



Property Maintenance Code Enforcement Programs

Department Of Buildings & Inspections
and Law Department's Quality of Life Team

February 30th, 2024

Overview:

- Mission and Purpose of Code Enforcement
- Operational Overview of Code Enforcement
- Recent Initiatives
- Enforcement Escalation Procedures and Examples

Code Enforcement- Mission

- To protect the health, safety, and quality of life of the public by assisting citizens with construction and land use code compliance, elimination of blight and building safety hazards, and promoting new development and renovation through excellent customer service, education, and fair and equitable enforcement.

Nearly all Code Enforcement work is “Complaint Driven”

Code Enforcement Customer Service Requests CSR

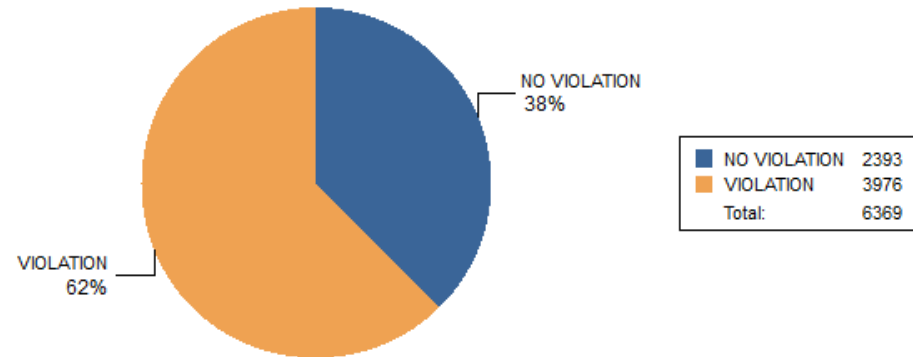
*6000 CSRs per Year

*Does not include weeds and litter

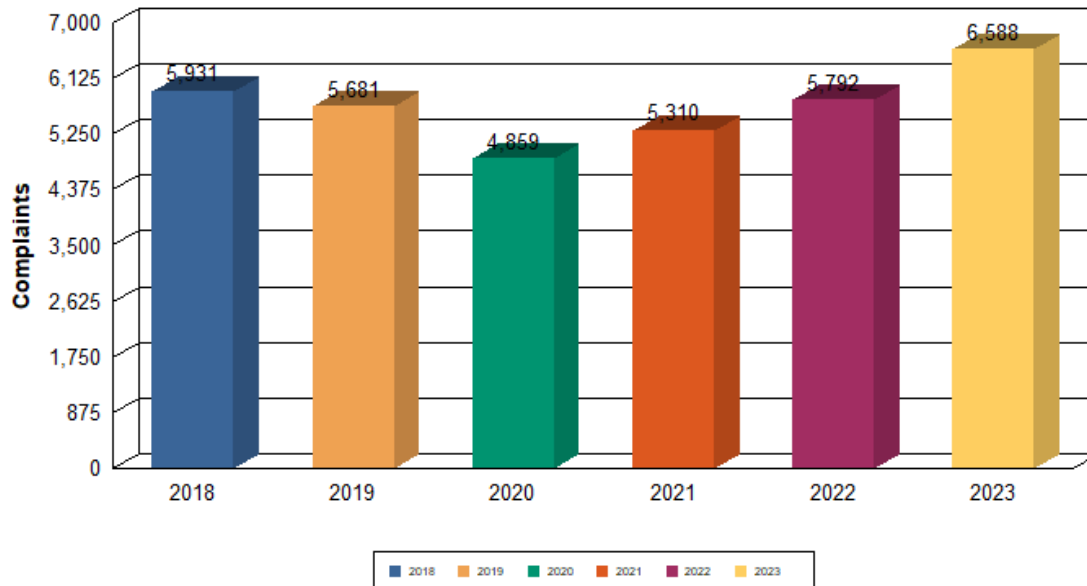
62% Result in Violations

