

Code Enforcement Department – State of the City 2022

The Code Enforcement Department strives to fairly and efficiently enforce and uphold the Codes and Ordinances while protecting the public health, safety, and welfare of our residents, businesses, owners, and visitors. The City of Wilmington accepts complaints from citizens as well as other local departments and agencies regarding violations of the City’s Property Maintenance and Zoning Codes. The department then investigates each complaint and determines a course of action.

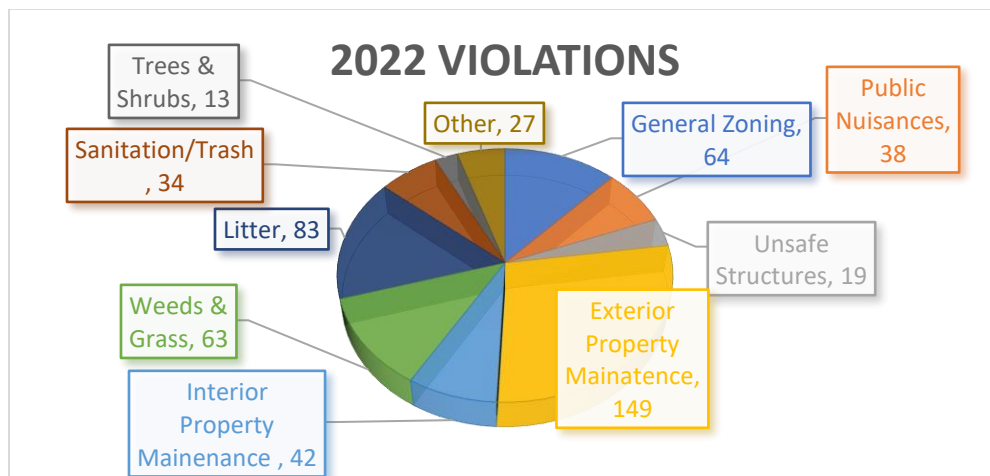
Cases and Violations

The number of new violations decreased this year from 592 to 532. Those 532 violations resulted in 382 new cases being opened with some cases consisting of multiple violations at one address. The chart below shows a breakdown of all current open cases from 2016 to present. A lot of time and effort has been put forth this year in respect to record keeping and case organization. While more cases were open in 2022 than in previous years, the use of warning notices in some instances prior to opening violations has been very successful.

Code Enforcement Case Load (YTD 12/15/2022)	
Code Enforcement Cases Opened 2022	382
Code Enforcement Cases Opened 2021	263
Closed Cases 2022	260
Open Remaining Cases from 2021	23
Open Remaining Cases from 2020	10
Open Remaining Cases from 2019	1
Open Remaining Cases from 2018	6
Open Remaining Cases from 2017	3
Open Remaining Cases from 2016	1
Total Open Cases (As of 12/15/2022)	178

Violations of the zoning and property maintenance codes are addressed by issuing warnings or formal violation notices (depending on the type and severity of violations) and working with the property owner and/or tenants to bring their property into compliance within a specified time frame. If property owners are not compliant, the cases are then turned over to the City Prosecutor and criminal charges are filed in Municipal Court.

This department handles a variety of violations regarding exterior property maintenance, junk vehicles, litter, grass and weeds, infestations, interior property issues, and other property issues. Below is a chart of the various violations opened in 2022.



Court Action

When property owners fail to comply with City Ordinances, it becomes necessary to file criminal zoning charges in Municipal Court. Five cases were filed in 2022, and all of those cases are still pending in court. This department reserves filing criminal charges as a last resort after all efforts to achieve compliance have been exhausted.

Special Projects

Continuing the work from 2021, the “Clean-Up Wilmington” program started by this department has continued to address littering, dumping and other blight, while working with other departments, agencies, donors, and volunteers.

Clean-Up Wilmington- 2022 Volunteer Stats



Collaboration and Community Support

This year the Code Enforcement Department has been privileged to collaborate with several City and County Departments, as well as individual project donors, and volunteers:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clinton County Regional Planning/ Land Bank (Taylor Stuckert & Ellen Sizer)• Clinton County Juvenile Court Community Service Program (Chad Mason)• Clinton County Solid Waste and Recycling District (Jeff Walls & Erin Hartsock)• Clinton County Prosecutor’s Office (Justin Dickman & staff)• Clinton County Treasurer’s Office (Kyle Rudduck & staff)• City Prosecutor’s Office (David Henry & Jane Horne)• Clinton County Dog Warden (Rex Doak)• Wilmington Police & Communications Department• Wilmington Fire Department | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wilmington Sanitation Department• Wilmington Street Department• Sugartree Landscaping (Lee Sandlin & Crew)• Sugartree Ministry Center• Main Street Wilmington• Clean-Up Wilmington Volunteers• Amazon Air• Wilmington College (Michael Allbright & Chip Murdock)• Clinton County Visitor’s Bureau (Susan & Melissa)• Art House- (Andrew Conarroe)• TimberTech- Earth Day Experience• Alkermes – Alks in Action (Sonja Godfrey)• Kava Haus (Brad Hayes)• Danatos Pizza (Doug Devilbiss) |
|---|---|

Without the support of these departments, agencies, donors, and volunteers, this year's progress and success would not have been possible. A big thank you to all the willing volunteers who have participated in our clean-up activities, "Many hands make light work"!

Property Success Stories

Photos below depict several property cases that have been closed or are in the process of compliance. Originally these structures were all in poor condition on the interior as well as the exterior, but with renovations the side-by-side photos speak for themselves.

E. Vine Street- Owner was repeated non-complaint in regard to exterior and interior maintenance of the vacant house. Court case was filed and arraigned in November of 2021. Owner sold to an investor in March of 2022 and the new owner began renovations.



E. Truesdell Street- An active investigation by the City of Wilmington Police Department uncovered substantial issues inside this property. Tenants were evicted and the property owner has started interior and exterior renovations to correct all violations.



N. Spring Street- Owner and tenants had ongoing issues with sanitation and litter. The home was abandoned and foreclosure proceedings began. The home was sold to a third party at a Sheriff's Sale and they have done extensive renovations on both the interior and exterior.



Lytle Place- The owner of this structure passed away and family members were inhabiting the home without electricity or running water. After the home became vacant, it was sold at Sheriff's Sale to a third party who completely renovated. This home then sold to a private owner over the summer.



Looking forward to continued success and collaboration in 2023.

Annen Vance, Code Enforcement Official