



SEARCH



Thursday, Mar 1, 2012  
64.0°F Mostly Cloudy

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Report a Building Violation

Existing Structures Division

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Report a Violation

Existing Structures Division  
Department of Building Construction & Inspections  
Henrico County, VA  
P.O. Box 27032  
Richmond, VA 23273  
Telephone: 804/501-5869  
Fax: 804/501-4984

Introduction to the Division

Henrico County has several laws directed at creating and maintaining clean safe communities. This pamphlet briefly describes the laws that require the maintenance of buildings and structures to prevent unsafe and unhealthy conditions. Among these laws are the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code, the Henrico County Graffiti ordinance, and the Drug Blight and Bawdy Places ordinances. Important telephone numbers are also provided if you should have any questions about these laws. These laws are important to the people that work and live in Henrico because they prevent the onset of blight and crime. Safe clean communities also attract prospective employers and residents that seek the quality of life enjoyed by Henrico's citizens.

Principal Responsibilities

- Investigate complaints regarding both the interior and exterior condition of existing structures.
- Investigate complaints regarding unsafe structures and dwellings that are unfit for human habitation due to unsanitary conditions or the lack of water service.
- Investigate and remove graffiti from structures that is visible from right-of-way.

The Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code

The State of Virginia enacted the first State building code, titled the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code, in 1973. The State building code regulates both the construction and maintenance of buildings and structures throughout Virginia. State law requires that all local governments establish a building inspections department to issue permits and inspect buildings and structures when they are being built. The State building code also requires that buildings and structures be maintained in good repair and that unsafe structures be either demolished or repaired. The maintenance requirements for existing buildings are aimed at preventing the deterioration that often leads to blight and increased crime. Examples of the maintenance requirements of the State building code include:

- prohibiting the accumulation of trash and garbage within buildings,
- repairing damaged electrical wiring,
- replacing broken windows,
- repairing damaged structural elements such as joists, beams and columns,
- painting unprotected wood that is exposed to the weather, and
- repairing leaking plumbing and roofs.

Violations of the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code are Class 1 misdemeanors that are punishable by a fine, upon conviction, of up to \$2500. Property owners that are convicted of violations are also required by law to abate the cited violation.

Unsafe Buildings and Structures

The Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code also authorizes the County to condemn any building or structure that is unsafe. Examples of unsafe buildings include:

- buildings that are vacant and open at door and window,
- buildings that are a threat to collapse due to structural failure,
- buildings that are occupied with no means of sewage disposal, and
- buildings with exposed electrical wires that may shock occupants or start a fire.

Unsafe buildings cannot be occupied unless such occupancy is specifically approved by the Department of Building Construction & Inspections. The Department is authorized to repair, demolish or secure these buildings if the work is not performed by the property owner. The property owner is charged for any work that is performed by the Department. Any unpaid charges are collected by the County in the same manner as taxes.

The Graffiti Ordinance

Section 10-1 of the Henrico County Code authorizes the Department of Building Construction & Inspections to remove graffiti from privately owned buildings, walls, fences and similar structures when the graffiti can be seen from a public road or street. The County will request the permission of the property owner prior to removing the graffiti and the County does not charge the owner for this service.

Drug Blight & Bawdy Places

Sections 10-2 and 10-4 of the Henrico County Code allow the Chief of Police to request the Department of Building Construction & Inspections to repair or demolish buildings or structures that are being used for illegal drug activities or for prostitution. The Chief of Police can file this request with the Department of Building Construction & Inspections only after criminal enforcement actions have failed to eliminate the illegal activities.

Volunteers are Welcome!

Violations are occasionally found on properties that are owned by residents that are unable to abate the violations for financial or physical reasons. These residents need a helping hand with maintaining their properties. The Henrico County Community Maintenance Program within the Planning Department organizes volunteer efforts to assist these needy citizens. Please call the Community Maintenance Program at 672-4757 if you can volunteer your time and/or skills to assist residents that are unable to maintain the structural, electrical, mechanical and plumbing systems in their homes.

Related Property Concerns

Properties with Building Code violations frequently have violations of other County ordinances. If you call to report a building code violation please be prepared to advise our staff if the following other concerns exist on the property:

- Are there any tall grass or weeds on the property?
- Are there any inoperable or unlicensed vehicles or trailers on the property?
- Have you seen any evidence of rats on the property?
- Does the property have any trash, garbage or litter that is not covered or stored in covered, watertight containers?
- Is the property vacant or occupied?

Providing this information will better prepare the inspector to properly resolve all concerns on the property.

Online Services

- Inspection Scheduling / Plan Review Status

Contact Information

Department of Building Construction and Inspections

Mailing Address:  
P.O. Box 90775  
Henrico, VA 23273-0775

Physical Address:  
4301 East Parham Road  
Henrico, VA 23228

Phone: (804) 501-4360  
Fax: (804) 501-4984

Automated Permit System:  
(804) 755-4300

Questions & Contact Information

Personnel List