

ORANGE COUNTY CODE ENFORCEMENT:

Frequently Asked Questions



How do I make a complaint and have Code Enforcement investigate? Call 3-1-1. Describe the situation you observe and provide an address. It's best to specify if the violation is more likely to occur at certain times of the day or during the week. You can remain anonymous. The County also has a 3-1-1 mobile app on which you can report code enforcement issues.

What does the County do about graffiti? Call 3-1-1 and report the location. It will be painted over as soon as possible.

I think my neighbor is offering a short-term vacation rental (Airbnb, Homeaway, etc.) at their home. Is this allowed? No, it is not allowed in residential areas in Orange County. If such activity is suspected, Code Enforcement will investigate. Also, consider reporting the activity to your homeowners association.

I see signs all over the roadways. Sometimes even political signs. What is being done about this? Orange County removes more than 100,000 signs from the right-of-way each year. A private contractor, along with Code Enforcement Officers, is currently helping pick up the nuisance signs. Political signs are allowed on private property, but not on the right-of-way. They are only allowed on private property 90 days prior to and 10 days after an election.

My neighbor hasn't cleaned his pool in months. I'm worried about the potential for insects, etc. Can the County clean this pool? No, but the County can issue a violation notice and impose fines. Report by calling 3-1-1.

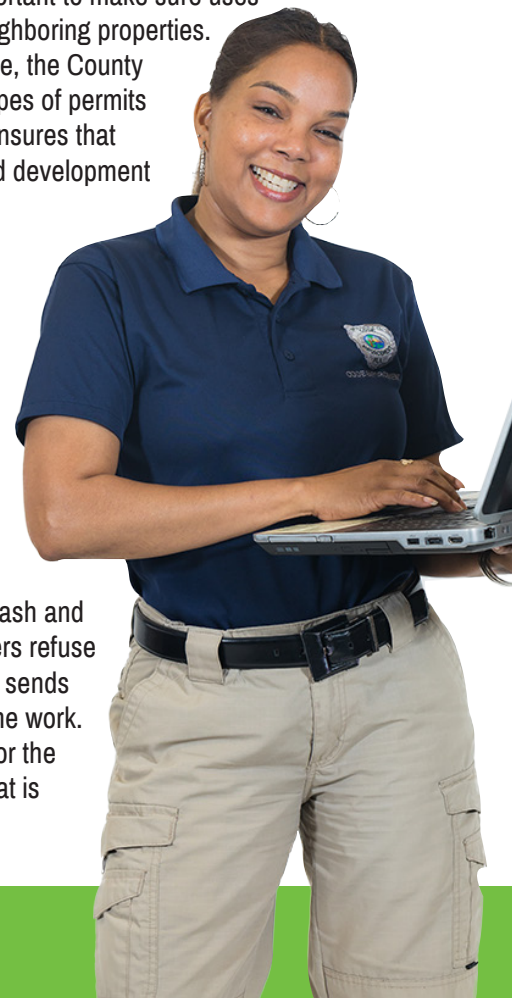
I called a complaint into 3-1-1 days ago. Nothing on the property has changed. Why doesn't the County do something? Code Enforcement is a legal process. Properties are alleged to be in violation. Property owners must be given adequate time to correct the violation. So it is not uncommon for it to take three to six weeks to obtain compliance. However, 80 percent of the violations come into compliance within 20 to 40 days. More than 94

percent of the properties cited by Code Enforcement within a 12-month period come into compliance.

What is the best way to make sure Code Enforcement is paying attention to our neighborhood and understands our concerns? Form a partnership with the Code Enforcement Division. If you have a homeowners association, invite the area officer by calling 3-1-1. Once the residents and the area officer are in communication, a relationship can be formed. Maintaining that relationship is the best way to keep clean, orderly neighborhoods.

I am a business owner. Code Enforcement recently issued me a violation notice because there is no land-use permit for my property. What does this mean? Every parcel of property is assigned a zoning district (residential, commercial, agricultural, etc.). There must also be an established "use" for each parcel because a wide range of activities is allowed within each zoning district. It is important to make sure uses are compatible with neighboring properties. Depending upon the use, the County might require certain types of permits and inspections. This ensures that life-safety, drainage and development standards are met.

Can the County do anything if my neighbor refuses to cut his grass or keeps piles of debris in his yard? Grass growth of more than 18 inches is a violation. So is the accumulation of junk, trash and debris. If property owners refuse to clean up, the County sends out a contractor to do the work. Refusal to pay the bill for the work results in a lien that is placed on the tax rolls.



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Code Enforcement says junk vehicles are not allowed. What constitutes a junk vehicle? Flat tires, undergrowth, dismantled, wrecked, no license plate, expired tag or registration. If owners do not remove or repair the vehicle in 15 days, the County contractor will tow it away.

I've been trying to get my landlord to fix a leaky pipe for weeks. So far he has not done so. Is this a code violation? Yes. Under the County Property Maintenance Code, every structure has to be properly maintained. Every building's roof must be free of leaks, have no faulty wiring, no cracks in walls, etc. The owner can be subject to fines if violations are not repaired.

I just found out there is a code enforcement lien against my property. How do I get the lien released? Code Enforcement has a process. Once the property is in compliance, the fines can be reduced and the lien (if applicable) released. Compliance is the key. Call 3-1-1, explain you are calling about a lien release, and the appropriate county staff will respond.

My neighbor has loud parties late at night. Who do I call? The Noise Ordinance is enforced by the Sheriff's Office. Please call the non-emergency number at the Sheriff's Office at 407-836-4357.

Who takes care of vehicles, trailers, or boats abandoned in the street?

Please call the non-emergency number at the Sheriff's Office at 407-836-4357.

Does the County ban commercial vehicles? No. For example, there is no rule that says someone can't park a work van on

his/her property. The County does, however, prohibit dual rearwheeled vehicles. If you see a big truck, be sure to report it to 3-1-1 when Code Enforcement is most likely to see it (evening, weekend, etc.).

Does the County prohibit parking in the front yard? No. There is no ordinance that prohibits parking on the grass/front yard.

What is the role of the Code Enforcement Board and Special Magistrate? After a Code Enforcement Officer observes a violation and discovers it has not been corrected, a hearing is scheduled. There are two governing boards – think of them as two different “judges” – set up under state law that take testimony and evidence, and determine if a property is in violation. A property owner found in violation is given a specific period of time to correct the violation or a fine starts accumulating for every day the violation exists. Fines can range up to \$1,000 per day. Liens are filed against the property as well.

The County has a Special Magistrate and a Code Enforcement Board. What's the difference? Under state law, they both perform the same function - determine if a violation exists, and if one does, set a compliance date and a fine if the violation is not brought into compliance. Due to the volume of work Orange County established a Special Magistrate in 2004. Cases are assigned to the boards based on the region of the County where the property violations exist (east, central, west).

Does the County have enforcement powers? Every city and county in Florida is bound by the same law, which allows fines of up to \$1,000 per day for an initial violation and \$5,000 per day for a repeat violation. Failure to comply will result in filing of liens against the property. Under certain serious circumstances, local governments can foreclose on the liens, taking ownership and seeking more responsible owners or uses for the property.

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