38% No Violations Result

Percent of Complaints Resulting in Orders



Citizen Property Maintenance Complaints by Year



Code Enforcement - 2023

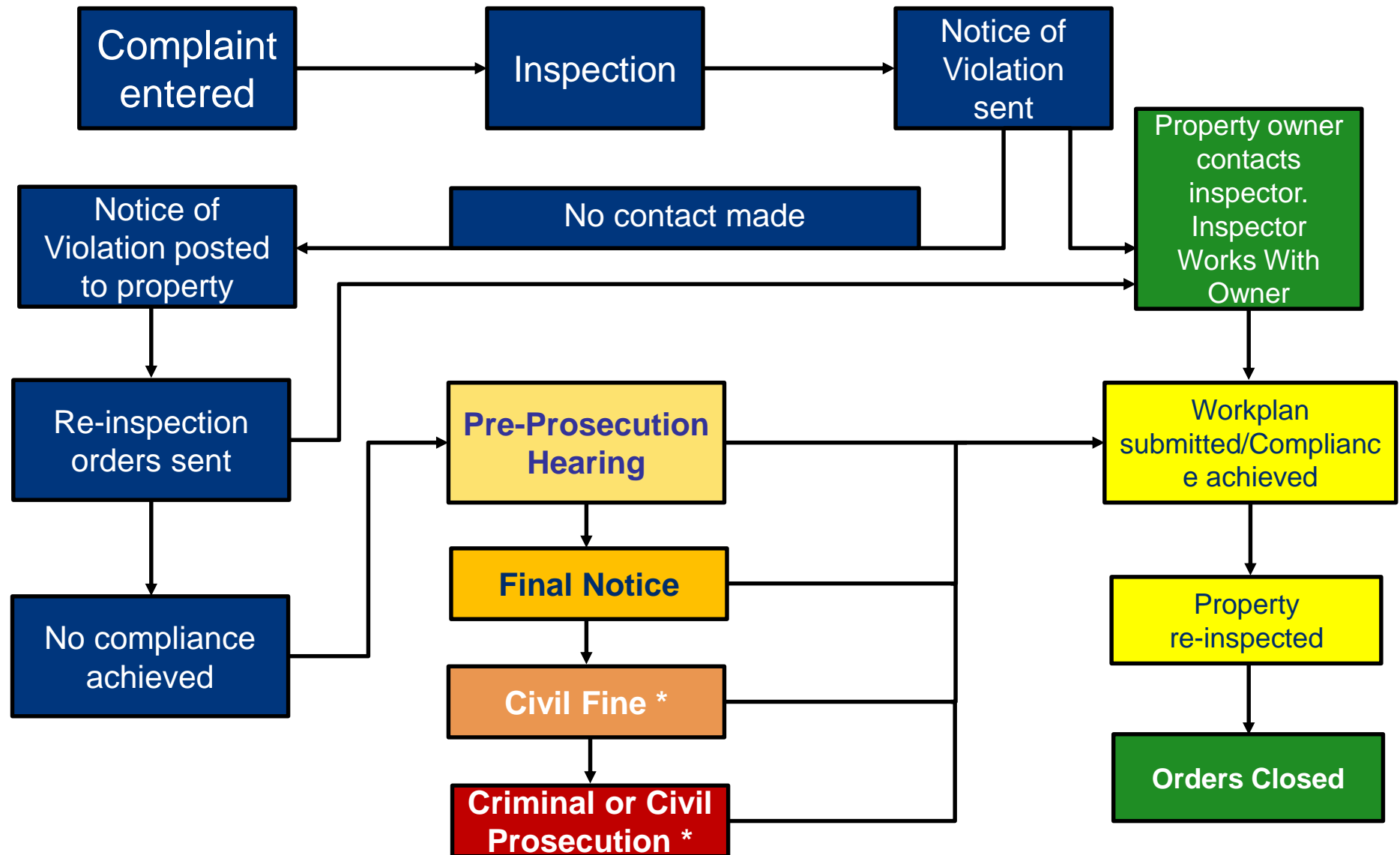
- Code Enforcement Inspections 2023 = 46,626
- Orders Issued = 4,571
- Violations = 14,802
- Cases Closed With Compliance= 3,993
- Violations Closed With Compliance = 10,216
- Est. Value of work completed \$14,998,350
- Est. Average Cost per Violation \$2,088
- Est Median Cost per Violation \$375.

What is Code Enforcement?

MUCH OF THE CODE ENFORCER'S WORK INVOLVES:

- Educate and coach the citizen on the code requirements and why the requirement exists.
- Working with owners to develop and implement a work plan that leads to compliance
- Assisting owners in solving code compliance problems and causes
- Change behavior from non-compliant to pro-active
- Persuading an owner to spend money on work they do not necessarily want to perform.

