

Prince William County
**Neighborhood
Services**

An illustration of a two-story house with a brown and grey facade, a dark roof, and a two-car garage. A large green tree stands to the right of the house. The house and tree are set against a dark blue background with a green and blue swoosh at the bottom.

A Day in the Life of a Property Code Inspector

Working with you for a better community!

Who are we and what do we do?

Neighborhood Services Division:

- 1 - Assistant Director of Public Works for Code Enforcement (Division Chief)
- 3 – Code Enforcement Supervisors (Chief Inspectors)
- 15 – Code Enforcement Inspectors & Senior Code Enforcement Inspectors
- 2 – Code Enforcement Technicians (Intake Technicians)
- 2 – Administrative Staff (Coordinator & Specialist)
- 1 – Business Services Analyst

What We Enforce:

- Prince William County Zoning Ordinance
- Virginia Property Maintenance Code (VA USBC Part III)
- Prince William County Graffiti Ordinance
- Prince William County Vegetation Ordinance
- Prince William County Refuse Ordinance
- Virginia State Code 33.2-1224 – Illegal Signs in VDOT ROW

Our Mission

Maintain a safe, clean, and healthy community through education, community support, and enforcement of codes.

Neighborhood Services is the division of Public Works responsible for helping residents improve their neighborhoods through cooperative efforts and education, working with property owners to ensure compliance with building and property codes, and picking up illegal signs along our roadways. It is NSD's mission to assist residents in understanding, abiding by, and raising concerns about compliance with the County's codes.

Complaint-Based Division

Where do the complaints come from?



*** We do not accept anonymous complaints ***



Research

Where is it? What's the complaint? Is there a history of complaints at this location? What permits/approvals do they have? Etc.

Inspect

Visit property. Document what we see. Attempt to contact owner. Leave business card, door hanger.

Issue Violation Notice

Issue to owner(s). Compliance deadlines vary based on case type but must extend past the appeal period.

Reinspect

Return to the property to document the conditions following the compliance deadline.

Court

If voluntary compliance is not achieved, court is a necessary next step. These cases can take months or years to get closed.

