

Be Informed

This brochure has been developed to explain some of St. Petersburg's housing and neighborhood standards. Our first priority is to help residents voluntarily comply with these standards. If you receive a violation notice, we recommend that you take positive action to resolve any violations. Also contact your Codes Investigator with any questions about violations and what must be done to correct them. The following additional brochures are available:



- Address Numbers
- Certificate of Inspection Program
- Commercial Equipment Parking
- Emergency Fire Exits
- Illegal or Abandoned Dwelling Units
- Inoperative Motor Vehicles
- Junk, Rubbish, Outdoor Storage
- Legal Premises Agent for Out of Town Owners
- Maintenance of Buildings
- Painting to Protect Your Home
- Parking in Residential Areas
- Permits Required
- Prohibited Business
- Rodent and Insect Control
- Visibility Triangle Requirements
- Unsafe/Unfit Structures
- Yard (Vegetation) Maintenance Standards



Codes Compliance Assistance
Municipal Services Center Building—3rd Floor
One 4th Street North
Phone: 727-893-7373
Fax: 727-893-5558
Visit us on the Web at www.stpete.org/codes.htm

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Illegal or Abandoned Dwelling Units

Codes
Compliance Assistance
A Neighborhood Service



Illegal or Abandoned Units



The City Council adopted rules for illegal and abandoned dwelling units in order to:

- Protect occupants of these units from hazardous conditions caused by code violations;
- Reduce overcrowding or require that amenities such as parking and yard space are adequate to support the number of residents;
- Preserve and improve the character, appeal and value of neighborhoods; and
- Stop inappropriate uses of properties in neighborhoods.

Illegal dwelling units are units that are not legally constructed with a permit. Units that are not constructed with a permit are a code violation and cannot be occupied.

Abandoned units include units within multiple unit property that have been legally constructed in history, but exceed the number of units allowed under current zoning, and the owner has failed to pay occupational taxes, or utilities have been off for an extended period of time.

Abandonment may mean that a unit or units within a multiple unit property cannot be re-occupied and the total number of units allowed on the property can be reduced to conform to current zoning.

Types of Abandoned Units

Abandoned, grand-fathered units are dwelling units which have not been occupied for a continuous period of one year; or for intermittent periods amounting to at least one year or more within any two-year period; and/or no occupational license has been issued for a continuous period of two years or for intermittent periods amounting to two years or more within a three year period.

If the property has been occupied but the occupational license has not been maintained, the Community Preservation Commission (CPC) can reinstate some or all units with expired occupational licenses under certain limited circumstances.

Abandoned, nonconforming units are dwelling units which have not been occupied and/or lack an occupational license in an area no longer zoned "residential" the property must meet the present zoning requirements.

For example, abandoned dwelling units cannot be occupied in an area zoned " industrial".

The property owner may only appeal to the CPC if they can prove that an error has occurred.



Appeals

The property owner may also apply to the Planning and Visioning Commission (PVC) and City Council for a land use amendment/re-zoning of the site.

A property owner may appeal a staff determination that they have an illegal unit to the City's Community Preservation Commission. This Board has the authority to determine if the units are legal or illegal. The owner must provide evidence to prove that the unit or units were legally constructed and occupied.

If approved, the units must also pass a City inspection, and meet all other conditions placed on the property by the Board, such as parking and landscaping.

Each property subject to these regulations must be individually reviewed.

The City will notify the owner by a violation notice if illegal or abandoned units are found. Multi-unit residential property owners or prospective purchasers can secure their investment by contacting Development Review Services at 893-7471 to request up-to-date zoning information about their property and the number of legal dwelling units.