Code Enforcement Process











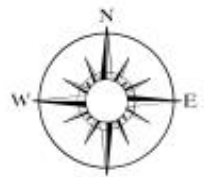
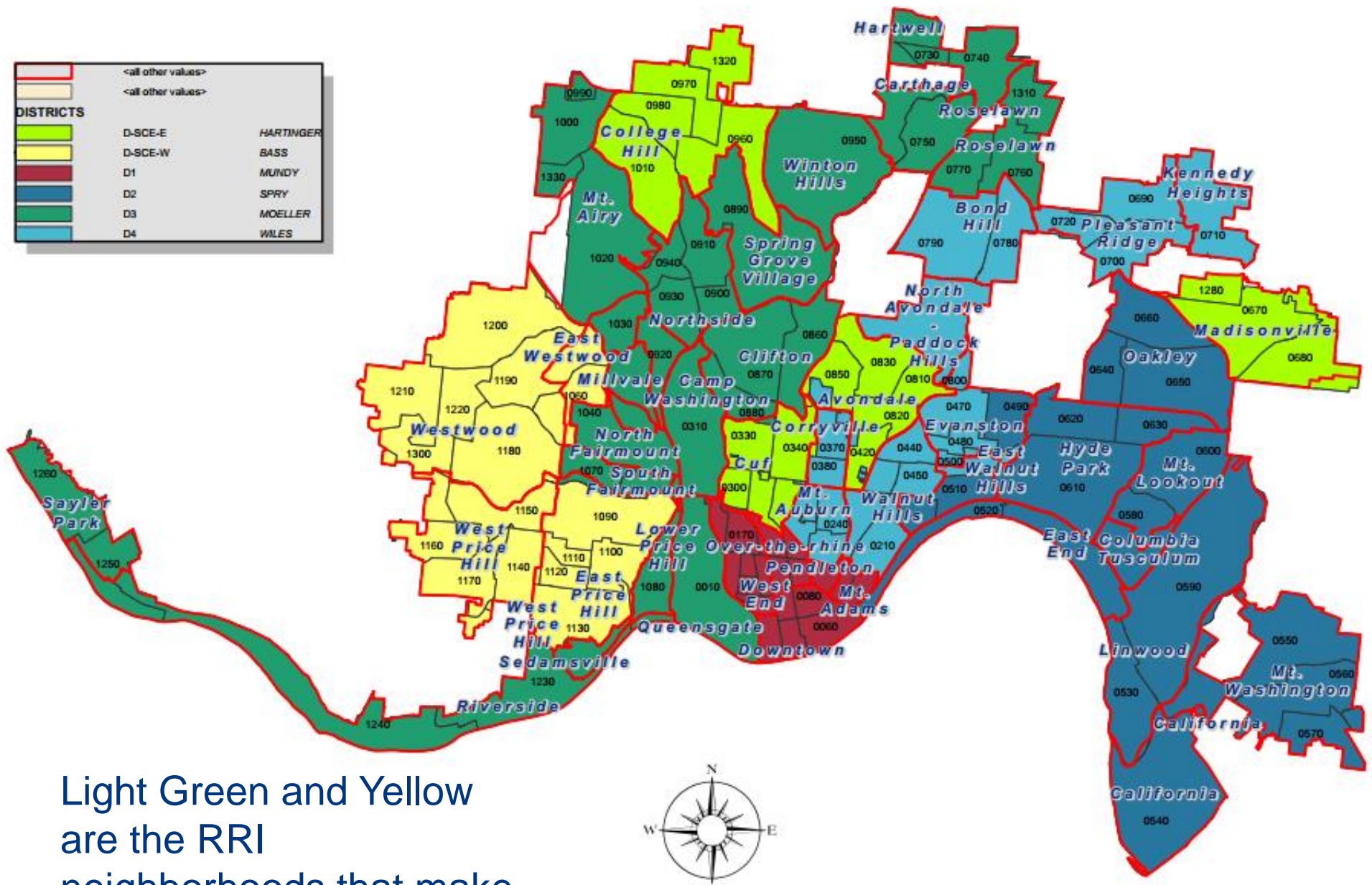
* For owner occupied properties, this step does not occur without prior approval from Director and Law Dept. Quality of Life Team.

Code Enforcement Staffing

B&I will be operating with > 30% reduced inspections staffing for the next 10 to 12 months. The Building Inspection Academy classes started on February 26th, for over 20 trainees. This group will restore our capacity upon graduation near the end of 2024.

- Inspectors handle a variety of tasks in a more compact section of a neighborhood including Code Enforcement, Building Permit Construction Inspections, Weed and Litter (PLAP) and related duties. Case loads average 476 cases (active permits & orders) per. Inspector
- In anticipation of the launch of the expanded Residential Rental Inspections Program (RRI), the Inspection Districts have been reconfigured to align with the added RRI focus neighborhoods.
- Likewise, two Strategic Code Enforcement (SCE) work units (East & West Side) have also been formed to expand RRI and handle SCE Cases. Currently, SCE inspectors are handling all duties except PLAP in their assigned area.
- By the 1st of 2025 the SCE will be deployed citywide as an overlay to handle the most difficult cases and fully implement t

	<all other values>	
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DISTRICTS		
	D-SCE-E	HARTINGER
	D-SCE-W	BASS
	D1	MUNDY
	D2	SPRY
	D3	MOELLER
	D4	WILES



Light Green and Yellow are the RRI neighborhoods that make up the two SCE Districts.

Supervisor's Role

- **Inspectors are Assigned by District Supervisor**– There are normally 6 to 8 inspectors per district.
- **Each Crew District has a Supervisor**- An inspection district will comprise a number of neighborhoods. 2 New Districts were formed in 2024 to conduct Strategic Code Enforcement and the recently expanded Residential Rental Inspections Program
- **Review Inspector Recommendations** – Supervisors review and approve every enforcement action for consistency, fairness, and accuracy.
- **Conduct Quality Control Follow-up**– Supervisors conduct quality control inspections behind inspectors to improve customer service delivery, consistency, and quality.
- **Respond to Citizen Concerns**- Supervisors are a resource for neighborhood groups and citizens with concerns or questions. We schedule a supervisor to answer citizen questions during the entire business day.

Recent Initiatives to Improve Code Enforcement Outcomes

Staffing

- **Housing Services Coordinator** - Full time social worker added to staff to perform community outreach with struggling owners and tenants.
- **Building Inspector Academy** - Launched new academy to train inspectors completely in-house. Will allow us to diversify inspection staff to better reflect the communities served, instill good interpersonal communication and customer service skills, and ensure all new inspectors are fully trained with required technical skills. Will alleviate critical staffing shortages in department.
- **New Strategic Code Enforcement Teams** - To enforce the expanded Residential Rental Program and specialize in strategic enforcement methods working with QC'

Recent Initiatives to Improve Code Enforcement Outcomes

Funding

- **Home Repair (HARBOR and Emergency Home Repair) –**
The department is now managing two home repair programs—deploying over \$2 million per year and now better able to connect struggling homeowners with resources.
- **Stabilization Funding –** Added flexibility to use demolition funds for stabilization activities, to preserve housing where possible to facilitate redevelopment.
- **Additional “Carrot” Programs Under Development –**
Continued internal and external collaboration to stand up additional new programs to offer homeowners and small landlords financing options for repair of existing

