



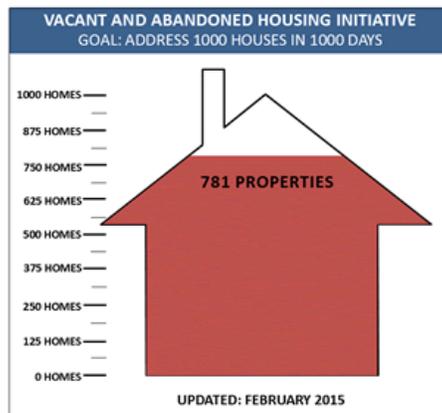
# Department of Code Enforcement

## Winter 2015

WORKING TO MAKE CODE ENFORCEMENT MORE CITIZEN FRIENDLY!

## What's Going On in Code Enforcement?

### 1000 Houses in 1000 Days Update



**Count of Houses:**

- 265 Houses Repaired
- 344 Houses Demolished
- 10 Houses Deconstructed
- 4 CDC Partner Houses
- 62 State Blight Elimination Program
- 0 Houses Under Contract for Deconstruction
- 96 Houses Under Contract for Demolition
- 781 Total

This February marks two years since Mayor Pete began the "1000 Houses in 1000 Days" Initiative. Thanks to the hard

work of city departments like the Mayor's Office, Community Investment, Legal, Engineering, and C.E., we are well on our way to accomplishing what many thought was an impossible task.

**We were also mentioned in the national media!** On January 12<sup>th</sup>, Harvard Business Review wrote an article entitled "What Business Can Learn from Government." In the article the "1000 Houses in 1000 Days" Initiative is mentioned as an example of how innovative local government can really be. The article can be found at this link:

<https://hbr.org/2015/01/what-business-can-learn-from-government>



### New Member to the Code Team

Greg McGowan joined our department October 1st to take over the responsibilities for area 4. In commenting on his job so far Greg says, "the amount of unity that is evident in this city as a whole is very encouraging."



### Welcome Back, Tom!

Tom rejoined Code Enforcement October 20<sup>th</sup> after 7½ years of service in the Department of Engineering. In working with residents to get code issues resolved Tom says "I feel like I make a difference at the end of each day."

## Director's Corner

With winter almost over, and spring just around the corner, the department is excited to start using our new case management software called **Accela**. This is an iPad application that will allow inspectors to issue citations for all housing and environmental violations throughout the city. This application will reduce the case turnaround time. Shortly after the Code Enforcement inspectors begin using this application, Animal Care & Control will start their rollout of the software. A great feature of this application is that city departments and residents will be able to go online and view Code Enforcement citations with the current status of a property in the process.



A second major change is that our Department will be teaming up with the **311 Call Center**. 311 has worked out well for other city departments and is a great asset to South Bend. By allowing calls to go to 311, residents can receive answers to various simple Code Enforcement questions faster and will allow our office staff more time in quickly addressing other issues like billing and inspections.

Our department has made some **cosmetic changes**. Our inspectors have replaced their polo shirts with

more professional button-down shirts. We have received extremely positive feedback from residents, one of whom commented that she felt safer allowing us into her home because of it. Also, our office went through a makeover late last fall with a fresh coat of paint, new ceiling tiles, and matching carpet. Improvements were much needed and **we thank our friends at Engineering** for helping us with the renovations.

Finally, Code Enforcement is currently in the process of **reviewing our practices and procedures** to become more streamlined and efficient in serving the residents of South Bend. We will be holding a Strategic Planning workshop on February 20th and 23rd to develop a mission statement, visions, and plans to guide our department into the future.

All the Best,

**Randy Wilkerson**

## Thank you, Karl!



Last August, Karl Hardy retired from Code Enforcement after **40 Years of**

**Service!** One could even consider Karl a "founding father" of our department considering he began working here even before Code Enforcement became an official department for the city.

In reflecting on Karl's tenure, two inspectors who were close with him share their insights. Ed Humphrey, who is the inspector for the far-Westside of South Bend, says the best word that described Karl was "erudite" meaning one who shows great knowledge and learning. He also said Karl was always friendly, never spoke harshly of others, and

was fond of giving everyone he knew a nickname.

Ed Williams, who looks after the near-northwest side of town, stated he has "nothing but good things to say about Karl." He mentioned that Karl is his mentor and his friend and still talks with him every once in a while to see how the retired life is treating him. He also says that Karl's favorite part of the job was interacting with people to help come up with resolutions. Of all the lessons he learned from him, the most important one was to maintain accountability and professionalization in the job and demonstrate that inspectors are here to help make the lives of South Bend citizens better.

