

## **City of Tucson Code Enforcement Division – Standard Procedures**

The City of Tucson Code Enforcement Division can receive a complaint by phone, FAX, email, letter, in person, from a code enforcement inspector, City Communications, other City personnel, and from on-line/SeeClickFix.

When a complaint is received we check in our data base, Permits Plus, first to see if we already have a case open for that complaint. If there is not a complaint we open a new report for inspection. We strive to open a case within 24 hours of receiving a complaint. The call center concerns are entered faster as often the caller wants the activity number for their records, or needs to know who the inspector will be.

The information is then forwarded to the area inspector. Each of our inspectors is assigned to a specific geographic area within the City limits. We currently have 18 area inspectors. The data base assigns the report to the correct area inspector. (We have five customer service representatives in the call center)

Life and safety concerns are addressed by the inspector right away, or within 24 hours. A number of our emergency cases (a fire, car through a building, no electricity or water concerns come to us via City Communications or from TPD directly) are addressed quickly after receiving the complaint. The inspectors are often called in the field to address these concerns.

Issues that do not involve threats to life or safety are addressed within a week to two weeks.

An inspector can work with a constituent by talking with them before issuing a notice of violation. They can give the person a verbal warning. Most of our inspectors will issue a notice of violation, and make a phone call or talk with the owner in person. Most deadlines are for thirty days for abatement. If no violation is found then we close the case as a No Verify.

Code enforcement inspectors work to have compliance occur with the notice of violation. On the second inspection, if there is no progress and no contact from the owner, the inspector can issue the first \$75 reinspection fee. The owner has to have received the notice of violation in order for a reinspection fee to be charged. A reinspection fee can be charged after each inspection when the violation(s) has not been abated. We usually have thirty days between inspections. We can keep charging reinspection fees even when we are heading to Court, or are in Court proceedings. Most individuals will abate a concern after they receive the first \$75 fee invoice. They usually then rush to avoid a court hearing!

If we do not get compliance from the notice of violation a citation can be issued to the property owner. A citation means we are heading to City Court. We start with an arraignment date, usually thirty days out. After the arraignment is held we wait for City Court to set the hearing date. This can sometimes be a month to six weeks out before the inspector and property owner have an initial Court appearance before a judge. Often an initial Court appearance does not resolve the issue. A judge can offer the property owner additional time to abate the issue. This can be 30 to 45 days.

Per Karin Erickson, Code Enforcement Division – November 2012