Recent Initiatives to Improve Code Enforcement Outcomes

Operations

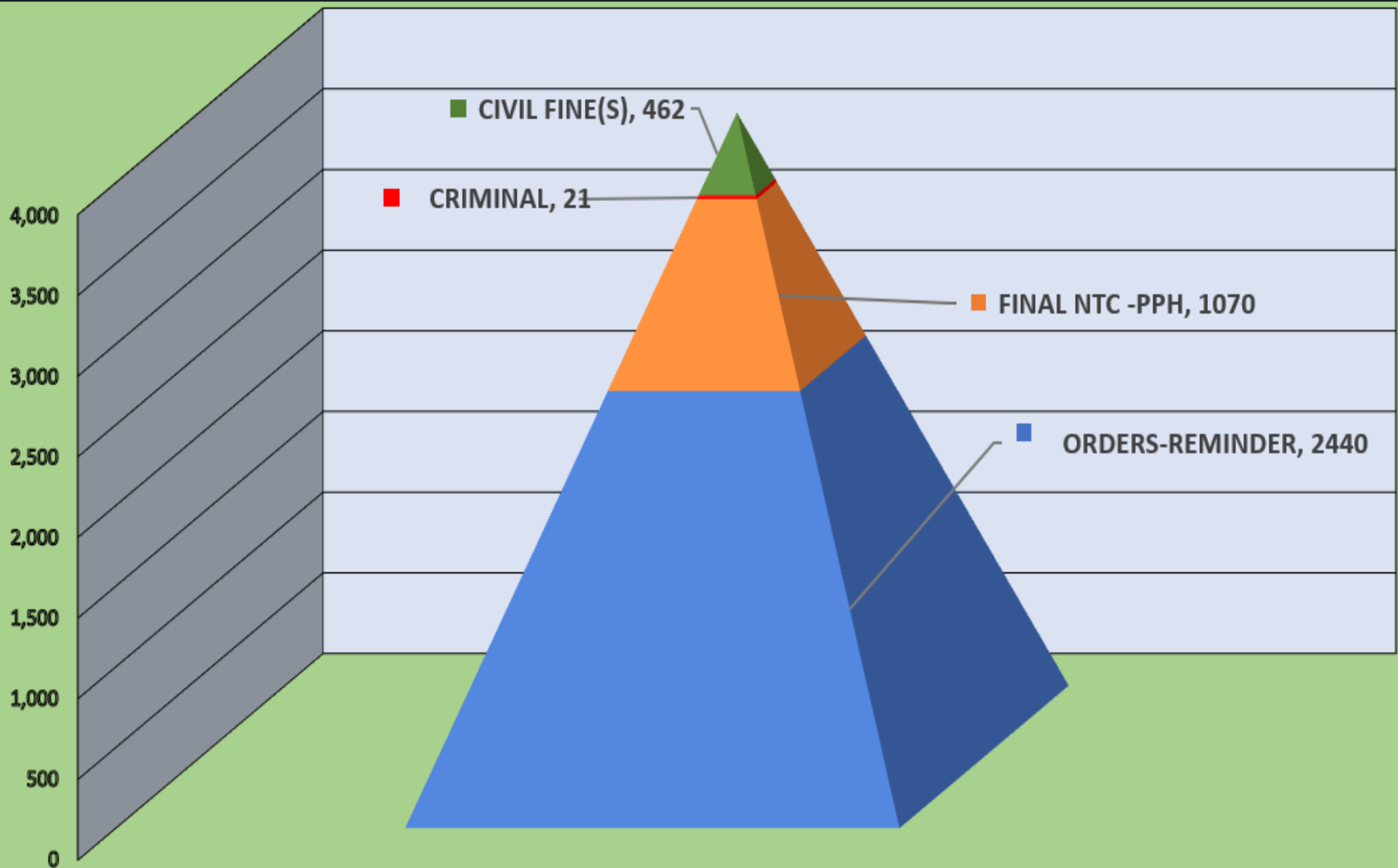
- **Landlord Training-** The Department has provided this training to over 500 housing providers at no charge. The training is to improve practices and keep illegal activity out of rental property.
- **Criminal Complaint Filing Review-** The procedure was expanded to require review and sign off by the Inspector, the Supervisor, the Department Director, and an Attorney from the QOL team to ensure consistency and appropriateness of each case.
- **Department Newsletter-** The Department will issue it's first newsletter this spring to open communication with the public and keep our communities informed of our programs, activities and tips for gaining code co

If the inspector's efforts toward voluntary compliance are unsuccessful- Punitive action, such as Civil or Criminal Prosecution, are the last options available.

- The Law Department Quality of Life (QOL) team meets with our staff monthly.
- For chronic high-volume offenders, Civil legal remedies are used to change behavior.
- An Administrative Civil Citation is \$750.00 for the first offense and \$1250.00 for each subsequent offense.
- Criminal Charges, a last resort, get an extensive review by the Supervisor, Director, and QOL Team before filing. The penalty if convicted is up to 6 months incarceration and/or \$1000.00 fine.

