

# LAKELAND UP TO CODE



The City of Lakeland's mission is to be a community working together to provide an exceptional quality of life. In support of that mission this brochure was designed to inform property owners and tenants of some of the most common code violations within our city. We invite you to review this information and contact the **Code Enforcement Office** if there are any questions as to how these standards apply to your property. Working together responsibly we can provide an exceptional quality of life for all of Lakeland's residents.

# COMMON CODE VIOLATIONS



## FENCES

Fences can not be over 4 feet in height in front or street side yards or 6 feet in height in side or rear yards and must be kept in good repair. Fences must be constructed of approved materials. Use of materials such as barbed wire, razor wire and electrified fencing are prohibited within residentially zoned areas.



## DERELICT/INOPERABLE VEHICLES

A derelict/inoperable vehicle is a vehicle that does not display a current license tag and/or is not equipped with all parts that are required to legally and safely operate on public streets and/or can not be driven under its own power. Derelict/inoperable vehicles cannot be stored except in a fully enclosed, legally constructed building.



## OPEN STORAGE

Open storage is prohibited. Generally, any equipment, materials or furnishings that would ordinarily not be used outdoors may not be stored outdoors. For example, you may not keep indoor furniture, household appliances, auto parts or building materials outside.



## MINIMUM HOUSING STANDARDS

All wood, siding, shingles, roof covering, railings, walls, ceilings, porches, doors, windows, screens and any other exterior parts of residential structures must be maintained in weather-tight, rodent proof, sound condition and in good repair. Interior walls, ceilings, floors, doors and hardware must be in sound condition and in good repair. Electrical, heating and plumbing fixtures shall be installed in accordance with local codes and maintained in good and safe repair.



## UNSECURED STRUCTURES

Structures which are open and unprotected as a result of the omission or disrepair of windows, doors, walls or other enclosures are required to be secured or boarded up. The City has specifications for boarding up, which is allowed until repairs are completed, not to exceed 120 days.



## YARD MAINTENANCE STANDARDS

Yard maintenance includes any untended growth in excess of 12 inches in height and maintenance of plant material in any right-of-way abutting the property.



## JUNK, TRASH & DEBRIS

Junk, trash and debris are prohibited from being left in the yard and must be disposed of properly. This includes, but is not limited to, junk, auto parts, appliances, furniture, building materials, tires, trash such as discarded paper, cardboard, plastics, etc., and debris such as tree trimmings and fallen limbs.



## PROHIBITED BUSINESSES

Most businesses are not allowed to operate in residential areas as they disrupt residents and neighborhoods. This means that car and boat repairs, construction of cabinets and furniture and other activities that are not normally carried on in a residential district are prohibited. Remember, engaging in a business requires an occupational license.



## NON-RESIDENTIAL VIOLATIONS

All non-residential type structures shall be maintained in sound condition and good repair, be weather-tight, water-tight and resistant to the harmful effects of weather. Exteriors must be free of peeling paint, graffiti, mold, broken glass, etc. Any reconstruction shall be finished in a manner that will not depreciate values of neighboring properties and with the same or similar materials used in the existing construction.



## SIGNS

The sign regulations deal with prohibited signs, abandoned conforming and non-conforming signs, and signs placed within public rights-of-way. Signage prohibited by the sign regulations includes, but is not limited to, banners, pennants, streamers, balloons, and fluttering devices designed to attract attention, portable signs, temporary point of purchase signs, and signs on vehicles.



## COMMERCIAL VEHICLES/EQUIPMENT

It is unlawful for any person to park any commercial vehicle, such as semi-trucks and/or trailers, either as one unit or separately, wreckers, tow trucks, box trucks, dump trucks, bucket trucks and the like, in any residentially zoned areas within the city. The parking or storage of construction equipment is also prohibited in residentially zoned areas except on property where the sale, rental, servicing or storage of construction equipment is a conditional use or on property where a building permit has been issued and construction is actually in progress.



## PARKING

Motor homes, campers, boats, trailers, etc. may be parked upon the owner's own residential premises as long as they are within applicable setbacks and are not parked in the front yards, street side yards or public rights-of-way.



The **CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICE** ensures compliance with the City's codes and ordinances relating to housing, overgrowth, openstorage/care of premises, zoning, disabled/abandoned vehicles, minimum maintenance for commercial structures, signage, and news racks. Violators are provided time to correct violations and administrative hearings are scheduled for those that are not corrected. *Code Enforcement Officers* are each responsible for different areas/districts (divided by census tracts) of the city. The *Sign Enforcement Officer* is responsible for obtaining compliance with the sign and news rack regulations city-wide.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- Complainants can report a violation via our website. Go to <http://www.lakelandgov.net/cac> and choose the Code Enforcement category. Complaints can also be emailed to [CodeEnforcementComplaints@lakelandgov.net](mailto:CodeEnforcementComplaints@lakelandgov.net). Please be sure to include a specific address.
- The most common violations are illegal parking of inoperable vehicles and failure to mow and clean up junk and trash.
- Any structural repairs, reroofing and most plumbing and electrical work can require a permit. Please call the Building Inspection/Permitting Division at (863) 834-6012 for more information.
- Any business located within the city limits requires City and Polk County Business Tax Receipts. Please call the Occupational License Division at (863) 834-6025 for more information.
- A setback is a required amount of area between the property line and where items may be located, i.e. sheds, RVs, boats, etc. Setbacks vary according to the particular zoning and location of the property.
- The City can clean and clear vacant lots after the required legal notification is made to the owner.
- The City can address unsafe residential buildings through demolition under the Standard Housing Code.
- Code Enforcement Officers routinely attend neighborhood association meetings to review and explain code requirements. If you would like an officer at your next meeting, please call (863) 834-6251.



Code Enforcement Office • 1104 Martin L. King, Jr. Avenue • Lakeland, Florida 33805  
(863) 834-6251 • [www.lakelandgov.net](http://www.lakelandgov.net) • [CodeEnforcementComplaints@lakelandgov.net](mailto:CodeEnforcementComplaints@lakelandgov.net)