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Code Enforcement Manual: Omaha Neighborhood Scan

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code enforcement manual.

The code training program

Minimum safety and sanitation levels for neighbors and occupants is important to maintain structural and weather-resistance performance.

Inadequate sanitation and insect or rodent infestations can negatively affect a neighborhood. Poorly maintained residences and businesses affect the image of the neighborhood.

Responsible property owners may not want to invest in neighborhoods that look unkempt. Results include decreased property values and more irresponsible property owners buy into the area. This cycle continues without proper code enforcement.

Neat, clean and well-maintained properties attract owners and occupants maintain a neighborhood's self-image.

Code enforcement training tips

- These pages provide background information to conduct your own scan of properties in your neighborhood. Please click here for the printable (pdf) version.
- Important areas of the housing code are shown by number and section of the International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC).

Code Scan Coverage for Neighborhood Associations	
Code enforcement training	Please click here to begin the training session or below to review parts
Property scan training	
Safety	
Environmental	
Housing	
Property status	



303.03. premises identification.

Buildings shall have approved address numbers placed in a position to be plainly legible and visible from the street or road fronting the property. These numbers shall be Arabic numerals or alphabet letters. Numbers shall be a minimum of 4" (102 mm) high with a minimum stroke width of 0.5" (12.7 mm).

Reasons

Easily legible numbers are essential for rapid response of emergency personnel.

Ratings

None: Address numbers are present

Problem: Address numbers are not present.





Problem. (Above) Address numbers are partially missing. **No Problem.** (Left) Address numbers are present.



Problem. Address numbers are missing.



land use.

Reasons

Omaha Neighborhood Scan makes note of the land use of properties. This is not part of Omaha code enforcement, instead it is useful for neighborhoods to guage what is happening in their neighborhoods. Some neighborhoods are interested in downzoning and want to take note of what types of properies are in their neighborhoods.

Things to look for

Multiple address numbers. Multiple mailboxes. Multiple entrances.

Ratings

Single family: One family residence. **Two-family/Duplex:** Two family residence. **3-4 family:** Three to four family residence.

5+ family: Multiple family residence. Examples include chopped-up houses, apartments

Office Commercial: Commercial space that houses offices.

Retail Commercial: Retail space.

Industrial: Industrial space, includes gas stations, filling stations.

Vacant land/Unsure: The parcel does not have a house or business on it. Includes parking lots. Please check this option if you are unsure of the property's land use.





Single family.

Two-family/Duplex.



5+ family.



301.3. Vacant structures & land.

All vacant structures, their premises, or vacant land shall be maintained in a clean, safe, secure and sanitary condition so as not to cause a blighting problem or adversely affect the public health or safety.

Reasons

Vacant structures and land may invite vagrants, crime and animals. Structures left vacant for long periods of time may become eyesores of the neighborhood.

Ratings

Occupied structure on property

Vacant structure

Vacant land

Land under development: New construction is occurring on the property

Other/unsure: Please mark this if unsure about the occupancy status of the property





Occupied structure on property.

Vacant structure.





Vacant land.

Vacant land.

Property scan training



under construction.

Reasons

Omaha Neighborhood Scan makes note of properties under construction. This is not part of Omaha code enforcement, instead it is useful for neighborhoods to guage what is happening in their neighborhoods. Some neighborhoods may take information into account when planning for scan follow-up.

Things to look for

The obvious -- construction vehicles, workers. Construction material.

Ratings

No: No signs of construction on the property. **Yes:** Work is being completed on the property.



No problem.

Property scan training



302.3. Sidewalks & driveways.

All sidewalks, walkways, stairs, driveways, parking spaces and similar areas shall be kept in a proper state of repair and maintained free from hazardous conditions.

Reasons

All sidewalks, walkways, stairs, driveways, parking spaces must be kept usable and kept in proper repair. Walking surfaces that have deteriorated to a condition that presents a hazard to pedestrians must be repaired or replaced to eliminate the hazard and thus reduce the potential for accidents or injuries.

Things to look for

Cracks that are wider than a finger.

Cracks with edges that are even or higher on one side than another.

Sections are raised up or lower than surrounding areas.