Significant resources are used to address a smaller percentage of chronic

FINAL ENFORCEMENT ACTION NECESSARY PRIOR TO CASE BEING CLOSED IN 2023



CHRONIC OFFENDER BEHAVIOR EXAMPLES

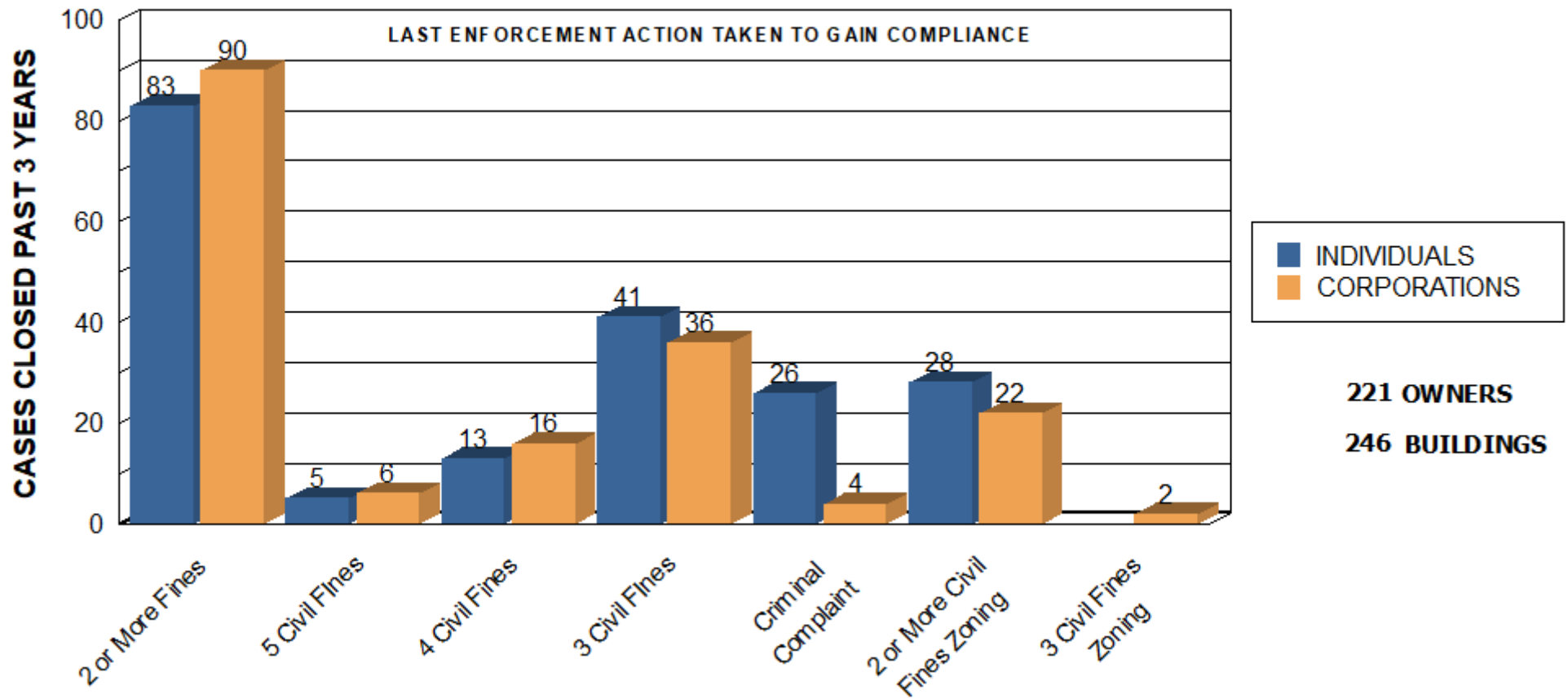
- **The Large Absentee Corporate Owner**
- **Rule Defiant Small Landlord**
- **Investment Portfolio Property Manager**
- **Land & Building Speculator**

CHRONIC OFFENDER BEHAVIOR EXAMPLES

The worst offenders make up approximately 3 to 5% of the caseload but require an inordinately large amount of staff time and effort to