Common Complaints

No Zoning Approval

Building Maintenance Concerns

Tall grass

Dump Heap

Parking on Unimproved

Motor Vehicle Concerns

Overcrowding

Outside Storage

Unsafe Structures

Land Disturbance

Animal Concerns

Illegal Signs

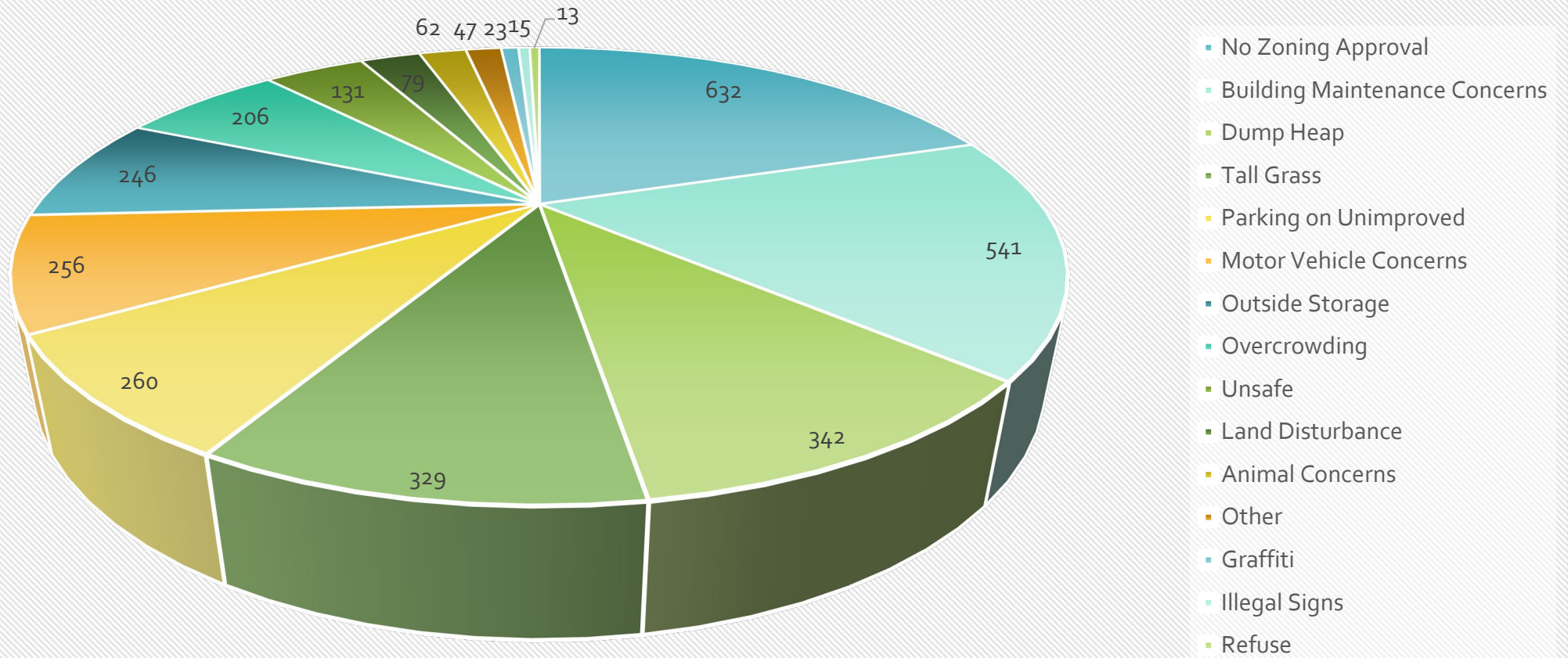
Refuse

Graffiti

Other



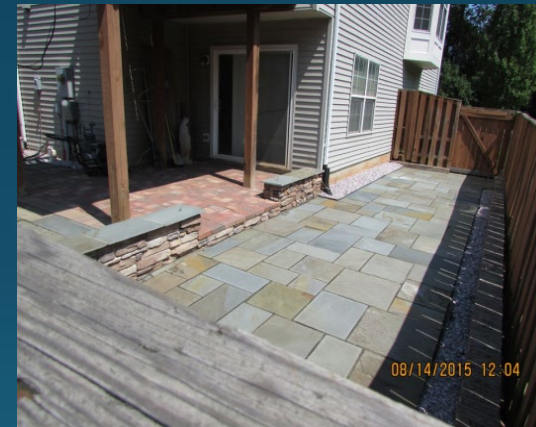
Complaints by Type for FY2025



No Zoning Approval

Prince William County Zoning Ordinance

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.



434 cited violations in FY2025

Building Maintenance Concerns

Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code Part III

Common Interior & Exterior Maintenance Concerns

- Exposed and unprotected exterior surfaces
- Structures in disrepair / deteriorated
- Plumbing fixtures leaking or not operational
- Electrical hazards
- Mechanical equipment not operable
- Stair / deck / handrail / guardrail / window glass violations
- Occupancy violations / habitable spaces
- Elevator inspection compliance
- Residential fire safety such as smoke alarms
- Accumulation of rubbish / garbage

617 cited violations in FY2025



Tall Grass

Prince William County Vegetation Ordinance

Under 2 Acres

It shall be unlawful for the owner of any property of less than two acres to permit weeds of more than 12 inches in height to remain standing upon any part of such property.



169 cited violations in FY2025

Over 2 Acres

It shall be unlawful for the owner of any property of two acres or more to permit weeds of more than 12 inches in height to remain standing upon any part of such property that is within 150 feet of the pavement edge of a state-maintained road or 200 feet of the building or dwelling of another.



12 cited violations in FY2025

Running Bamboo

It shall be unlawful for the owner of any property to allow running bamboo to grow without proper upkeep and appropriate containment measures, including barriers or trenching; and It shall be unlawful for the owner of any property to allow running bamboo to spread from his property to any public right-of-way or adjoining property not owned by the landowner.



9 cited violations in FY2025

Dump Heap

Prince William County Zoning Ordinance

Dump heap shall mean any lot on which trash, debris, garbage or other waste, junk or scrap material is dumped or deposited, and which has not been approved as either a debris landfill or a sanitary landfill.