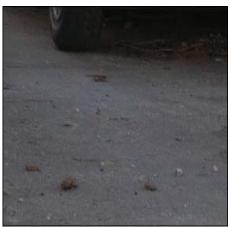
Concrete that has deteriorated due to weather and wear.

Ratings

None: Sidewalks/driveway shows no problems.

Minor: Cracks in sidewalks/driveway are evident. Less than 25% of the area has cracks. Cracks do not present a walking or other hazard.

Major: Major cracks and uneven areas. More than 25% of the area has cracks. Major walking hazard and weatherization problem for house/grounds.





No problem.

Minor problem. Cracks with edges that are evident; cracks do not present a walking or other hazard.





Major problem. Cracks with edges that are even or higher on one side

than another, sections are raised up or lower than surrounding areas, concrete that has deteriorated due to weather and wear.

Major problem. Cracks with edges that are even or higher on one side than another, sections are raised up or lower than surrounding areas

Property scan training



302.1. Sanitation.

All exterior property and premises shall be maintained in a clean, safe and sanitary condition. The occupant shall keep that part of the exterior property which such occupant occupies or controls in a clean and sanitary condition. Exterior area must be maintained clean and free from rubbish and garbage. Each jurisdiction has neighborhoods within the overall community which have distinct characteristics. Deteriorated, low-cost housing may predominate in one area, while another has expensive, well-maintained housing units. Sanitation standards should be enforced uniformly and consistently.

Things to look for

Cluttered or littered driveway, yard or porch;

Cluttered garages;

Deteriorating, uncared for trees, lawns and shrubs.

Ratings

None: No problem; premises neat and orderly.

Minor: Lawn unkempt; some litter; cluttered porch; etc. Less than 25% of property is slightly disordered. Major: Disorder an eyesore, will involve more than normal clean-up and maintenance to correct; more than

25% of property is slightly disordered.





No Problem.

Minor Problem. Some clutter in yard.





Major Problem. Cluttered and littered yard. Major Problem. Cluttered and littered yard.



302.4. Weeds.

All premises and exterior property shall be maintained free from weeds or plant growth in excess of 10" (254 mm). All noxious weeds shall be prohibited. Weeds shall be defined as all grasses, annual plants and vegetation, other than trees or shrubs provided; however, this term shall not include cultivated flowers and gardens.

Things to look for

Criteria establishing maximum heights for grasses and weeds are necessary to reduce rodent shelters and pollen dust problems. All noxious weeds are prohibited. Cultivated flowers and gardens are not considered to be weeds. Cultivated is defined as "to loosen to dig (soil) around growing plants." Uncultivated gardens should be treated the same as weeds and tall grasses.

Ratings No problem

Problem: noxious weeds in excess of 10".





No Problem.

Problem. Noxious weeds in excess of 10".



Problem. Noxious weeds in excess of 10".



Problem. Noxious weeds in excess of 10".



302.7. Accessory structures.

All accessory structures, including detached garages, fences and walls shall be maintained structurally sound and in good repair.

Reasons

Accessory structures must be maintained in accordance with the criteria established by the section. Property owners often give detached garages, sheds, fences, retaining walls and similar structures a lower maintenance priority than the primary structure. Thus, these structures are frequently in disrepair.

Things to look for

Roof problems Rotting siding/boards Broken windows Structure needs painting Structure looks slanted/not level.

Ratings

None: No problem. Premises neat and orderly.

Minor: Property looks slightly disordered; need of paint or rust removal is slight on storage area; some

litter/storage items visible. Less than 25% of storage area needs paint or exterior work.

Major: Disorder is an eyesore and will involve more than normal clean-up; disrepair potentially a hazard to continued use. More than 25% of storage area needs paint or exterior work.



Minor problem. Wall is missing pieces, crumbling.



Major problem. Fence is broken, slanted and missing pieces.



Major problem. Roof problems, painting, structure looks slanted/not level



rotting siding/ boards, structure needs Major problem. Wall is missing pieces, crumbling.



302.8. Motor vehicles.

No inoperative or unlicensed motor vehicle shall be parked, kept or stored on any premises and no vehicle shall at any time be in a state of major disassembly, disrepair or in the process of being stripped or dismantled. Painting of vehicles is prohibited unless conducted inside an approved spray booth.