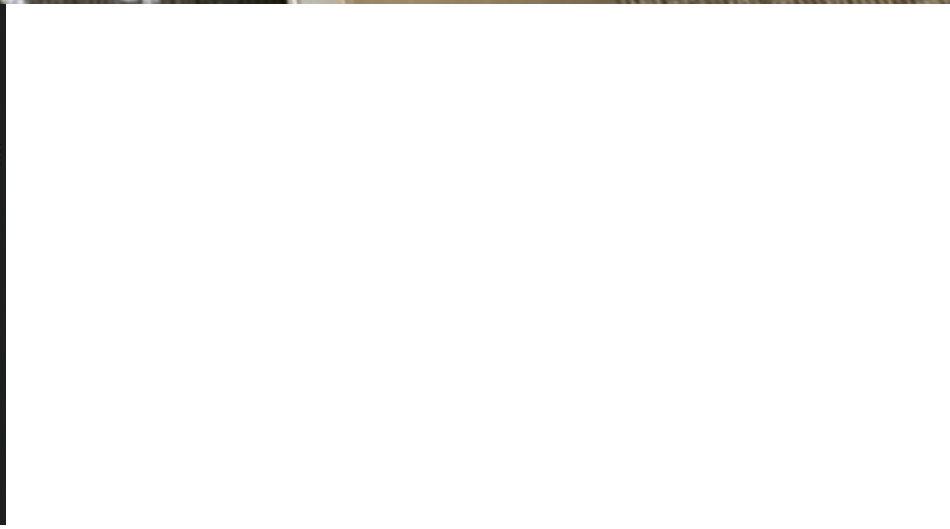
remedy

CHRONIC OFFENDERS 2 OR MORE FINES OR CRIMINAL



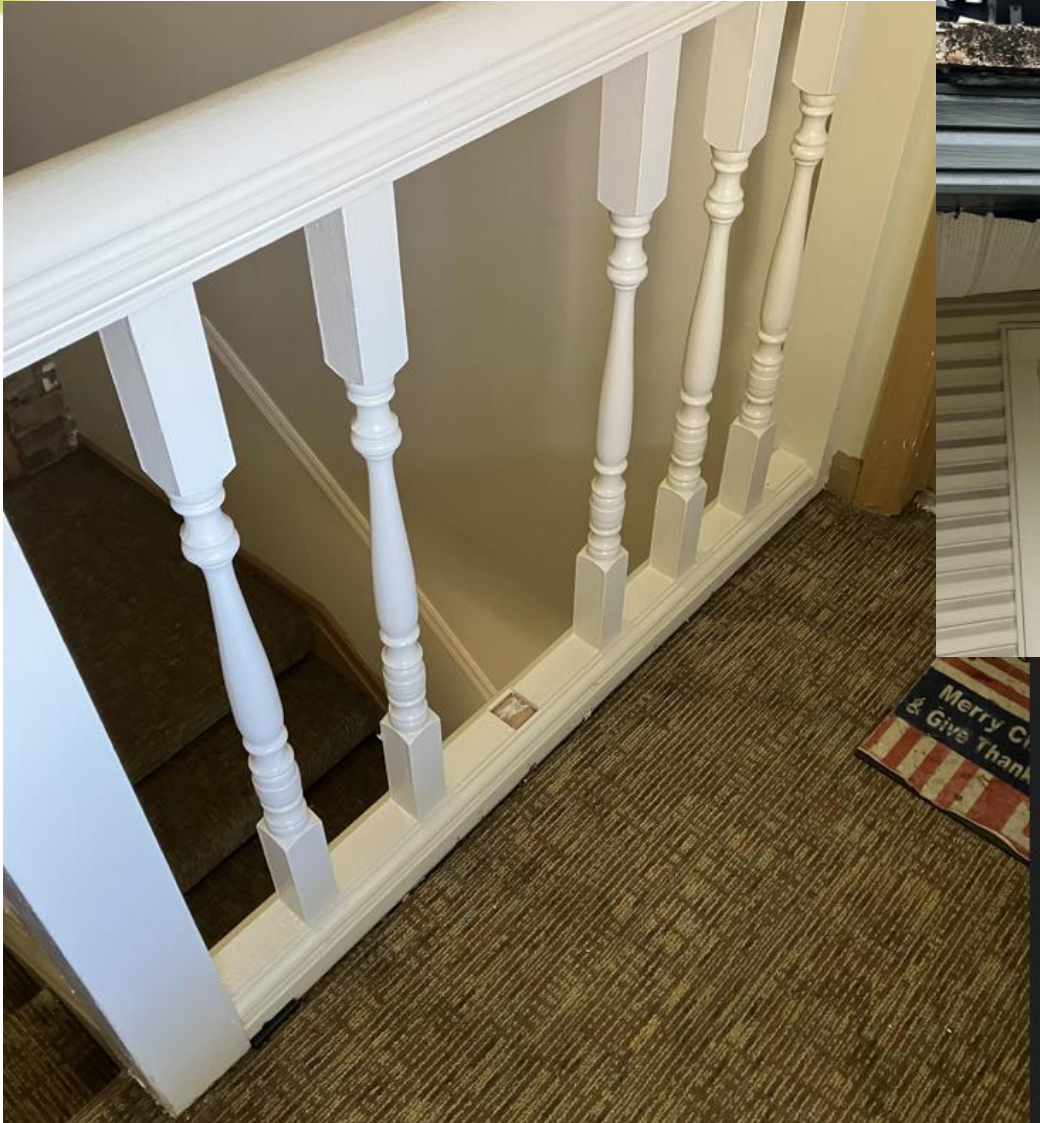
The Large Absentee Corporate Owner

- This type of ownership is headquartered out of town and acquire larger multi-family properties that are often heavily mortgaged.
- Rely upon overextended employees or a local management company to operate
- Rent revenue is diverted to profits to attract investors, pay debt service, or expand the portfolio at the expense of local property maintenance, management, and improvement
- Remotely located corporation provides little oversight and cycle through local management firms
- Turnover in management and under funded operations lead to a chaotic environment and unabated code violations.









Rule Defiant Small Landlord

- Undercapitalized and looking for ways to cut corners
- Against the concept of codes and building regulations in general
- Housing purchased at low cost from distress sales
- Make repairs without permits and oversight
- Moves tenants into units unfit and uninspected
- Poorly trained lacking property management/ maintenance skills. Refuses to learn or change
- The poorly managed homes are often fire and safety hazards.