140 cited violations in FY2025

Parking on Unimproved Surfaces

Prince William County Zoning Ordinance

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 less than one acre shall be parked or stored only on an improved parking surface, meaning an area surfaced with asphalt, poured or precast concrete, brick, pavers, or other similar material commonly used for parking surfaces. In no event shall a vehicle be parked or stored on a gravel, grass, dirt, or other unimproved surface. Gravel shall not constitute an improved parking surface.



179 cited violations in FY2025

Motor Vehicle Concerns

Prince William County Zoning Ordinance

Inoperative Vehicle shall mean any motor vehicle, trailer or semitrailer which is not in operating condition; or which for a period of 60 days or longer has been partially or totally disassembled by the removal of tires and wheels, the engine, or other essential parts required for the operation of the vehicle; or on which a valid license plate or a valid inspection decal is not displayed.

Prohibited Vehicles regardless of weight: (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.



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.

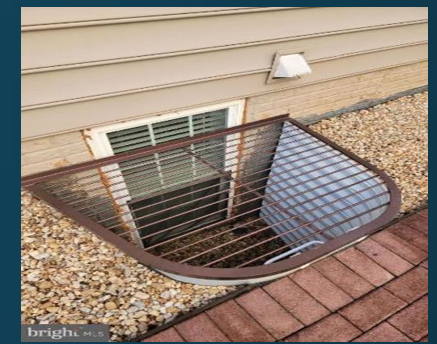


312 cited violations in FY2025



Overcrowding

Prince William County Zoning Ordinance



A dwelling unit may be occupied by not more than one (1) of the following:

(a) One person or two 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 in subsection (2) and not to exceed two roomers or boarders as permitted by section 32-300.02.18, "Accessory Uses - Boarders/Lodgers".

(b) Two 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.

(c) A group of not more than three persons not necessarily related by blood or marriage living and cooking together as a single housekeeping unit; provided that the limitation on the number of unrelated persons shall not apply to residents in a housekeeping unit by individuals with disabilities within the meaning of Section 3602 of the Fair Housing Act (42 USC 3601, et seq., as amended).

The maximum occupancy of a single-family dwelling unit is as follows:

- i. For a dwelling with a total finished area up to 1,000 sqft, no more than 3 adult occupants.
- ii. ...from 1,001 sqft - 1,500 sqft, no more than 4 adult occupants.
- iii. ...from 1,501 sqft - 2,000 sqft, no more than 5 adult occupants.
- iv. ...from 2,001 sqft - 2,500 sqft, no more than 6 adult occupants.
- v. ...from 2,501 sqft - 3,000 sqft, no more than 7 adult occupants.
- vi. ...from 3,001 sqft - 3,500 sqft, no more than 8 adult occupants.
- vii. ...from 3,501 sqft - 4,000 sqft, no more than 9 adult occupants.
- viii. For a dwelling unit over 4,000 sqft of total finished area, no more than 10 adult occupants.

124 cited violations in FY2025

Outside Storage

Prince William County Zoning Ordinance

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).

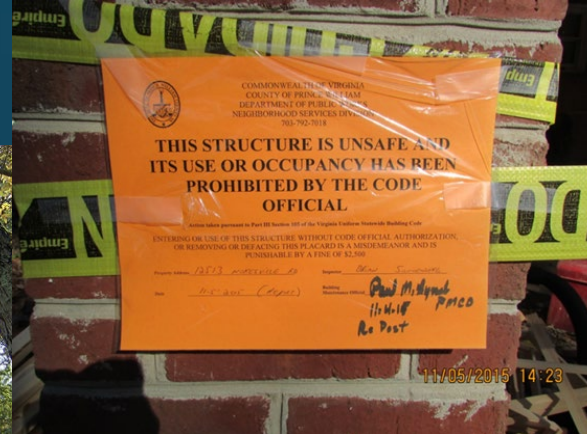


Outside storage, including but not limited to refuse removal areas, shall be permitted only behind a solid, uniformly colored fence of sufficient height to block the stored material from view. Notwithstanding the aforementioned provision, the storage of debris, appliances and trash on open porches and 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.