Reasons

Improper storage of inoperable vehicles can be a serious problem for a community. The vehicles are unsightly, clutter the neighborhood, provide a harborage for rodents and are an attractive nuisance for children. This regulation addresses two problems associated with vehicle storage and repair: The blighting influence that improperly stored inoperable vehicles have on a neighborhood; The neighborhood mechanic who attempts to operate a vehicle repair business from home.

Ratings

No problem

Problem, not parked on hard surface

Problem, parked on street

Problem, parked in driveway





Problem. not parked on hard surface

Problem. parked in driveway



Problem. parked in driveway



302.9. Defacement of property.

No person shall willfully or wantonly damage, mutilate or deface any exterior surface of any structure or building on any private or public property by placing thereon any marking, carving or graffiti. It shall be the responsibility of the owner to restore said surface to an approved state of maintenance and repair.

Reasons

Graffiti, carving and damage is a problem that plagues exterior surfaces of walls, fencing and sidewalks in cities and towns of all sizes.

This problem begins as an eyesore and can result in serious consequences, including declining property values and degradation of the structures; ability to repel rain and snow.

Ratings No problem Problem. Graffiti

Problem. Other damage





Graffiti.

Graffiti.





Graffiti.

Graffiti.

Property scan training



303.02. Protective treatment.

All exterior surfaces, including but not limited to: doors, door and window frames, cornices, porches, trim, balconies, decks and fences shall be maintained in good condition. Exterior wood surfaces, other than decay-resistant woods, shall be protected from the elements and decay by painting or other protective covering or treatment. All metal surfaces subject to rust or corrosion shall be coated to inhibit such rush and corrosion and all surfaces with rust or corrosion shall be stabilized and coated to inhibit future rust and corrosion. Oxidation stains shall be removed from exterior surfaces. Surfaces designed for stabilization by oxidation are exempt from this requirement. Peeling, flaking and chipped paint shall be eliminated and surfaces repainted. All siding and masonry joints, as well as those between the building envelope and the perimeter of windows, doors and skylights shall be maintained, weather resistant and water-tight.

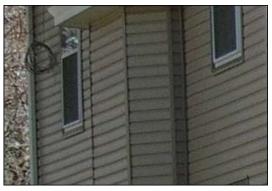
Reasons

If paint or other protective covering or treatment is used to provide protection from the elements, it cannot be peeling, flaking or chipped. Additionally, buildings with deteriorated paint, or with masonry joints and siding in disrepair or not weather tight will eventually decay and exert a blighting influence on the community.

Ratings

None: No problem

Minor: Cracking, blistering, peeling of paint and/or bare wood less than 25% of the exterior surface. **Major:** Severe surface deterioration, missing material, cracking, blistering, peeling of paint and/or bare wood on more than 25% of the surface, removal/replacement of deteriorated surface or missing materials required.



No Problem.



Minor Problem. Cracking, blistering, peeling of paint and/or bare wood less than 25% of the exterior surface.



Major Problem. Severe surface deterioration, missing material, cracking, blistering, peeling of paint and/or bare wood on more than 25% of the surface, removal/replacement of deteriorated surface removal/replacement of deteriorated or missing materials required.



Major Problem. Severe surface deterioration, missing material, cracking, blistering, peeling of paint and/or bare wood on more than 25% of the surface, surface or missing materials required.

Property scan training



303.4. Structural members.

All structural members shall be maintained free from deterioration and shall be capable of safely supporting the imposed dead and live loads.

Reasons

Building components that must support other building components are considered to be structural. Structural members must be kept sound and capable of supporting all of the dead and live loads imposed upon them. Dead loads are the loads created by the structure itself. The footing must adequately carry the load of the foundation, beams, joists, walls, roof and other similar members located above. Live loads are the weights that are added to the finished structure. Live loads include furniture, appliances, equipment and other items added to the inside of the building.

Things to look for

Roof joists Rafters Wall framing Foundation sill plates

Ratings

None: No problem

Minor: Evidence of structural problem, including deteriorating roof joint and rafter, bent wall framing, on less

than 25% of the housing structure.

Major: Evidence of structural problem, including deteriorating roof joint and rafter, bent wall framing, on more

than 25% of the housing structure.





