, light and ventilation requirements, heat facilities, and electrical receptacle requirements.



Hoarding

Clutter Image Rating Scale: Kitchen

Please select the photo below that most accurately reflects the amount of clutter in your room.



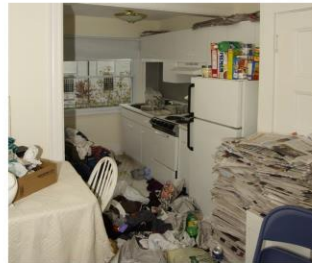
1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9

Hoarding

Clutter Image Rating: Bedroom

Please select the photo that most accurately reflects the amount of clutter in your room.



1



2



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6



7

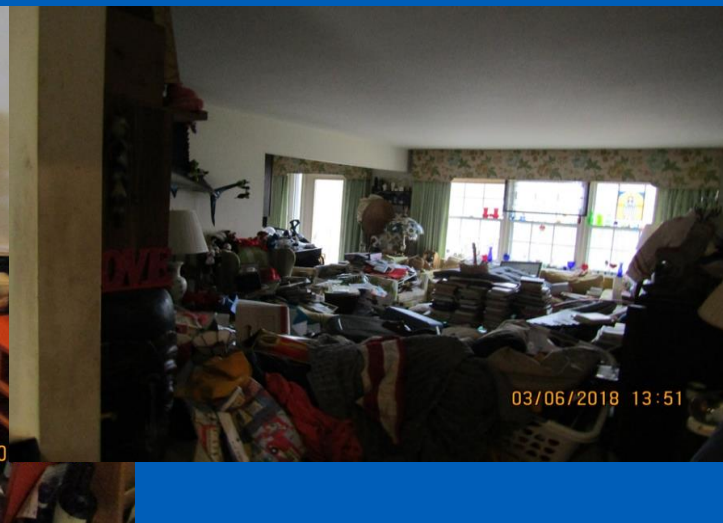
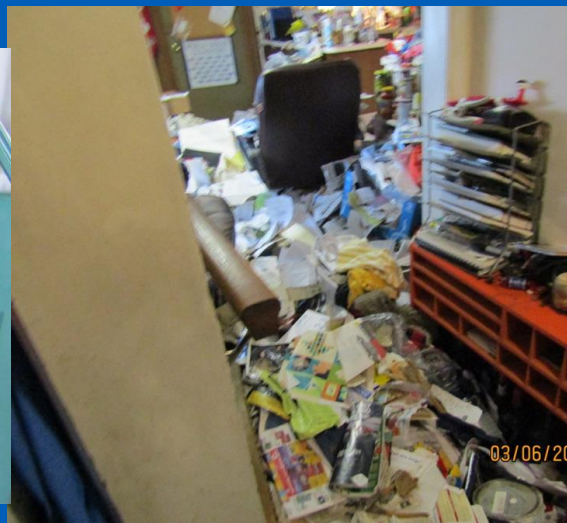


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Typical Hoarding Cases



Vegetation Violations

Commonly Reported during Growing Season

PRINCE WILLIAM
COUNTY

Tall Grass & Weeds

12+ Inches (A-1 exempt)



Running Bamboo

Allowing bamboo to invade onto public or private property



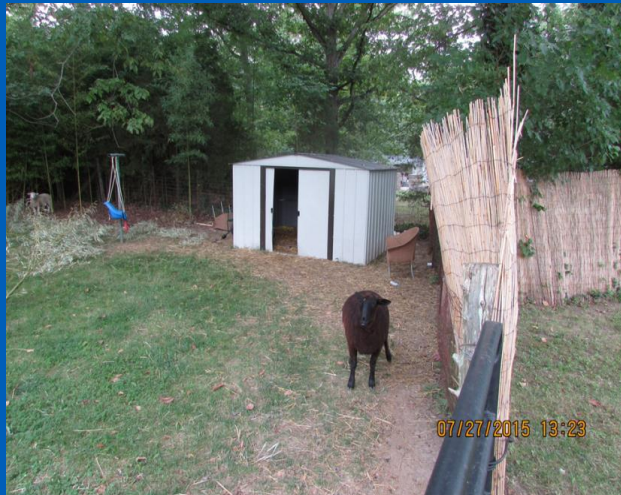
Tall Grass & Weeds Violations

- ✓ A violator has 14 days from receiving the notice to comply. The Inspector returns to the site after the compliance date has passed to verify the lawn has been mowed.
- ✓ If the occupant still has not complied, a County Contractor will be assigned to cut the grass. It usually takes three to four days to fit the job into the Contractor's schedule.
- ✓ If the County Contractor mows a property, a tax lien is placed on the property to cover the mowing cost to include associated administrative fees.