246 cited violations in FY2025

Unsafe Structures

Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code Part III



An existing structure determined by the code official to be dangerous to the health, safety and welfare of the occupants of the structure or the public because of, but not limited to, any of the following conditions:

- 1.The structure contains *unsafe equipment*;
- 2.The structure is so damaged, decayed, dilapidated, structurally unsafe or of such faulty construction or unstable foundation that partial or complete collapse is likely;
- 3.The structure is unsecured or open;
- 4.The degree to which the structure is in disrepair or lacks maintenance, ventilation, illumination, sanitary or heating facilities or other essential equipment;
- 5.The required plumbing and sanitary facilities are inoperable.

143 cited violations in FY2025

Land Disturbance

Prince William County Zoning Ordinance

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).



40 cited violations in FY2025

Animal Issues

Prince William County Zoning Ordinance

Common animal violations include chickens and chicken coops, other domestic fowl, farm animals, more than 4 dogs, etc.



46 cited violations in FY2025



Illegal Roadside Signs

Virginia State Code 33.2-1224

Erecting or maintaining illegal signs in the State right of way.



0 cited violations in FY2025, but 13,035 signs removed from the ROW in FY2025 and ~6,000 so far in FY2026



Refuse

Prince William County Refuse Ordinance

Refuse shall mean all solid waste products having the character of solids rather than liquids and which are composed wholly or partially of materials such as garbage, trash, rubbish, pet feces, litter, residues from clean up of spills or contamination, or other discarded materials (9VAC20-80-10) but not including human or agricultural animal body wastes.



1 cited violations in FY2025

Graffiti

Prince William County Graffiti Ordinance

Damage to or defacement of property within the county is expressly declared a public nuisance, and is subject to the removal and abatement procedures



"Defacement" shall mean the unauthorized application by any means of any writing, painting, drawing, etching, scratching or marking of an inscription, word, mark, figure or design of any type.

11 cited violations in FY2025

Other

Hoarding



Clutter Image Rating Scale: Kitchen

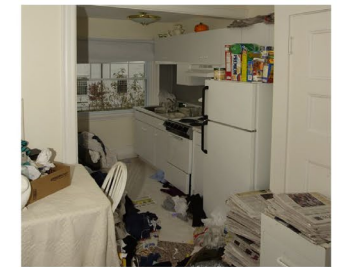
Please select the photo below that most accurately reflects the amount of clutter in your room.



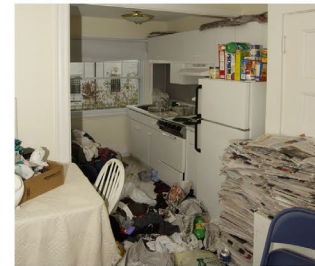
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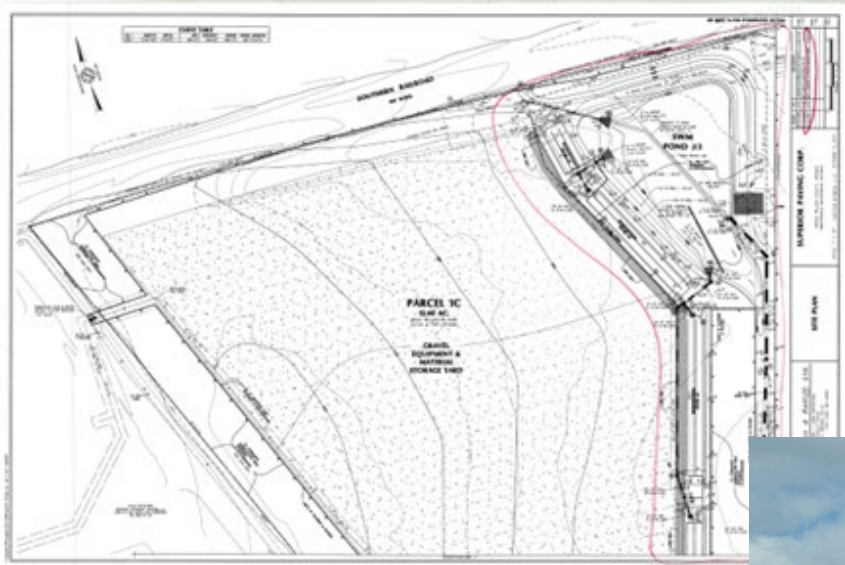
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Other Continued...

