



CITY OF DUNWOODY

41 Perimeter Center East

Dunwoody, GA 30346

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MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor and City Council

From: Michael Nier, Chief Building Official
Michael M. Tuller, Community Development Director

Date: April 12, 2010

Subject: Multi-Family Residential Code Compliance Program

In the last year, a movement began specific to addressing the physical condition of multi-family complexes within the City of Dunwoody. City staff has initiated the process of rehabilitating many of these multi-family communities incrementally through complaint-driven requests by the Dunwoody citizenry. Staff has discovered more multi-family developments than first identified and witnessed first-hand many of these communities were built during the boom years of DeKalb County, where code-required safety features were overlooked during the inspection process or not maintained.

Staff has been working diligently over the past 6 months in developing a program for multi-family residential code compliance that could be implemented in the City of Dunwoody within the year, if called upon. Staff has researched apartment “sweeps” programs in neighboring communities (i.e. cities of Sandy Springs, Roswell) in an effort to educate ourselves about existing code compliance programs and to better protect Dunwoody residents from unsafe living conditions and the property management decision-making that may be contrary to International Property Maintenance Code requirements.

Staff would recommend considering a multi-family residential code compliance program that addresses both exterior and interior inspection demands. The multi-family residential code compliance program staff would endorse consists of the two components which are proposed for adoption separately, yet function concurrently in the overall program design.

The first component of the program is a change to the city’s ordinance requiring all multi-family residential complexes have interior inspections performed for all dwelling units by a third-party inspection company. These interior inspections look for basic life safety issues and general overall condition of the interior units. This program component is not performed by city staff as the ordinance outlines; where all interior inspections must be performed by city-approved certified inspectors. Research has determined implementation of this program works most effectively in conjunction with the renewal of the complexes annual business license. This option would give city staff an opportunity to accurately compile a list of all multi-family dwelling complexes within the city limits and place all complexes on notice that exterior inspections will follow.



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The second component of the program is an internal city policy for implementing and performing the exterior inspections. This effort consists of “code compliance teams” inspecting a specified multi-family residential community to determine potential property maintenance code violations. The teams compile the inspection data into one concise report illustrating issues, violations, and repairs needed on the respective property. This report is then presented to the property management of the community in question for the building owner’s immediate attention. Staff works closely with management on reasonable timeframes for permitting and re-inspections, leading towards code compliance.

The ability to effectively implement a multi-family residential code compliance program relies heavily on the addition of a full-time employee versed in both building code and code enforcement disciplines. The Community Development Department has reviewed the budgetary requirements for the addition of a Multi-Family Residential Code Compliance Inspector, where there is funding currently available to add an additional employee dedicated towards this mission. The proposed employee would be hired for a 12-18 month temporary period, in order to evaluate the program implementation phase.

Staff recommends amending the City of Dunwoody Code of Ordinances as attached and consideration for increasing the current staffing level in the Community Development Department to include a full-time Multi-Family Residential Code Compliance Inspector as an effective means to promote this program.

Please find included; a sample interior report from a property in an adjacent jurisdiction.

Apartment Safety Inspection

Community:

Inspected: 11/02/2009 - 11/29/2009

Comment Summary Mandatory repairs & Recommended repairs

Mandatory repairs are listed in bold type. They must be repaired as part of the city inspections.

Recommended repairs are listed in regular type. They are termed FYI (For Your Information) and are recommended repairs for proactive maintenance. They are not required as part of the city inspection.

Apt

- 418 **GFCI faulty at master bathroom ; won't trip with button or tester.**
Wire clamp is loose & wires exposed at water heater.
Receptacle at master bedroom shows open ground.
Receptacle at master bedroom pulls off wall exposing the wires.
FYI: Rotted out or termite damaged porch window on #416.
Ground beneath steps to 400 is washed out,
- 708 **TPR drain pipe at water heater is missing.**
GFCI faulty at porch; not wired to GFCI at master bath.
Wires exposed and need a connector at the water heater.
- 710 **GFCI faulty at porch; not wired to GFCI at master bath.**
Receptacle cover missing at master bedroom left wall.
Filler plate is missing at panel box.
FYI: Stained sheet rock at hall bathroom ceiling over tub dry at inspection.
- 713 FYI: Packing seals leak - wasting water and allowing water to get into the walls at hall bathroom shower valves, cold side.
- 714 **Receptacle at master bedroom switched receptacle shows no power.**
FYI: GFCI needed at master bathroom, hall bathroom porch.
- 718 **GFCI faulty at master bathroom ; won't reset after tripping, reset button popped out on reset and won't reinstall.**
GFCI faulty at porch; not wired to GFCI at master bath.
Receptacle cover missing at master bedroom.
Receptacle at master bedroom front side shows open ground.
- 719 **Wires exposed and need a connector at the garbage disposal.**
Smoke detector needs batteries at master bedroom.
Tile missing/damaged at hall bathroom tub/shower wall; water can leak into walls.
GFCI faulty at master bathroom; won't reset after tripping.
- 810 FYI: Wires exposed and need a connector at the water heater.
Walls damaged at laundry behind dryer.
- 903 **Receptacle at kitchen, bedroom shall bathroom shows open ground.**
FYI: Wires exposed and need a connector at the garbage disposal.
- 908 **Receptacle at kitchen right side, back side shows hot neutral reverse.**
Exterior door sticks and hard to open at patio door.
- 1009 FYI: Leak at water heater base. Could fail soon.
Exterior door sticks and hard to open at patio doors