# Out & About in the City

Upcoming Events where Code Representatives Will Be

## Monday February 9

Northeast Neighborhood Meeting  
803 N. Notre Dame Ave  
5:30pm

## Wednesday February 11

Rum Village Neighborhood Meeting  
Rum Village Nature Center  
6pm

## Thursday February 12

Marquette Park Meeting  
Memorial Presbyterian Church  
5:30pm

## Tuesday February 17

Sunnymede Neighborhood Meeting  
Progressive Missionary Baptist Church  
7pm

## Wednesday February 18

Howard Park Neighborhood Meeting  
121 S Niles Ave  
7pm

## Thursday February 19

Southside Neighborhood Meeting  
Living Stones Church  
6:30pm

## Thursday February 26

Mayor's Night Out  
5<sup>th</sup> District  
5:30pm

## Monday March 2

Far Northwest Meeting  
LaSalle Landing  
5:30pm

## Monday March 9

Northeast Neighborhood Meeting  
830 N Notre Dame Ave  
5:30pm

## Wednesday March 11

Rum Village Neighborhood Meeting  
Rum Village Nature Center  
6pm

## Thursday March 12

River Park Neighborhood Meeting  
River Park Public Library  
6pm

## Tuesday March 17

LWWGA Neighborhood Meeting  
LaSalle Library  
6pm

## Wednesday March 18

Howard Park Neighborhood Meeting  
121 S Niles Ave  
7pm

## Thursday March 19

Southside Neighborhood Meeting  
Living Stones Church  
6:30pm



# FAQ on Code Enforcement

**Q:** How many inspectors does Code Enforcement have?

**A:** We have a total of 9 inspectors...considering South Bend has a population of 100,000 that means there is **1 inspector for every 11,000 people!** Because of this, we ask citizens for patience as we remedy code issues that may affect your neighborhood.

**Q:** When are hearings held?

**A:** Code hearings regarding housing repairs and/or environmental issues occur every **Tuesday and Thursday at 1:30pm in the Meeting Room on the 13<sup>th</sup> floor of the County-City Building.**

**Q:** Are inspectors allowed to go on people's properties to check for violations like high grass or trash?

**A:** No. Due to private property laws when a violation is reported, **an inspector must be able to see the violation from a public right-of-way (ex. Street, sidewalk, alley).** After our department gives the owner a warning letter and if the owner has not complied within a certain amount of time (usually 48 hours) then a city crew has the right to go onto the property to remedy the situation.

**Q:** Can the inspector go onto or inside a property to check for housing violations?

**A:** Due to private property laws, an inspector cannot go onto or inside a property unless **they have permission of either the owner or the tenant.**

**Q:** Does your department handle properties in the city with 5 digit addresses (ex. 12345 Main St)?

**A:** No. **We only handle street addresses up to 4 digits.** 5 digit numbered properties are handled by the St. Joseph County Building Department which can be contacted at (574) 235-9554.

**Q:** How long do I have to shovel the snow from my sidewalk(s) before there is a violation?

**A:** Residents have **24 hours after a snowfall to shovel** their portion of city sidewalks.

**Q:** My neighborhood has not shoveled his portion of the city sidewalk. Can you all send someone to shovel the snow?

**A:** Unfortunately, no. The only thing we can do is **issue a snow ticket of \$30 to the owner** for not shoveling the snow.

**Q:** Can I run a small business (ex. auto repair, psychic reading) in my neighborhood?

**A:** No. **If your neighborhood is zoned as residential,** you cannot run a business there.

**Q:** Can I convert my single-family dwelling to multi-family?

**A:** No. **Unless your neighborhood is zoned for multi-family** and one adds onto the property, it cannot be turned into a multi-family.

**Q:** Do you all handle noise complaints?

**A:** No. The **police department** is responsible for noise issues. Their non-emergency number is **(574) 235-9361.**

**Q:** I received a letter saying I have a violation listed as "Litter Sm" or "Litter Lg." What does this mean?

**A:** "Litter Sm" means there is a **small amount of litter** on your property. Examples include small bags of trash or a small pile of leaves.

"Litter Lg" means there is a **large amount of litter** on your property. Examples include: an old appliance, an old piece of furniture, a pile of debris from a home repair, or a large amount of garbage bags.