No Problem.

Minor Problem. Floor not sound.





Major Problem. Roof joists and rafters not supporting load.

Major Problem. Floor not sound; not capable of supporting loads.

Property scan training



303.05. Foundation walls.

All foundation walls shall be maintained plumb and free from open cracks and breaks and shall be kept in such condition so as to prevent the entry of rodents and other pests.

Reasons

The foundation must safely support the entire structure. Minor problems left uncorrected can become major. Major foundation problems can result in collapse of the structure. Three of the most frequent causes of foundation failure result from damage caused at the time of construction, soil problems (settling, sliding, heaving and expanding) and the effects of water. Water entering the foundation through cracks, holes or breaks can freeze and expand, causing damage to the foundation. All conditions that permit entry of rodents or other pests must be corrected.

Things to look for

Bulges in foundation wall **Buckles** Cracks Holes Crumbling material Settlement supports

Ratings

None: No problem

Minor: Includes hairline cracks, loose and flaking mortar and surface deterioration of cement blocks and poured concrete walls. Hairline cracks and other damage apparent on less than 25% of foundation walls. Major: Includes large horizontal and vertical step cracks, and large areas of missing foundation material. Cracks apparent on more than 25% of foundation walls.







Minor problem. Hairline crack, loose and flaking mortor. Covering less than 25% of the foundation walls.





Major problem. Missing parts & lacks a section of foundation.

Major problem. Settling, bulges in foundation wall, crumbling material & holes.



Major problem. Settling, bulges in foundation wall, crumbling material & holes.

Property scan training



303.06. Exterior walls.

All exterior walls shall be free from holes, breaks and loose or rotting materials; and maintained, weatherproof and properly surface coated where required to prevent deterioration.

Reasons

Holes, cracks, decayed wood or any other condition that permits rain or dampness to enter the structure must be repaired. Exterior surface materials must be properly coated to prevent deterioration if they are not naturally decay resistant. Many materials do not require surface coating, including: certain metals (aluminum, copper, etc.), masonry products (bricks, stone, stucco, etc.), naturally decay-resistant woods (redwood, cedar, etc.) and woods that have been treated with chemicals to prevent decay.

Things to look for

Bulges in walls, buckles Missing material Cracks in siding Holes in siding Efforts to patch siding Rotted or open areas of wall

Ratings

None: no problem

Minor: Bulging of 1-2", significant diagonal cracking in masonry surfaces or wood surfaces. More noticeable cracks, holes and wear in siding. Surface showing wear and deterioration and affecting less than 25% of siding. Cracking, blistering, peeling of paint and/or bare wood on less than 25% of exterior walls.

Major: Bulging beyond 2", significant diagonal cracking in masonry surfaces. Major cracks, holes and wear in siding affecting more than 25% of siding. Evidence of surface deterioration, missing material, cracking, blistering, peeling paint and/or bare wood over more than 25% of the exterior surface.

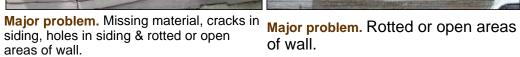






Major problem. Missing material, cracks in siding, holes in siding & rotted or open areas of wall.







of wall.

Property scan training



303.07. Roofs & drainage.

The roof and flashing shall be sound, tight and not have defects that admit rain. Roof drainage shall be adequate to prevent dampness or deterioration in the walls or interior portion of the structure. Roof drains, gutters and downspouts shall be maintained in good repair and free from obstructions. Roof water shall not be discharged in a manner that creates a public nuisance.

Reasons

A secure, non-leaking roof is necessary to keep a building properly maintained. Even small leaks can cause thousands of dollars in damage to insulation, plaster, studs and joists. Roof leaks usually occur along valley areas, around plumbing vents, chimneys, dormers and other penetrations through the roof. Drains, gutters and downspouts must be kept in working order so that water runoff is properly diverted.

Things to look for

Sagging roof ridge line Missing shingles Deflection of roof subsurface Rotted eaves.

Ratings

None: No problem

Minor: Several rotted or broken eaves apparent, sagging roof ridge line, missing shingles, structural deterioration or deflection (e.g., the movement of a structural part as a result of stress) over less than 25% of the roof.