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Longitude: W 84,33; 782 Latitude: N 39; 7,4



Longitude: W 84,33; 760 Lat

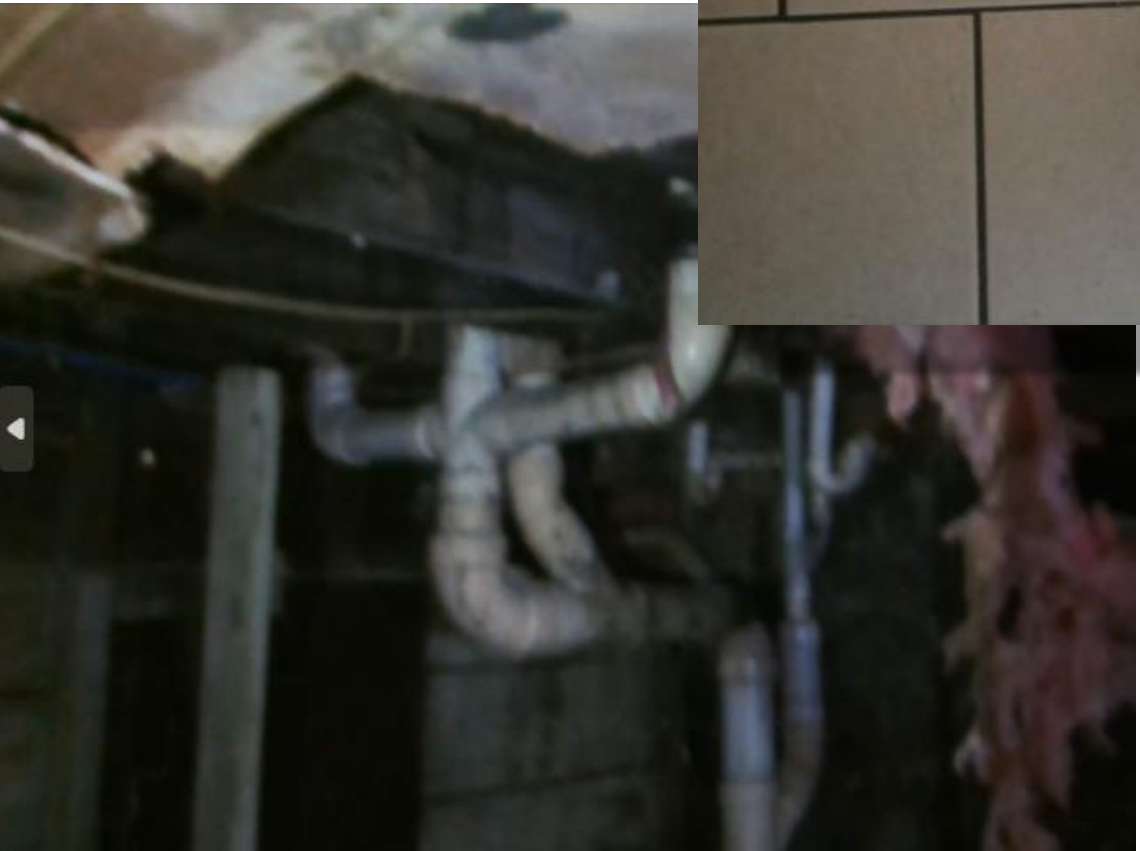


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Investment Portfolio Property Manager

- Manage for other investors a “pool” of properties
- Often scattered single family or small multifamily housing
- Primary motivation is paying dividends to investors and acquiring more property
- Often the single-family homes are scattered and more costly to maintain. Often do not obtain required permits
- Often buy “starter” homes traditionally intended for purchase as owner-occupied removing and converted to rental property
- If enough homes are obtained in an area, the corporation can reduce competition and drive-up rents







Land and Building Speculator

- Purchase vacant property in a transitioning area to simply hold the property and do nothing to improve it.
- Waits for value to increase by virtue of the investment of others on the street and surrounding neighborhood.
- Once the neglected property is last on the block depreciating value, speculators then profit by selling to nearby developers motivated to buy and abate the blight to protect their investment.
- Profits on the backs of surrounding property owners, and simply takes value out of a neighborhood already struggling to improve while doing nothing but allowing property to decline.
- Purchases vacant land at distress sale, will not pay property taxes, does not cut clean or cut weeds in hopes of selling it before it is foreclosed again

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Case Examples: 1833 Sycamore



