

CODE COMPLIANCE

ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN

I. INTRODUCTION: The purpose of this administrative plan is to describe the processes and procedures used by the Community Development Department in implementing the City of Woodland's Public Nuisance Ordinance (Chapter 14A of the City Municipal Code) as well as other codes enforced by the Code Compliance Staff. This document does not repeat the ordinances, but is intended to describe how staff typically conducts its work and to clarify areas of the ordinances that needs additional explanation.

II. GENERAL PHILOSOPHY: The general philosophy for code compliance in the City of Woodland is to provide a timely response to resident concerns about physical conditions in their neighborhoods. This means that staff function as problem solvers by working with responsible parties to ensure compliance with City codes.

This response and resulting compliance will be achieved through consistently applied processes as described. It is expected that all staff responsible for enforcing City codes will be responsive, exercise good judgment and common sense, and use a reasonable approach.

In terms of responsiveness, health/safety violations and complaints from City Council, City Manager's Office or City Attorney's Office is inspected immediately. All other complaints are inspected as soon as possible (generally within 24 hours.)

III. VOLUNTARY COMPLIANCE: Gaining commitment to the City's codes through voluntary compliance is a specific goal of Community Development. In attempting to achieve voluntary compliance, staff works with the Responsible Party to reach compliance by making sure they:

- Clearly understand why the condition is a violation;
- Have clear direction on what is required to correct the violation;
- Have appropriate referrals and resources as needed, and
- Have a reasonable amount of time for compliance.

IV. DUE PROCESS: The overall purpose of enforcing City ordinances is to encourage people to maintain their property in a safe and sanitary condition while respecting the property rights of their neighbors. Since a full range of code compliance activities can lead to the taking of private property, staff is to follow a process that ensures the Responsible Party is treated fairly and allowed reasonable time to correct violations. This process incorporates a voluntary compliance phase leading to a documented legal

IV. process that ensures adequate notice and appeal rights.

V. TAKING COMPLAINTS/SETTING UP CASES/COMMUNICATIONS

A. Steps in responding to Reported Concerns. In general, a code compliance case begins when a resident reports a perceived violation by telephone (actual contact or voice mail message), written complaint form, letter or personal visit to the office; or when the Code Compliance Officer proactively develops a case out in the field. Staff follows the same steps in responding to a complaint regardless of how the complaint is received.

The person receiving the complaint initially screens the concern to determine whether or not it is in the area of Code Compliance's responsibility. If not, the Complainant is provided an appropriate referral. If the Complaint is an emergency, the complainant will be forwarded, or transferred immediately to the appropriate person, department, or agency.

The person receiving the complaint also must determine whether or not the complaint appears to be a code violation. If so, a case is set up in the computer. The complainant is also asked if they wish to be kept informed of the status of the case. If so, this is noted in the computer so the officer can keep in touch with the complainant.

As much information as possible is collected so the officer has a complete understanding of the problem. Additional information, such as property owner or tenant names, parcels numbers, etc., and is included on the case sheet.

Cases are assigned the following priority:

- 1.) Conditions posing immediate health and safety hazards, and complaints from the City Council, City Manager's Office, or City Attorney's office. These are given to the Code Compliance Officer and investigated immediately;
- 2.) Resident Complaints. These are given to the Compliance Officer to investigate as soon as possible.
- 3.) Proactive cases developed by the Compliance Officer.

B. ANONYMOUS COMPLAINTS. If a complainant does not wish to give his/her name and phone number, staff are to advise the complainant that this data is necessary to obtain important information, follow-up, and report progress/status of case. Staff will re-assure the complainant that their name will be kept confidential when dealing with the Responsible Party. Should complainant insist on anonymity, staff will caution that anonymous complaints receive the lowest priority.

- C. NON-VIOLATIONS.** When the complainant does not have a valid complaint, or if an inspection determines no violation, the Compliance Officer will inform complainant in a timely manner. The Officer will also offer to meet with the complainant and educate him or her on the Code and provide ideas or options on how they might solve the problem. The Officer then closes the case by entering in the computer file the action taken.