



# Inspections and Code

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John Hudgison, C.B.O., Assoc. AIA  
Director

February 21, 2018

Re: Property Maintenance Enforcement

One of the Department of Inspections & Code main objectives is to maintain code compliance to all existing structures, accessory buildings and all existing premises. We investigate complaints of minimum requirements and standards for premises, structures, equipment and facilities for light, ventilation, space, heating, sanitation, protection from the elements, life, safety, safety from fire and other hazards, and for safe and sanitary maintenance. All of these items are enforced in the Chapter 8 Article V of the Columbus Code, which references the International Code Council 2012 International Property Maintenance Code.

The Department has 311 and our direct office line to receive calls from citizens concerned about their standard of living. In just the past year, we received over 3,700 complaints that were investigated and proper action taken for compliance.

If a property is vacant, we issue a 45 day letter of compliance where inspectors are to be on site every month to continuously monitor the progress of the structure. If the property continues to deteriorate, cost of repairs are more than 50% of the assessed value of the building, a Demolition Hearing is held and we may declare it on the Demolition List and take to Council for demolition and a lien is then placed against the property for the services rendered.

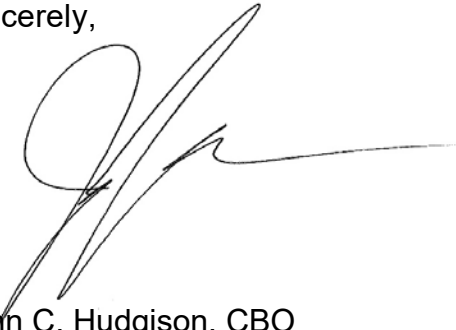
If the property is occupied, we ask the tenant placing the complaint to notify their management or maintenance staff first before we investigate. That gives the property owner time to make the necessary repairs. We separate the complaints into tiers:

**Tier I** – Issues that provide an immediate threat to life safety. Tenant is without gas, light, water, utility or significant structural damage to the property. Those complaints we ask the property owner to comply within 24-72 hours. If not in compliance, they are cited and a court date set.

**Tier II** – Issues that do not provide an immediate threat to life safety. Rotted Wood, Roof Leaks, Broken Windows that require time to repair and replace properly. Typically, these type of repairs may require a permit. 45 day letter is issued to the landlord and then inspected by Property Maintenance. If still not in compliance, they are cited and a court date set.

Our property maintenance inspectors are trained to be a neutral party and not to side with the tenant nor property owner in disputes. We investigate each case on its own merit and circumstances. When Inspections & Code inspectors go to a property they keep on hand a copy of the most recent Georgia Landlord Tenant Handbook which gives them more information on tenant and landlord rights. The Inspections & Code Department will continue to investigate complaints of tenants remaining in substandard living conditions and will enforce all local and state laws if applicable. If you have any other questions please feel free to contact our office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John C. Hudgison', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

John C. Hudgison, CBO

Building Inspections & Code Enforcement

Director