Comment Summary

Mandatory repairs & recommended repairs

Apt

- 1204 **Toilet backed up at master bathroom has flooded the floor.**
Walls/Ceiling finish is damaged at master bathroom ceiling.
FYI: Filter very dirt, at furnace. Recommend replacing.
Foundation is eroded at front walk outside this unit.
- 1205 **Wire clamp is loose & wires exposed at garbage disposal.**
FYI: Packing seals leak - wasting water and allowing water to get into the walls at hall bathroom hot side.
- 1211 **Wires exposed and need a connector at the water heater.**
FYI: Walls damaged at hall bathroom ceiling dry at inspection.
- 1212 FYI: Gap in tile at master bathroom shower wall. Can allow water in the walls and other units.
- 1214 **GFCI faulty at master bathroom; reset button popped out on reset and won't reinstall.**
Receptacle cover missing at hall right side.
The patio door is damaged. Sliding panel frame is broken and latch is missing.
FYI: The shower head is defective at master bathroom.
Faucets/valves loose at master bathroom shower valves.
Door falling apart at laundry.
- 1215 **Toilet loose; master bathroom.**
FYI: Wire clamp is loose & wires exposed at garbage disposal.
Walls damaged at master bathroom ceiling.
- 1217 **GFCI faulty at master bathroom not powering the porch or hall bath.**
FYI: Packing seals leak - wasting water and allowing water to get into the walls at hall bathroom shower valves, cold side. Handle loose as well.
- 1218 **TPR drain pipe at water heater is missing.**
Stained sheet rock at hall bathroom ceiling over tub shows high moisture - from apparent roof leak.
FYI: Toilet getting loose; hall bathroom.
- 1219 FYI: Wire clamp is loose & wires exposed at garbage disposal.
Toilet getting loose; hall bathroom.
- 1220 **TPR drain pipe at water heater is disconnected.**
- 1303 **Missing/broken handle at shower valves; hall bathroom.**
Toilet loose; master bathroom.
The patio door is damaged where water leak from overhead has caused wood rot. Door won't open.
FYI: The wall receptacle is loose at guest bedroom by bed.
- 1306 **Wires exposed and need a connector at the water heater.**
Receptacle at guest bedroom shows open ground.
Wires exposed and need a connector at the water heater.
- 1307 **Tile is loose at the shower wall; master bathroom. Can allow water in the walls and other units.**
Receptacle at dining room interior wall shows open ground, shows hot neutral reverse.
Receptacle at porch pulls off wall exposing the wires.
FYI: Remove flammables from closet with water heater, furnace.
- 1310 **TPR drain pipe at water heater is twisted and line made unusable for pressure release.**
Wires exposed and need a connector at the water heater.
- 1405 **Toilet loose.**
GFCI faulty at bathroom; hot-neutral reverse and won't trip with tester.
FYI: Packing seals leak - wasting water and allowing water to get into the walls at bathroom shower head.
Shower diverter is missing at bathroom shower valves.



CITY OF DUNWOODY

Multi-Family Code Compliance and Inspections

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Version 2010.4.12



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Multi-Family Code Compliance and Inspections

I. Purpose

This policy has been written to establish guidelines and procedures governing the mobilization of various department personnel for the purpose of conducting unscheduled multi-family code compliance and inspections of multi-unit residences and commercial structures in the City of Dunwoody.

These inspections are necessary to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of Dunwoody. This effort is effective only with the coordination of multi jurisdictional agencies and personnel. The Director of Community Development, in conjunction with the Chief Building Official shall be the point of contact for all communication regarding the planning & coordination of these operations.

