

Forest Hills Code Enforcement Policy

The goals of the code enforcement program are to ensure the safety of residents, maintain property values, ensure that all commercial and residential properties are consistent with community standards established by council via ordinance and directives and gain compliance by those in violation of borough regulations. To accomplish these goals, the Code Officer shall follow the steps outlined here to the best of his/her ability.

1. First contact with a property owner may be by phone or in person. At that time the property owner shall be informed that this contact will be followed by a written notice of violation within the next 3 days. The written notice shall include:
 - a. A date to comply that is within 14 days of the date of first contact
 - b. A description of the problem
 - c. Notice that failure to comply will result in a second notice sent via certified mail return receipt requested on the 15th day.
2. If property owner is not home a door hanger may be used to serve as first contact. The door hanger shall be immediately followed by a written notice of violation within the next 3 days. This notice shall include items outlined in number 1.
3. If compliance is not met at the end of 14 days, a second notice shall be sent immediately via certified mail return receipt requested AND by regular mail. The second notice shall include:
 - a. A date to comply that is within 14 days of the date of the second notice
 - b. A description of the problem
 - c. Notice that failure to comply will result in the issuance of a citation on the 15th day.
4. In attempting to gain compliance the code officer shall
 - a. Attempt to make personal contact first either in person, by phone or via a door hanger.
 - b. Take pictures of all violations
 - c. Issue a notice that details each violation and section of the ordinance that is in violation
 - d. If notice of violation is hand delivered but no one is home the notice shall be secured to the door with a picture taken for the record.
5. The code officer shall maintain regular patrol hours via car or on foot to acquire information and note any potential violations. While patrol shall be varied, the code officer shall organize patrol locations to maximize visibility and the opportunity to find potential violations. At least two thirds of the officer's time will be spent in the field.
6. All paperwork shall be handled in the office with only minor paperwork completed while in the vehicle so as to maintain visibility and to seek problem areas.

7. The Code Officer shall maintain a computerized file organized by property of all violators and shall periodically view these properties for compliance. The Code Officer shall maintain a brief written log of daily activities in a computer file that includes
 - a. The date,
 - b. List of activities for the day and approximate time of activity
 - c. All violations noted
 - d. Any other relevant information that may be helpful.

8. The Code Officer shall prepare and file a monthly activity report with council no later than the first of the following month. The report shall be in computer format. The report may be filed with the office secretary for inclusion in a future manager's report. The monthly activity report shall detail:
 - a. The date,
 - b. Address of all properties investigated,
 - c. Violations noted, actions taken at those properties,
 - d. The result of past actions, and
 - e. Any other relevant information that may be helpful.

9. The Code Officer shall attend a council and/or committee meeting monthly to report on activities and answer questions.

10. The code officer shall use the police secretary to assist with and complete written documentation outlined here to maximize the officer's time in the field.

11. Deviations from this policy may be authorized by the Manager or Solicitor when required by law or otherwise deemed to be in the best interests of the Borough.

DRAFT: May 28, 2010
APPROVED: June 16, 2010