Google Street view, September 2007

Case Examples: 1833 Sycamore



Case Examples: 1833 Sycamore



Case Examples: Colonial Village



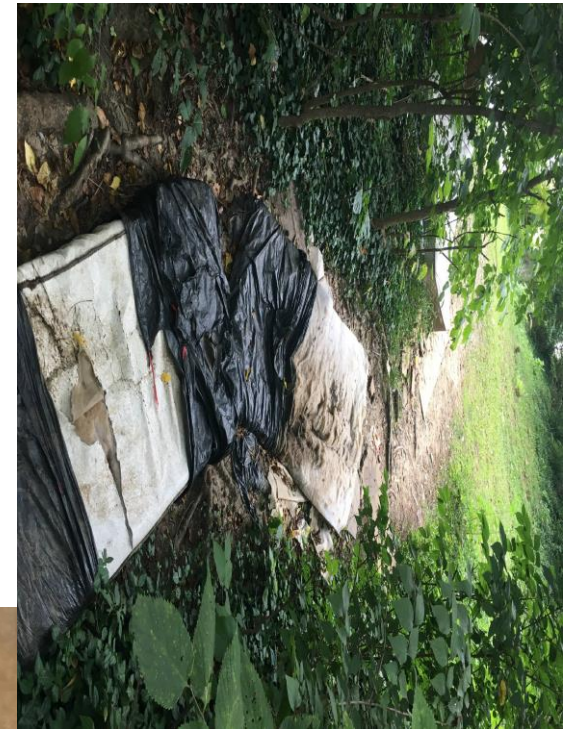
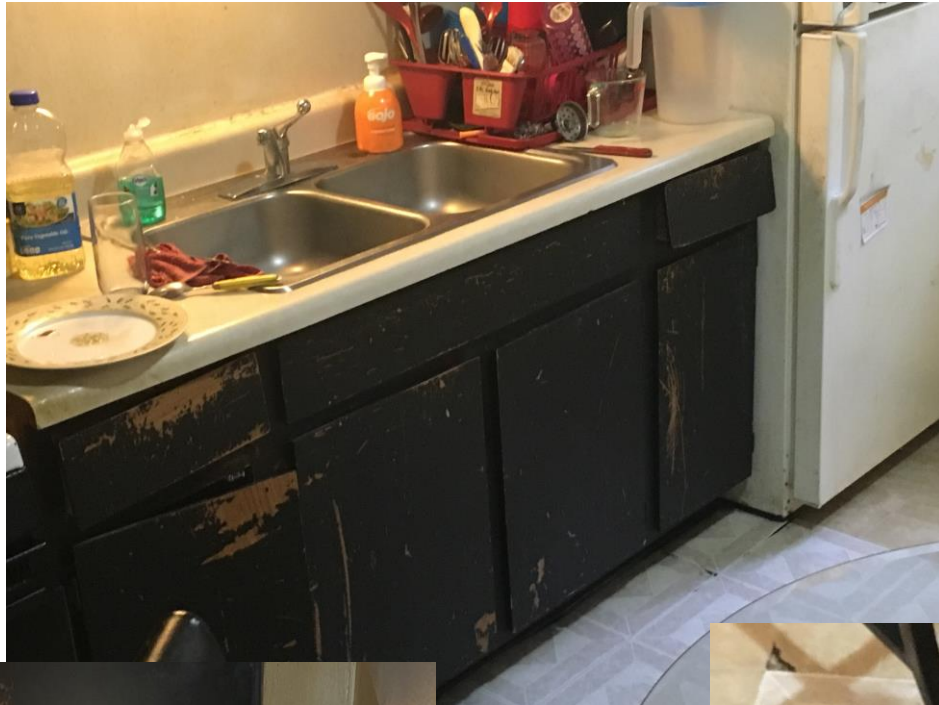
Only a month into 2014, Avondale had seen five fatal shootings, more than 2012 and 2013 combined. Two occurred on Irving Street. . . From November to February, Cincinnati police received 10 calls for shots fired or shootings on or near Irving, two of which were the homicides. . . .

Cincinnati Enquirer, July 5, 2014

In September 2020, three people were fatally shot in one of the units . . . Drug activity pervaded the property while the units' features fell into a deplorable state. Representatives from the Avondale Development Corporation found ceilings and walls caving in, sinks overflowing with sewage and black mold while conducting home visits to check on residents and investigate their living conditions.

WCPO.com, December 18, 2021

Case Examples: Colonial Village



Case Examples: Colonial Village

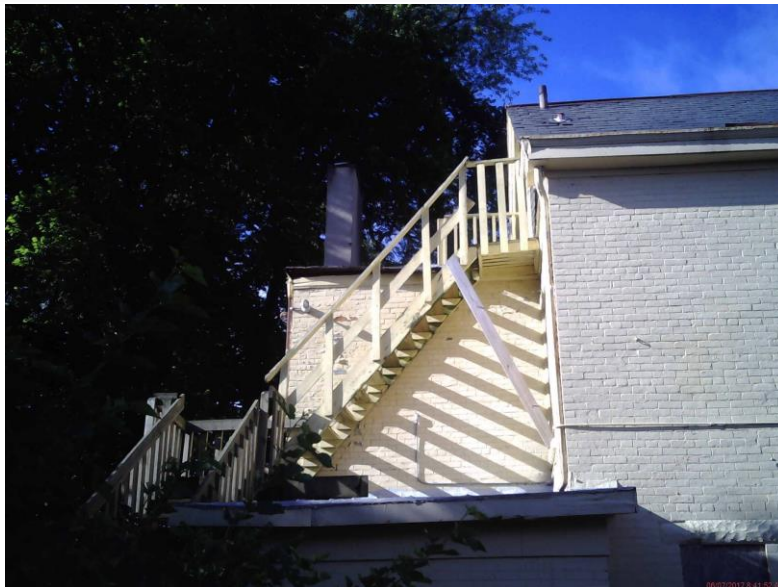


Case Examples: 4804 Whetsel Avenue



Google Street View, September
2011

Case Examples: 4804 Whetsel Avenue



Case Examples: 4804 Whetsel Avenue



Google Street View, September 2023

Case Examples: 702 Ridgeway Avenue



Google Street View, September 2007

Case Examples: 702 Ridgeway Avenue



Google Street View, May 2018

Thank you!
Questions?

Department of Buildings and Inspections