Zoning- Code Enforcement

Common Zoning Violations include: Chickens and Animal Violations (Chicken Coop Zoning approvals).



Zoning - Code Enforcement

Common Zoning Violations include:

Graffiti (Prince William County Code 16-56) If visible from right of way and property is occupied, 7 days to remove. If visible from right of way and property is unoccupied, 15 days to remove. If not visible from right of way, 15 days to remove.



Zoning- Code Enforcement

Common Zoning Violations include: **Illegal Signs** (temporary signs placed illegally in the right-of-way or on private property)



Sign Case Example

During a Proactive Enforcement Sweep, one PCE Inspector removed 432 signs on multiple dates. Sign owner only went to trial on 2 cases (60 signs and 3 signs). Sign Owner incurred fines for illegal signs in the amount of \$43,200. Another PCE Inspector's case resulted in an additional \$10,000 in fines for the same Sign Owner. Sign Owner's son was also sentenced to 10 days in jail.



No Zoning Approval 32-200.12

No building, structure, or use may be started, constructed, reconstructed, enlarged, or altered in any way, and no permits, licenses or other approvals therefore may be issued by any public authority, until the developer or owner shall have obtained approval from the Zoning Office.

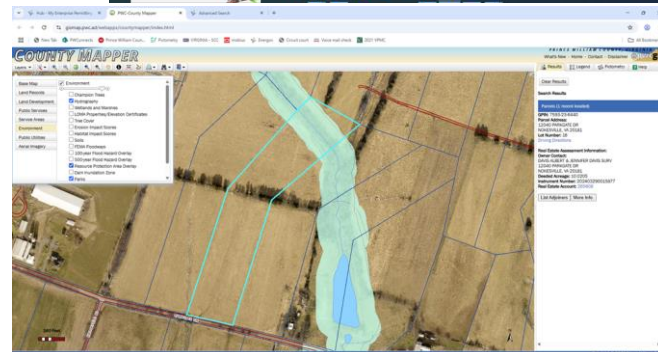
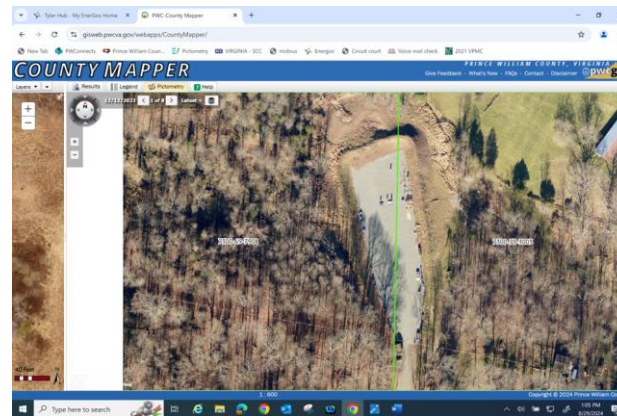


Other Zoning Related Complaints

Site Plan Violations

Non-Conforming Use, Special Use Permits,
Proffer Violations

Enforce Development, RPA & Land Use
Violations



Zoning- Code Enforcement

Common Zoning Violations include:

Land Disturbance violations.

Sec. 32-250.52. - Applicability.

1.No person may engage in any land disturbing activity in any zoning district, except as permitted by this chapter, until the area is the subject of an approved site development permit, land disturbance permit, or similar County approval. A site development plan, as applicable, shall be reviewed and approved in accordance with the zoning ordinance and the Design and Construction Standards Manual by the Planning Director upon written recommendation from the Director of Public Works. (2,500 square feet).

(Land Disturbance Permit – Environmental Management Division (703)792-7070.