Major: Missing shingles, rotted eaves sagging roof ridge line, significant structural deterioration or deflection over more than 25% of the roof.







Minor Problem. Sagging roof ridge line, structural deterioration.





Major Problem. Major problem. Rotted **Major Problem.** Major problem. Rotted eaves eaves and significant structural deterioration and significant structural deterioration



Major Problem. Rotted eaves, sagging roof ridge line, missing shingles, deflection of roof subsurface and significant structural deterioration.



Major Problem. Rotted eaves, sagging roof ridge line, missing shingles, deflection of roof subsurface and significant structural deterioration.

Property scan training



303.09. Overhang extensions.

All overhang extensions including, but not limited to canopies, marquees, signs, metal awnings, fire escapes, standpipes and exhaust ducts shall be maintained in good repair and be properly anchored so as to be kept in a sound condition. When required, all exposed surfaces of metal or wood shall be protected from the elements and against decay or rust by periodic application of weather-coating materials, such as paint or similar surface treatment.

Reasons

Most problems related to overhang extensions, especially signs, marquees, fire escapes and awnings, are a result of deterioration at the points where they are anchored to the building. Fire escapes, standpipes and exhaust ducts serve the critical functions of providing proper exiting, fire protection and the removal of exhaust products.

Ratings

None: No problem

Minor: Some signs of decay or rust; rotted eaves, paint or other weather-coating material has deteriorated

over less than 25% of the surface

Major: Significant signs of decays or rust, rotted eaves, paint or other weather-coating material has deteriorated over more than 25% of the surface. Sections of overhang extensions are missing or damaged.





No Problem.

Minor Problem. Some signs of decay; paint or other weather-coating material has deteriorated over less than 25% of the surface.





Minor Problem. Some signs of decay Major Problem. Significant signs of

or rust; rotted eaves, paint or other weather-coating material has deteriorated over less than 25% of the deteriorated over more than 25% of surface.

decays or rust, rotted eaves, paint or other weather-coating material has the surface.

Property scan training



303.10. Stairways, decks, porches & balconies.

Every exterior stairway, deck, porch and balcony and all appurtenances attached thereto, shall be maintained structurally sound, in good repair, with proper anchorage and capable of supporting the imposed loads.

Reasons

Regular maintenance is required to keep stairs, decks, porches and balconies in good repair so they do not become a hazard to occupants or visitors. Positive anchorage of elevated decks and exterior stairs which may be subjected to collapse is especially important.

Things to look for

Loose or missing concrete/boards Cracks and holes Leaning and out-of-plumb Lack of fire escape when applicable Missing steps No handrail

Ratings

None: No problem

Minor: Small crack or chipped area in porch/step concrete. If wood, slight wear and tear, with some small

cracks in wood. Affects less than 25% of area.

Major: Continued deterioration and sagging of porch/step concrete. Severely out of level/plumb. Extensive wearing and deterioration of concrete, with sever cracking and/or chipping. Affects more than 25% of area.



No Problem.

Minor Problem. Cracking, blistering, peeling of paint and/or bare wood less than 25% of the exterior surface.





Major Problem. Major problem. Loose or missing concrete/ boards, cracks and holes,

41/14

leaning and out of plumb.(above)

Major Problem. Major problem. Loose or missing concrete/ boards, cracks and holes, leaning and out of plumb.(left)

Property scan training



303.11. Chimneys & towers.

All chimneys, cooling towers, smoke stacks and similar appurtenances shall be maintained structurally safe and sound, and in good repair.

All exposed surfaces of metal or wood shall be protected from the elements and against decay or rust by periodic application of weather-coating materials, such as paint or similar surface treatments.

Reasons

Chimneys, towers of all types and other similar appurtenances are frequently ignored until they become non-functional or are in danger of collapse. Because of the corrosiveness of the exhaust gases, chimneys and smokestacks often deteriorate on the inside first. Occasionally, deterioration may become sufficient to prevent the chimney or smokestack from operating properly. Obstructed chimneys have caused numerous carbon monoxide deaths.

Things to look for Missing mortar in brick Leaning

Combustible material.