Site Plan Violations



Resource Protection Area (RPA) Violations



Proffer Violations



Other Continued...

Post Damage Reports

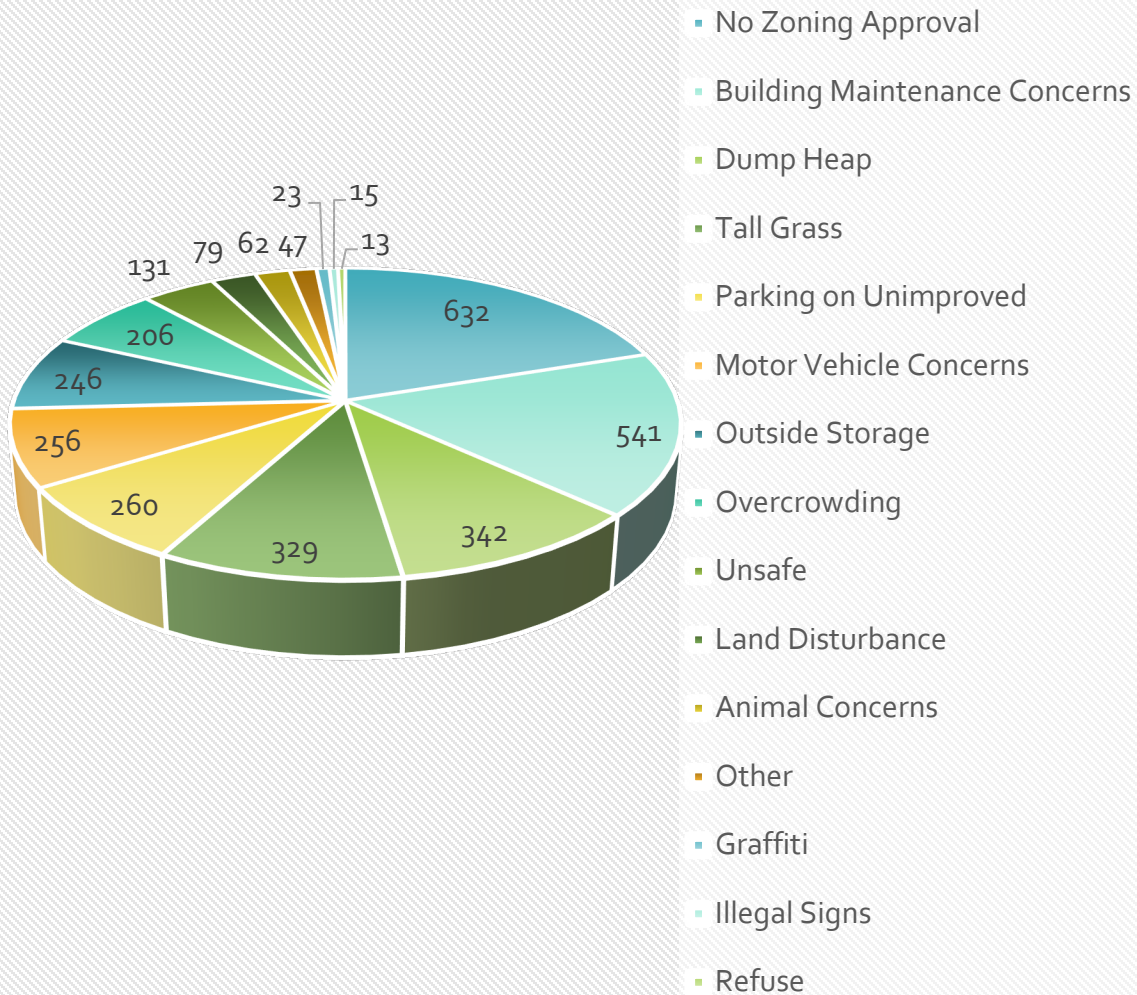


Spot Blight Program

