



MAINTENANCE OF BUILDINGS

As we age, we take steps to maintain and improve our health. The neighborhoods and structures in St. Petersburg also require maintenance to stay in good health as they age. Individual structures and neighborhoods that are poorly maintained cost citizens more money, depress property values, and foster vandalism and crime.

The best solution to maintaining good neighborhoods is for everyone to voluntarily comply with a standard of maintenance agreed upon by the community.

Unfortunately, some property owners are unable to meet the expectations of the community without some help or additional incentives.

That is why citizens have asked government to enforce minimum property maintenance and zoning standards. Enforcement of these standards protects surrounding property owners and tenants, who might otherwise suffer substandard conditions.

The City Code requires that structures be maintained in a sound, sanitary condition and all parts must be in good repair and working order.

The balance of this brochure describes some basic requirements but does not include all code requirements. Codes Compliance staff are available to assist property owners to research the code and answer questions not addressed here.

Maintenance Standards

What kind of maintenance is required on the outside of a structure?

- Repair rotted wood, broken or missing boards, siding, roof shingles, soffit, fascia, stairs, railings, fences and walls;
- Driveways, sidewalks, etc. must be in good repair and free of debris;
- Doors, windows and screens must be in good repair, operate properly, and be locked;
- All exterior surfaces must be sealed against rain, weather, insects and other pests;
- Paint or other preservative treatment is required to prevent weathering and deterioration of the structure's parts.

What kind of maintenance is required on the inside of a structure (when used as a dwelling unit)?

- Plumbing and kitchen equipment must be kept clean and must work safely;
- Light, ventilation, electric service, air and water heating, sufficient living space and a clean environment are required;
- Bathroom floors must not allow water to penetrate, must be in good repair and able to be cleaned easily;
- Garbage and trash must be properly disposed of and insects and other pests must be exterminated; additional requirements apply to rental property.

Vacant Structures

Windows, doors and other openings must be in good condition and locked. In rare cases, owners may need to board-up openings in a vacant structure with security boards to prevent break-ins. Security boards must be made of exterior grade plywood and must be painted in a neutral color that blends with the exterior colors of the building. In addition, all other code requirements for the exterior must be maintained.

Requirements for Repairs

Repairs must be made with materials that match the rest of the structure.

Repairs must be made in a workmanlike manner and be able to withstand normal wear or use.

What happens if I am notified of a violation?

For first time violations, the property owner will have a reasonable amount of time to make the necessary repairs. Structures that are found to be a blighting influence, unfit, unsafe, unsanitary, a fire hazard or otherwise dangerous to life or property may be declared a "nuisance". If not promptly repaired, nuisance structures may require demolition.