II. Definitions

When used in this policy, the following words, terms and phrases, and their derivations, shall be the meaning ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning,

A. **Commanding Officer** -The Commanding Officer shall be the Chief Building Official or his/her designee.

The Commanding Officer Responsibility:

1. Supervise and maintain control over all activities of the search teams.

B. **Command Post** -A Command Post shall be established onsite (or at an offsite location). The location of the post will be revealed during the pre-inspection briefing.

Command Post staff shall include:

- 1 One primary radio operator
- 2 One support aide (if available)
- 3 The Commanding Officer

The Command Post shall be responsible for:

- 1 Initiating all orders, decisions and directions regarding the inspection operation.
- 2 Coordinating of communication equipment, team designations and all reports and



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documentation.

- 3 Maintaining a record/communications log sheet to include the following:
 - a) All important communication relevant to the operation.
 - b) Team assignments
 - c) Start and end times

C. **Search Teams** – employees of the city or other designated representatives as needed.

D. **Team Leader or Team Captain** – Code compliance officer overseeing the inspection of the facility

Team Captain Responsibility:

1. Maintain a roster of team members
2. Supervise and maintain control over all activities of the inspection teams
3. Mark and record any special findings by team members during inspection
4. Complete as directed all reports or other information requested by the Commanding Officer.

III. Guidelines

A. Each search team shall be comprised of a minimum of

- (1) Police Officer,
- (1) City Staff consisting of one or more individuals certified as:
 - (1) Code Compliance Officer (team leader),
 - (1) Building Inspector,
 - (1) Development Inspector and
 - (1) Fire Inspector (substitutions will be permitted if designated representatives are not present).

B. Each search team will be given a team designation represented by a different color, and all team members will wear their respective color during the search (i.e. Blue team, Red team etc.)

C. Additional personnel may include Animal Control, EMS and Department of Health. These units will have designations based on their function (i.e. Animal control 1, or Dept. of Health 3 etc.).

D. Any other participants, including but not limited to media, council members, City administrators etc. will be designated as the **Alpha** team. Each Alpha team must be accompanied by (1) Police Officer and have a designated Team captain.

E. Multi-Family Code Compliance and Inspections shall be conducted the last Wednesday of each month from 08:00 hrs to 12:00 hrs, unless directed otherwise.



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F. Pre-Inspection briefings shall be held at 07:30 hrs, the day of the scheduled inspection at Dunwoody Community Development Office, unless directed otherwise. All participants are required to be present for the pre-inspection briefing.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. Coordination of the Inspection will begin two (2) weeks prior to the scheduled Inspection date.

B. A property will be identified by the Community Development Department, and the coordinator will begin notifying each participating Department. The location of the Inspection will remain confidential until the pre-inspection briefing.

C. Site maps, aerial photographs and other logistical information will be obtained by Code Compliance and duplicated for distribution on the day of the Inspection. Code Compliance staff will conduct a preliminary inspection prior to the Inspection date.

D. Confirmation (including staffing levels) with all participating agencies will be completed before the close of business on the day prior to the Inspection.

E. Prior to the close of business on the day before the scheduled inspection, the Commanding Officer will ensure that all equipment is operable and that all documents are prepared.

F. On the scheduled day of the Inspection, a pre-inspection briefing will commence in accordance with Section III F.

G. Upon arrival at Dunwoody City Hall, all participating personnel will sign-in. Command Post staff will assign teams and designations, distribute equipment, and cover basic operation procedures. The command post location will be established.

H. At approximately 08:00 hrs, all participants will travel expeditiously to the search site. Upon arrival, all teams will await further direction by Command Post staff.

I. Command Post staff will assign each team with a location to begin the search.

J. Upon completion of the search of the assigned location, Team Captains will inform the Command Post that the search is complete. The team will remain at that location and await direction from Command Post. In the event that a team member becomes separated from their team, it is the team Captain's responsibility to inform the Command Post.

K. Search teams will commence with onsite inspections and record all findings as directed by Command Post staff.

L. Command Post staff will notify all Team Captains when the search is over. All team members



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will reconvene at the Command Post, return all equipment, and sign out.

M. Team Captains will be responsible for all assigned team equipment and reports.

V. SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

- A.** This policy is meant to augment property searches and attempt to establish practices and procedures.
- B.** The Commanding Officer is responsible for ensuring that the provisions of this policy are complied with.