

Ordinance No.: _____
An Ordinance Requesting
Vacant/Abandoned Property Registration Ordinance

Where As, The City Council recognized a problem due to an increase in the number of vacant and abandoned properties located throughout the city, Specifically, the presence of vacant and abandoned commercial and residential properties.

Where As, The City understands that these conditions has lead to neighborhood decline, lower property values, revenue decline and unattractive public nuisances.

Where As, The City Council of the City of Prichard, Alabama hereby agree that the owners, lenders and trustees who has fail to adequately maintain and secure vacant/abandoned structures with ongoing code enforcement issues within the city shall abide by this Vacant/Abandoned structure registration Ordinance.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PRICHARD, as follows:

Section 1. Application of Article provisions.

The provisions of this article apply to all properties in the City.

Section 2. Property Maintenance Requirements.

This Ordinance requires owners of properties, banks, and other entities to notify the City of Prichard when a business is closed or property is foreclosed upon. Also, a requirement that the property undergo a thorough interior and exterior inspection to document conditions. Owner at that time will provide Information to City a local contact person who is to maintain the property, and to work with Inspection Department to correct code violation issues.

If property is not suitable for rehabilitation, owner is to give city a written statement of intent To when structure will be reasonably brought up to standard by repairs. This intent statement cannot exceed a 6 month period.

Section 3. Requirement for Registration of Abandoned/Vacant Property.

Any mortgagee who holds a mortgage on real property located within the city shall, If the property is found to be vacant or shows evidence of vacancy, it shall be deemed abandoned real property and the mortgagee shall, within ten (10) days of the inspection, register the property with the City of Prichard Inspection Department, or his or her designee, on forms provided by the city. A registration is required for each vacant property.

Registered abandoned/vacant properties shall remain under the registration requirement, security and maintenance standards of this Ordinance as long as they remain vacant. In the event of a change in the status of the property, including change in status from vacant to occupied, the person or corporation that has registered the property must report any change in writing, within ten (10) days of the change to the City of Prichard code enforcement manager, or his or her designee.

Registration pursuant to this section of the Code shall contain the name of the mortgagee, the direct mailing address of the mortgagee, a direct contact name and telephone number of the mortgagee, a facsimile number and e-mail address for the mortgagee, and the name and

twenty-four (24) hour contact phone number of the property management company responsible for the security and maintenance of the property.

Section 4. Properties Vacant over 3 months

Any properties that is vacant for three months will pay a non-refundable registration fee in the amount of \$200.00 per property, shall accompany the registration form(s). This fee will be an annual registration until property is occupied.

Section 5. Posting of the Abandoned Property with Contact Information.

At such time that the property becomes abandoned/vacant property, the mortgagee shall promptly post it with the name and contact number of the local property manager. The posting shall be no less than 18 inches X 24 inches, and shall be clearly visible and legible from an adjacent street. The posting shall contain the following language: THIS PROPERTY IS MANAGED BY: _____. TO REPORT PROBLEMS OR CONCERNS, CALL: (XXX) XXX-XXXX.

Section 6. Penalties and Schedule of Civil Penalties.

Failure of the mortgagee and/or property owner of record to properly maintain the property with all applicable code provisions may result in a violation of the city code and issuance of a civil violation ticket, citation or notice of violation/notice of hearing by a city code enforcement officer. Pursuant to a finding and determination by the city's Special Magistrate, the city may take the necessary action to ensure compliance with this section of the Ordinance.

Section 7. Database for Abandoned/Vacant Properties.

The City of Prichard will maintain a database to track the location of vacant/abandoned properties as well as complaints and responses.

Section 8. That this ordinance shall become effective immediately upon its adoption and publications as required by law.

Section 9. Each Business owner in our commercial districts are required to have an annual pre-fire, safety and structural integrity inspection. These inspections will begin in the month of January. All vacant or abandoned buildings will be inspected first. As this is a requirement of this ordinance, any failures to allow access to any property will be considered a violation and will result in a citations being issued.

Section 9A. Any violations that are discovered during the inspection processed will be documented. To avoid citations being written, those violation must be abated within the time frame allowed on the documentation provided during the inspection.

Discussions about the need for such a program began late last year when city councilors approved a permit authorizing demolition of the former S.H. Kress Building. AIM meetings spurred debate about how to improve the city's curb appeal and residents' desire "to be known as an exceptionally beautiful community."

City councilors determined the "presence of vacant, abandoned or dilapidated structures creates blight." Areas where blight is found often "lowers property values, leads to deteriorated conditions, undermines the quality of life, affects the public health, safety and welfare, and also results in human injury and criminal activities."

Growing Food in Philadelphia: Some Basics on Building Codes and Permits

BUILDING CODES

What are building codes for? What do they cover?

Building Codes are used to ensure minimum standards for safety of occupants and the protection of life and property from avoidable hazards such as fires or structural failures. They address all aspects of new construction and remodeling. Codes have been written and refined by committees over decades and carry the weight of law when adopted by state, county, and city government. In Philadelphia, the building code is based on the model rules of the International Code Council.

What code governs buildings in Philadelphia?

Title 4 of The Philadelphia Code (The Philadelphia Building Construction and Occupancy Code) governs building sites, construction, alteration, addition, repair abatement, removal, demolition, location, occupancy and maintenance of all buildings, structures and building service equipment within the City of Philadelphia.

Is this important for an urban gardener or farmer?

If you are planning on constructing anything in your garden or farm, or if you currently have structures, you should be familiar with the specific building code governing your specific structures. You'll want to make sure all existing or planned structures are in line with the requirements of The Philadelphia Code. Such structures may fit into the following Code categories:

Roof Gardens (see Section B-1504 of Title 4)