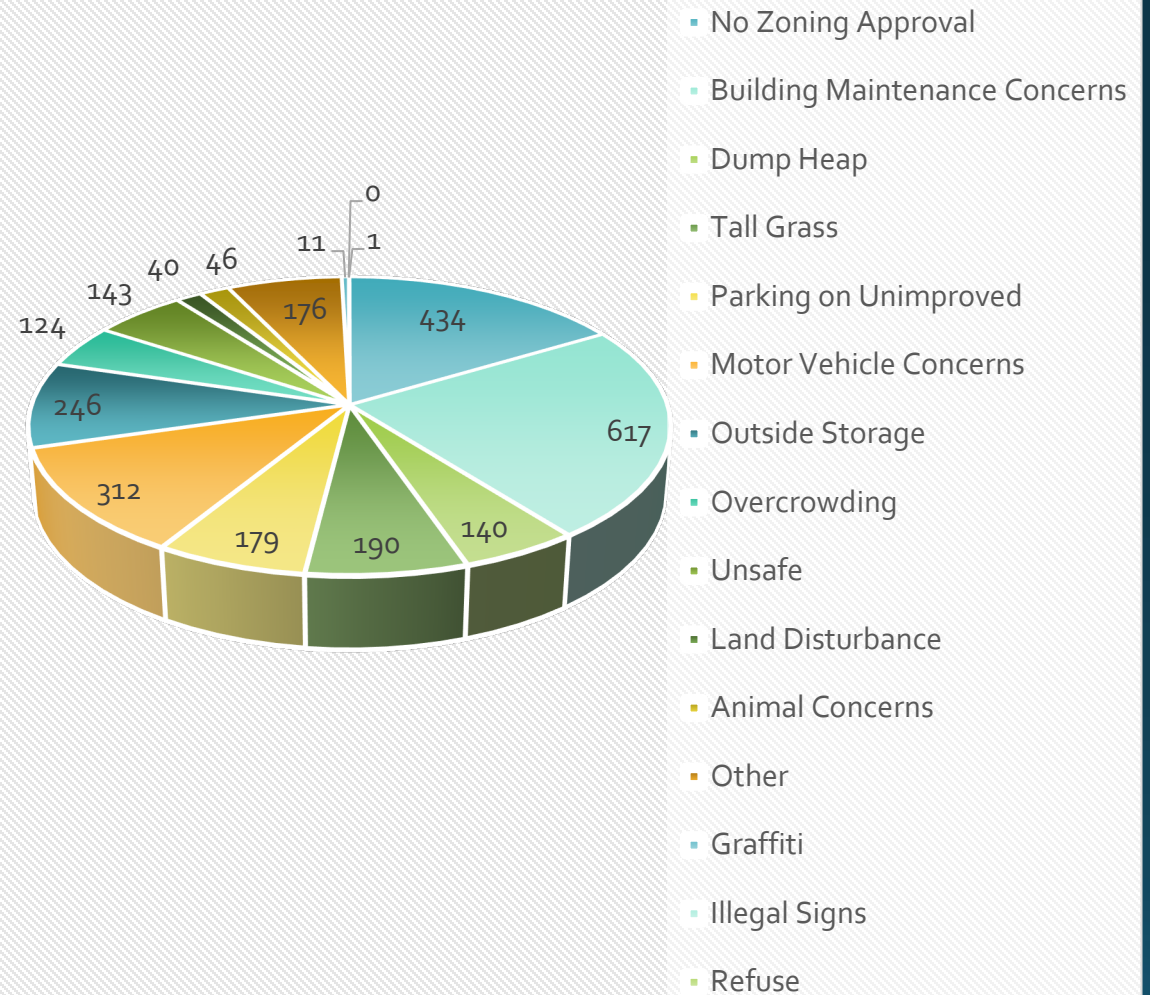


By Type for FY2025

Complaints Received



Violations Cited





- How to file a complaint:
- TTY 711 / 703-792-4311
- <https://www.pwcva.gov/311>

Questions?