Ratings

None: No problem

Minor: Slight cracks or holes, loose material over less than 25% of the area, slightly leaning or out-of-plumb. **Major:** Cracks, holes over more than 25% of the area, combustible material in direct contact with or in dangerous proximity to chimney, substantial leaning or out-of-plumb.





No problem.

Minor problem. Slight cracks or holes, loose material over less than 25% of the area, slightly leaning or out-of-plumb.



Major problem. Missing mortar in brick, leaning, cracks, holes over more than 25% of the area and out-of-plumb.



Major problem. Missing mortar in brick, leaning, cracks and out-of-plumb.

Property scan training



303.12. Handrails & guards.

Every handrail and guard shall be firmly fastened and capable of supporting normally imposed loads and shall be maintained in good condition.

Reasons

Handrails are a safety issue.

Exceptions

Prior to 1938, stairs were not required to have handrails. The City adopted the code requiring handrails at stairs with 4 or more steps in 1938 and then again to include those with 3 or more steps. If you have an original stair in place with missing handrails, built prior to 1938, and the stair has not been enlarged or altered, your stair may qualify for exemption.

Ratings

No problem. No rail, porch 2 steps or less Problem. No rail, porch 3 steps or more No problem. Rail, in good condition Problem. Rail, needs repair





No problem. No rail, porch 2 steps or less

No problem. Rail, in good condition.



Problem. No rail, porch 3 steps or more. Handrail and guard are not firmly fastened. Not capable of supporting loads; not in good condition.



Problem. Rail, needs repair. Handrail and guard are not firmly fastened. Not capable of supporting loads; not in good condition.



303.13. Windows, skylights & door frames.

Every window, skylight, door and frame shall be kept in sound condition, good repair and weather tight. All windows, skylights and doors must be installed in their frames so that they are weather tight (i.e. able to prevent wind, rain or other elements from entering the structure).

Things to look for

Out of plumb openings Storm doors

Windows deterioration of sash, sill or frame

Ratings

None: No problem

Minor: Visible problems, with less than 25% of windows/sashes/ screens/doors showing some sign of

deterioration or degradation.

Major: Continued deterioration encompassing more than 25% of the doors/windows/screens of the housing

structure.



No Problem.



Minor Problem. Little deterioration of sash, sill or frame.



Major Problem. Little deterioration of sash, sill or Major Problem. Little deterioration of sash, frame.



sill or frame.



303.13.1 Glazing.

All glazing materials shall be maintained free from cracks and holes.

Reasons

All glass is to be maintained without open cracks or holes, which can admit wind and moisture. Defective glass poses hazards to occupants.

Things to look for

Cracked or broken panes.

Ratings

None: No problem

Minor: Visible problems, less than 25% of window pane is cracked.

Major: Continued cracking and deterioration encompassing more than 25% of the window pane.





No problem.

Minor problem. Less than 25% of winodw pane is cracked or broken.



Major problem. Cracked or broken panes.



Major problem. Cracked or broken panes.



303.15. Doors.

All exterior doors, door assemblies and hardware shall be maintained in good condition. Locks at all entrances to dwelling units, rooming units and guest rooms shall tightly secure the door. All exterior doors, door assemblies and hardware must perform their intended functions properly (i.e., open and close easily and keep out the elements). Locks must be readily released without keys, special knowledge or effort.

Ratings

None: No problem

Minor: Visible problems, with less than 25% of the door's appearance showing some sign of deterioration or

degradation.

Major: Continued deterioration encompassing more than 25% of the door's appearance.





No problem.

Minor problem. Less than 25% of the door's appearance showing some sign of deterioration.



Major problem. Door broken and missing parts. No locks on the door. Door cannot close.



Major problem. Door assembly not in good condition



601.1. Electrical lights.

The owner of the structure shall provide and maintain mechanical and electrical facilities and equipment in compliance with these requirements.

Things to look for

Exposed wires Broken bulbs and fixtures Exposed socket

Ratings

None: no problem

Minor: broken bulbs, fixtures and exposed sockets apparent on less than 25% of the structure.

Major: broken bulbs, fixtures and exposed sockets apparent on more than 25% of the structure. Exposed

wires present a hazard.





No problem.

Minor problem. Exposed bulb.



Major problem. Exposed wires, broken bulbs and fixtures, exposed socket.