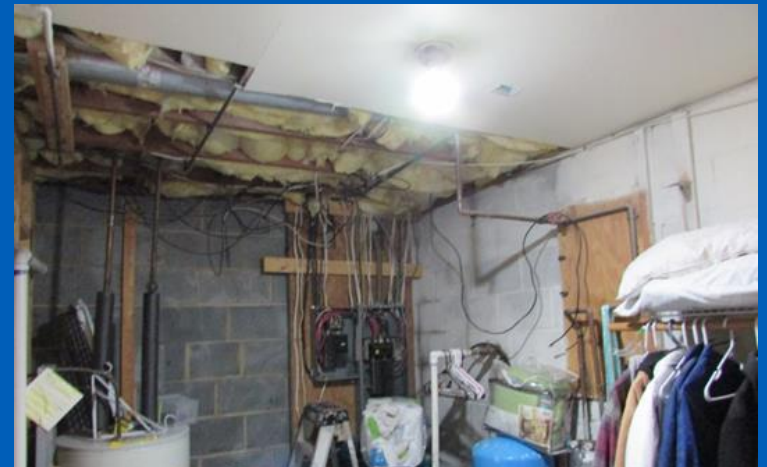


Virginia Maintenance Code

Part III of the Building Code

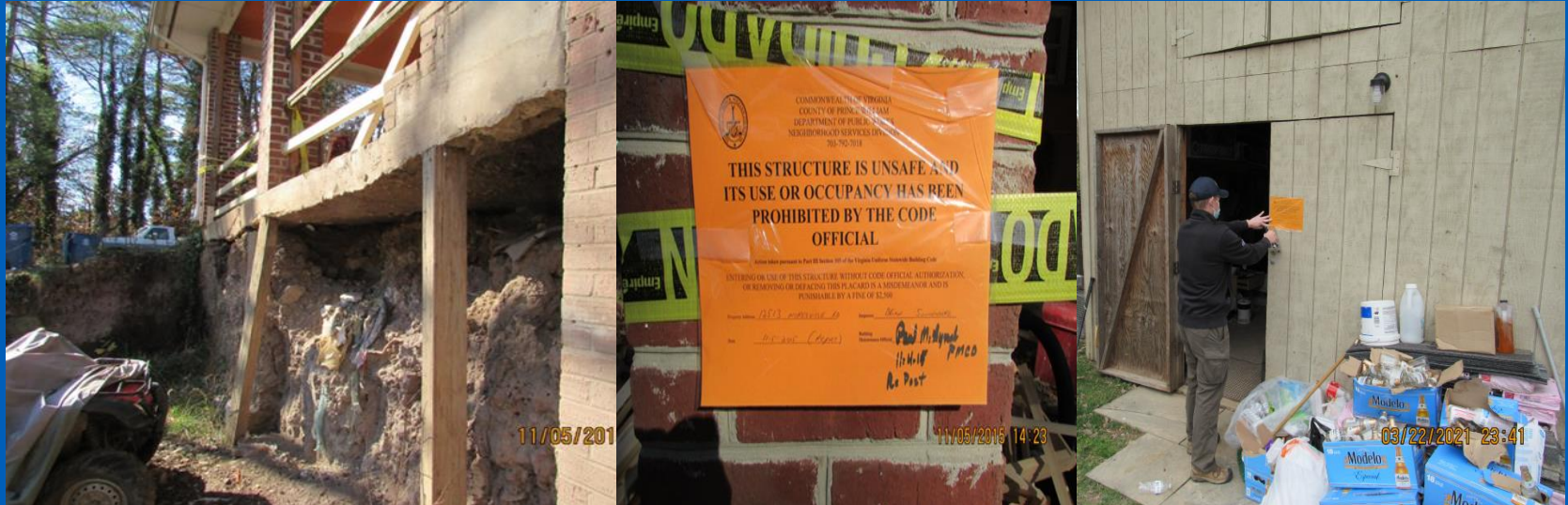
Common Building Code Violation:

- Exposed & Unprotected exterior coverings
- Exterior materials in disrepair or deteriorated
- Plumbing fixtures leaking or not operational
- Electrical hazards
- Mechanical equipment not operable
- Unsafe / Unfit Structures
- Stair / Deck / Handrail / Guardrail/ Window glass violations.
- Occupancy Violations / Habitable Spaces
- Elevator inspection compliance
- Residential Fire Safety such as smoke alarms.



Unsafe Structures

VMC 106.1- Existing Structures
Unsafe for Human Occupancy



Post Damage Reports



Defined Virginia State Law

“Blighted Property” shall be defined by Virginia Code Section 36-49, as may be amended, as...

Any individual commercial, industrial, or residential structure or improvement that endangers the public’s health, safety or welfare because the structure or improvement is dilapidated, deteriorated, or violates minimum health and safety standards,

or any structure previously designated as blighted pursuant to Section 36-49.1:1, under the process for determination of “Spot Blight.”



Spot Blight Program

GOAL

To identify blighted properties declared a public nuisance, which are to be repaired or removed by demolition through voluntary compliance, or by executive action by the Board of County Supervisors of Prince William County.

- ❖ Spot Blight properties endangers the public's health, safety, or welfare.
- ❖ Attracts rodents along with rodent harborage
- ❖ Attracts criminal activity, vagrants, and general mischief
- ❖ Presents danger for responding public safety personnel
- ❖ Negatively impacts the property values & standards of living in the community



Additional Criteria for PWC BOCS

- ✓ It has been vacant or boarded for at least one year.
- ✓ It has been the subject of documented complaints.
- ✓ It is no longer being maintained for useful occupancy.
- ✓ It lacks normal maintenance and upkeep.



Any Questions?



Thank You for Joining Us Today!

Contact Us

703-792-7018

Email: NSD@pwcgov.org

Office Hours – Monday-Friday 8am-4pm