



Top Ten Blight Violations in the City of Detroit

- 1. Ordinance 9-1-36(a). Failure of Owner to Obtain Certificate of Compliance.** According to the property maintenance ordinance, all buildings and structures shall be required to have a certificate of compliance issued by the Buildings and Safety Engineering Department. This includes all buildings and structures required to be inspected pursuant to the Detroit City Code; and any part of a residential structure occupied pursuant to an oral or written rental contract or lease agreement for monetary compensation. This requirement shall not include one-family dwellings which are occupied by owner of the structure and the owner's immediate family and those portions of a two-family dwelling which are occupied by the owner and the owner's immediate family. *Commentary: All residential rental property and commercial structures must be inspected on an annual basis. Once inspection fees are paid an inspector conducts an inspection and issues a Correction Order. The Correction Order will indicate the needed repairs, if any, and a deadline for compliance. The Certificate of Compliance is provided after a re-inspection which shows the Correction Order has been complied with. Citations under 9-1-36 are written by Inspectors with the Building and Safety Engineering Department.*
- 2. Ordinance 9-1-81 (a). Failure to Register Rental Property.** The owners or agents of rental property shall register all rental dwellings with the Buildings and Safety Engineering Department and obtain a certificate of registration. Certificates of registration of a rental property shall be renewed annually on the date established by the Buildings Safety Engineering and Environmental Department. *Commentary: All residential rental property in the City of Detroit must be registered with the Buildings and Safety Engineering Department. There is no fee for registration. Citations under 9-1-81 (a) are written by Inspectors with the Buildings and Safety Engineering Department.*
- 3. Ordinance 9-1-104. Excessive Weeds and Plant Growth.** All premises and exterior property shall be maintained free from weeds or plant growth in excess of eight (8) inches and from all noxious weeds. For purposes of this section, weeds and plant growth shall include all grasses, annual plants and vegetation other than trees or shrubs, but does not include plant growth in exterior areas where flowers and gardens are maintained and cultivated. *Commentary: The most common violations of this ordinance occur along the fence line at the rear of the subject property. Citations under 9-1-104 are most often written by Department of Public Works Inspectors and Police Officers.*
- 4. Ordinance 22-2-88(b). Allowing Bulk Solid Waste to Lie or Accumulate.** Bulk solid waste or any discernible amount of medical or hazardous waste allowed to remain or accumulate on or about the premises, its sidewalks, and adjoining public property shall be considered illegal dumping. Under 22-2-88(a) the ordinance indicates that it shall be the duty of the owner of record of any vacant or occupied property to keep such premises, its sidewalks, and all adjoining public property between the center of the street and one-half (1/2) of an alley, free of solid waste, medical waste, and hazardous waste at all times. *Commentary: This section makes it illegal to store solid waste on your property. Even if the property was illegally dumped by someone else, leaving solid waste on the property could result in a violation for the property owner. Tickets can be issued if the bulk solid waste is in the street or on the berm in front of the property, in the alley behind, in the rear yard, or even in an open garage if the debris is visible from the street. Citations under 22-2-88b are most often written by Department of Public Works Inspectors and Police Officers.*
- 5. Ordinance 9-1-110(a). Inoperable Motor Vehicles.** It shall be unlawful to keep, park, or store inoperative or unlicensed motor vehicles on any premises or property, including any motor vehicle which is in a state of major disassembly, disrepair, or in the process of being stripped or dismantled, provided, that an individual may perform mechanical work on one (1) Motor vehicle on the premises or property as long as such work is performed inside a garage or other enclosed structure or area designed and approved for such purposes. *Commentary: Inoperable or unlicensed vehicles cannot be stored in a person's yard. Vehicles with an expired or with no plate may cause the property owners to be issued a citation. Citations under 9-1-110 are most often written by Department of Public Works Inspectors and Neighborhood Police Officers.*

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6. Ordinance 22-2-45. Violation of Time Limits for Containers to Remain at Curbside. Properly stored domestic solid waste shall be collected by the Department of Public Works. Owners and/or occupants of residential structures who receive curbside collection shall place approved containers on a berm area not earlier than 6:00 p.m. on the day before collection and shall remove the same not later than 9:00 p.m. on the day of collection. *Commentary: The approved containers are called "Courville Containers." Containers placed at the curb too early or left too late may subject the owners and/or occupants to a violation. Citations under 22-2-45 are most often written by Department of Public Works Inspectors and Neighborhood Police Officers.*

7. Ordinance 9-1-105. Rodent Harborage. All buildings, premises, and structures and exterior property shall be kept free from rodent harborage and infestations. Where rodents are found, they shall be promptly exterminated by approved processes which will not be injurious to human health. After extermination, proper precautions shall be taken to eliminate rodent harborage and prevent re-infestation. No building, premises, or structure shall be used for the storage or handling of solid waste, including debris, garbage, litter and rubbish, which provide a place for rodents to harbor. *Commentary: When residents keep their dogs outside any feces that remains for more than a day or uneaten dog food often attracts rodents. Ordinance 22-2-21 requires animal waste to be removed from private property within twenty-four (24) hours. Citations under 9-1-105 are most often written by Department of Public Works Inspectors and Neighborhood Police Officers.*

8. Ordinance 9-1-103. Allowing Snow and Ice to Accumulate. Snow or ice that has fallen or formed on any sidewalk in the front, rear, or on the sides of any house, premises, building or lot shall be removed within twenty-four (24) hours after the snow or ice has fallen or formed, or a quantity of salt, sand, ashes or other approved material applied to the snow or ice sufficient to render the sidewalk safe for persons to walk upon. However, snow or ice shall not be plowed, shoveled or piled from private properties, other than residential, onto the paved roadway of any city street or highway. Snow or ice plowed shoveled or brushed from any residential property or public sidewalk shall not be placed in any manner so as to interfere with public travel. *Commentary: Residents and business owners must shovel their snow or otherwise make the sidewalks safe within twenty-four hours of a snow fall. Businesses who plow their lots into the street are subject to tickets under this provision. Citations under 9-1-103 are most often written by Department of Public Works Inspectors and Neighborhood Police Officers.*

9. Ordinance 9-1-82(d). Failure to Obtain Lead Clearance. It shall be unlawful for a rental property to be occupied without a lead-clearance report being obtained and provided to the Building Safety Engineering and Environmental Department. *Commentary: All rental property in the City of Detroit constructed before 1978, must be inspected. This is to protect the health and welfare of children who occupy rental property that contains lead-based paint hazards. Exposure to lead can cause serious problems for children, including learning problems, behavioral problems, and speech and language problems. Citations under 9-1-82(d) are exclusively written by Building Safety Engineering and Environmental Inspectors.*

10. Ordinance 9-1-111. Failure to Remove Graffiti. Any graffiti on any exterior surface of any building, premises, or structure is a violation and is declared a public nuisance. The owner shall have the continuing responsibility to remove graffiti, maintain the property free of graffiti, and to restore any exterior surface that has been damaged by graffiti. *Commentary: Since this ordinance was amended in 2015, hundreds of tickets have been issued and more than 30,000 illegal tags have been removed from buildings, bus shelters and electrical boxes by the General Services Department. Business owners who fail to remove graffiti in a timely manner face having thousands of dollars in removal costs added to their judgments. Citations under 9-1-111 are most often written by Building Safety Engineering and Environmental Inspectors and Neighborhood Police Officers.*

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