



WOODS WATCH

The Official Publication of
The Coventry Woods Neighborhood Association

www.coventrywoods.org

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KEEP COVENTRY WOODS UP TO CODE

When to call 311 for Neighborhood Code Enforcement

Thanks to the hard work of so many neighbors this spring on their yards and houses, Coventry Woods remains one of the most physically attractive neighborhoods in Charlotte. Everyone benefits when your property is maintained.

Upkeep issues with the folks who live nearby? We're all neighbors, and what you see as an obvious problem may not be on someone else's radar screen.

For problems involving a neighbor's home, yard or possessions, it's often a good idea to first speak with the persons living there. Are they aware of what's bothering you?

"Getting along" is part of being a good neighbor.

But sometimes situations can't be so easily resolved – and when that happens, you need to call 311.

The City of Charlotte has ordinances that spell out community standards for appearance and land use.

The Neighborhood Development Department's Code Enforcement Division is responsible for making sure the ordinances are enforced.

The Neighborhood Development page on the city/county Website says, "Code Enforcement inspectors work to maintain community standards. They enforce health and sanitation ordinances against tall grass and weeds, junk

cars and graffiti, making communities cleaner and less vulnerable to crime. Code inspectors also protect residents by ensuring that homes are structurally sound and preserve neighborhood property values by preventing inappropriate business use of residential properties. They also enforce zoning regulations to prevent overcrowding of land and facilitate efficient provision of transportation, water, schools, parks and other public facilities and services."

You call 311 to report a code violation. Your complaint will be taken and someone from Code Enforcement will check on the situation. You can also call Code Enforcement directly, at 704-336-7600.

A Code Enforcement inspector will visit the property within three working days. If a problem is cited but not taken care of, Code Enforcement can issue fines, and progressively increase the penalty for noncompliance.

We've outlined some of the more common code violations.

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CWNA
5310 Coronado Dr.
Charlotte, NC 28212

KEEP COVENTRY WOODS UP TO CODE continued

Unmowed or untended lawn

The city code says: "There shall be no heavy undergrowth or accumulation of plant growth which is noxious or detrimental to health. ... Fences and "accessory buildings" need to be maintained in safe and substantial condition or demolished.

If grass is 12 inches or higher, the city can have the property mowed, and send the bill to the owner. A fine may be issued of \$50.

Parking on lawns

The city code prohibits "Parking of vehicles in front yards and side yards of a corner lot, except on an improved driveway or parking pad."

The ordinance carries a \$25 fine with possible vehicle towing upon a fourth occurrence.

Junked vehicles

The city code says one – and only one – junked vehicle can be located in the rear yard if it is "entirely concealed by an acceptable canvas covering." A junked vehicle is defined as "a vehicle that does not display a current and valid license plate lawfully upon that vehicle and that: (1) Is partially dismantled or wrecked; (2) Cannot be self-propelled or moved in the manner which it originally was intended to move; or (3) Is more than five years old and appears to be worth less than \$100."

At-home car-repair or painting businesses

Code Enforcement says it is illegal to operate a car-repair or car-painting business in your home's driveway or garage. It's perfectly legal to make minor repairs on your or your relatives' vehicles. But having a moonlight or side-line shop is prohibited and can result in fines.

Construction of outbuildings and additions without permits

Anything 12 feet by 12 feet or larger requires

a city permit. Permits are required for "the addition, repair, or replacement of load bearing structures." There are also restrictions on where an accessory building can be located, how near to an easement one can be built, and on the number of buildings that can be built. Illegal construction can be ordered stopped or demolished; fines can be issued. Permits and inspections are handled by the city/county Land Use & Environmental Services Agency. For information, call 704-432-7822.

Ongoing yard sales

Most folks enjoy yard sales, but holding them repeatedly can be an annoyance. A \$5 permit is technically required "when having a yard sale, attic sale, garage sale, or similar type of sale." The ordinance says "only four sales are permitted at any given name/address during one year. These type sales can be no longer than two consecutive days."

Too many sales can trigger 311 complaints – and fines.

House exterior needing upkeep

The city code says houses should have no "holes or excessive cracks in walls, ceilings, outside doors or outside windows," and that "exterior wood surfaces not inherently resistant to deterioration shall be treated with a protective coating of paint or other suitable preservations with sufficient frequency to prevent deterioration."

If a rental home, the tenant can request a housing inspection. What can neighbors of a rental or owner-occupied eyesore can do: Five adults who are "residents of Charlotte" can jointly request an inspection. Penalties and time allotted for compliance varies with the infraction.