



City of Slidell

Department of Cultural & Public Affairs • For Immediate Release

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PRESS RELEASE

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City of Slidell Stepping Up Code Enforcement 57 Notices of Violation Issued



Today, the City of Slidell has taken an aggressive, proactive stance against property owners who are in violation of the city's Code of Ordinances. Going door-to-door in the Sun Valley neighborhood off of Ponchartrain Drive, officials issued 57 notices of violations with a total of 63 infractions that were in plain sight, including high grass, trash, litter and inoperable cars. Some properties had multiple violations.

Property owners who received notices will have 15 days to bring the violation(s) into compliance, at which time code enforcers will follow-up to ensure that improvements have been made. Owners who fail to make progress will receive a summons to appear in court in front of a judge and can be punished by a fine of \$500.00 or imprisonment for a term of six months. Unlike other cities which require their police to issue summons, Slidell's inspectors actually have the ability to write court summons, saving the city both time and money.

According to Eric Giroir, Director of Building Safety, "We are urging our residents to comply with the city's adopted property codes. Please take note of the condition of your property and clean it up." Giroir has been with the department for 29 years and has seen the number of violations steadily increase. Since January 2009, the department has investigated 400 cases, many of which start with a call or letter from a neighbor who complains about a property. Officials are then dispatched within 24 to 48 hours to verify the complaint and are tasked with contacting the property owner and getting the violation into compliance. This year, only 15 cases have been issued summons for failure to act.

“This is only the first neighborhood of our city-wide sweep,” added Giroir. “We are starting with south of the city and working our way north. It is our goal to hit every neighborhood in Slidell.

“We want a clean city,” said Mayor Ben Morris. “We plan to proactively enforce the city’s current property ordinances and where necessary, make our codes tougher so our neighborhoods are clean and property values remain high.”

“Many of the calls I receive are about tall grass,” said Slidell City Councilman Lionel Hicks, who is in favor of adopting stronger ordinances so that quality of life remains strong in Slidell. According to the current property ordinance, for owners who fail to cut and remove weeds, grass, trash, debris or garbage, the city may order an authorized agent to cut and clear property at the expense of the owners. “Many people have rebuilt their homes after the storms. They have nice yards. They don’t want to have a property next to them with high grass, trash and garbage.”

If you would like to report a property that is in violation, you can call 985-646-4324 or fill out a Complaint Investigation Report online, www.slidell.la.us.

Are you breaking the law?

Here are 10 of the most common code and ordinance violations that are occurring:

- 1. Animal nuisance.** Dogs and cats cannot be or cause a nuisance. This includes damaging, soiling and defecating on property other than its owner's; continuous barking for 15 minutes; turning over garbage containers; interfering with people on private or public property; chasing vehicles or bicycles or attacking other animals.
- 2. Inoperable cars.** It is unlawful to abandon, store, leave, place or park any motor vehicle or parts of vehicles, machinery, furniture, household goods and appliances that are inoperable, scrapped, discarded or junked, upon any public street, highway or public property of the city.
- 3. Trash and debris in yards.** Motor vehicles, parts of vehicles, machinery, furniture, household goods, junk lumber, junk building materials and broken or discarded household appliances cannot be stored in your yard in plain sight.
- 4. Blowing grass clippings into drains or streets.** It is unlawful to sweep litter, grass clippings or leaves into gutters, drains or streets. Property must be free of litter, including sidewalks, alleys, parking alleys and gutters.
- 5. Overgrown grass.** Property owners must cut and remove weeds, grass and underbrush exceeding 12 inches.
- 6. Leaving trash cans on the street after garbage pickup.** Emptied garbage cans must be removed from the street right-of-way by noon on the day following that collection day. Failure shall be considered littering.
- 7. Basketball goals located in the street right-of-way.** It shall be unlawful to place any obstruction in city rights-of-way.
- 8. Parking recreational vehicles, boats or trailers.** In general, it is not permissible to park a recreational vehicle, boat or trailer whose length exceeds 20 feet or height exceeds seven feet

from the ground level to the top of the vehicle in all residential zones.

9. **Cars for Sale.** You cannot park a motor vehicle, trailer or watercraft on public or private property to display for sale unless the property is zoned for that type of business.
10. **Cars parked in the grass or yard rather than on the driveway.** Parking spaces, driveways and travel lanes on any lot shall be hard-surfaced with either concrete or asphalt.

Cutline: Ryan Bourque, a city code enforcer, writes a notice of violation for tall grass and garbage.



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