City of Tacoma Nuisance Ordinance

In January 2007 the City Council voted to strengthen and enforce the revised nuisance codes by abating (cleaning up) nuisances that property owners do not clean up on their own. The nuisance code amendments include, but are not limited to, the following features:

- **A call is placed to report a code violation**
- **Once the call is taken, a code enforcement officer will drive to the address, take a picture of the violation and post a notice with the picture on the violator's front door.**
- **A letter to the property and the property owner will be sent with details of the violation.**
- **Eighteen (18) days will be given the property owner to amend the violation.**
- ***IF*, after 18 days, the violation has not been addressed by the property owner, the City will send a crew to clean up the violation.**
- **The property owner will be charged for the clean up; which generally runs about $1,700.00 and up. (so far, the experience is that most property owners clean up on their own property once they get the notice.)**

As of January only 3% of violations have been cleaned up by City staff.

The nuisance code amendments address issues related to the timely removal of nuisances such as (but not limited to):

Yard

- **Animal waste/feces or parts which are improperly handled, contained, or removed from the premises; including bones, meats, hides, skins, or any part of any dead animal, fish, or foul.**

- **Animal manure or excreta in any quantity which is not securely protected from flies and the elements and which is likely to become putrid, offensive, and injurious to the public health.**

- **Overgrown, uncultivated, or unkempt vegetation of any type, including, but not limited to, shrubs, brush, trees, weeds, blackberries, and grasses over <u>one foot in height or length.</u>**

- **Where a single parcel is undeveloped and over one acre in area, elimination of the fire hazard presented by vegetation may be accomplished by removing the vegetation from the area within 20 feet of abutting, improved properties.**

- **Inappropriate disposal or accumulation of vegetation waste, including, but not limited to, grass clippings, cut brush, cut trees, and/or cut weeds.**

- **Weeds, foliage, grass, shrubs, or other vegetation which constitute a fire hazard, or encroaches on sidewalks, alleys or neighboring properties, is damaging public improvements, or subjects neighboring residential properties to weed growth.**

- **Storing of flammable junk on any real estate, including but not limited to old rags, rope, cordage, rubber, boxes, or paper.**

- **Storing outside a completely enclosed building items that constitute a threat to the public health, safety or welfare, including but not limited to: old or scrap rope, batteries, paper, trash, rubber debris, tires, waste, used lumber or salvaged wood, machinery or appliances or parts of such machinery or appliances, vehicular component parts, iron, steel, old or scrap household goods or hardware, medications, medical supplies, or medical devices, cut brush or wood including dead or decaying plant material except s contained in a compost pile or orderly stacked firewood if cut in lengths of four feet or less.**

House

- **The existence of any screening which is in a falling, decayed, dilapidated, or unsafe condition.**

- **Any unsightly, abandoned, or deteriorated building or structure, or any building or structure constructed with inappropriate materials or improperly fastened together of anchored against forces of nature.**

- **Any building or structure where construction was commenced and the building or structure was left unfinished.**

- **Missing and/or broken gutters; broken and/or missing windows; peeled, blistered paint; foundation has holes and cracks; railings and/or steps are broken; missing siding; chimney falling apart parts of roof is missing and has holes in it.**

- **Burning or disposal of refuse, sawdust, or other material in such a manner as to cause or permit ashes, sawdust, soot, or cinders to be cast upon the streets or alleys of the City, or to cause of permit the smoke, ashes, soot, or gases arising from such burning to become annoying or to injure or endanger the health, comfort, or repose of said persons.**

Parking of vehicles on residential property

The primary function of yards on single-family residential lots is to provide access to light and air and to provide circulation, recreation, and landscaping around the primary single-family dwelling building, which are beneficial to the general health and welfare of the community. This section establishes standards by which parking vehicles on single-family residential lots are allowable.

- **Vehicles parked in the side or rear yard area of single-family residential lots shall be limited to those lots which have legal access from the adjacent street or alley and shall be limited to four vehicles or to no more that 60 percent of the combined side and rear year area, whichever is less.**
- **Vehicles parked in the front yard of single-family residential lots, although discouraged where alley access is available, shall be limited to those lots which have legal access from the adjacent street or alley. Parking of vehicles in front yards**

shall be on a properly prepared and contained all-weather surface, including, but not limited to, concrete, asphalt, gravel, approved permeable paving materials, or other material approved in accordance with TMC 2.02.

- **The total number of vehicles parked or stored in the open on a single-family residential lot shall be no more that six (6).**
- **Inoperable vehicles stored on single-family residential lots shall be limited to the rear yard area. Screening shall be provided between the inoperable vehicles and adjacent properties or rights-of-way.**
- **All private vehicles which are fully enclosed within a legally constructed garage or other structure are not considered as part of the allotted number of vehicles for purpose of this section.**

Abandoned Autos

What is an abandoned vehicle?

Abandoned vehicles are ones that have been left on City street and may have one or more of the following characteristics:

- **Dismantled**
- **In a state of disrepair (broken windows, sitting on blocks, etc.)**
- **Stripped of major parts**
- **Missing license plates**
- **Filled with garbage**
- **Sitting in the same sport for seven or more days and appears non-operational**
- **In front of a residence in which owners have moved away. Most abandoned vehicles are left by people unknown to those living in the neighborhood.**

How do I get rid of abandoned vehicles in my neighborhood?

The City of Tacoma will help if the vehicle is considered an abandoned vehicle. Call the abandoned vehicle hotline at (253) 591-5926. The abandoned vehicle enforcement officer will not respond to neighborhood parking problems, including:

- **Vehicles parked illegally**
- **Vehicles with expired licenses**
- ****Recreational vehicles parked on City rights of way.**

Please call the Tacoma police Department non-emergency number (253) 798-4721 and choose option 1 (one) for those types of vehicle problems.

****City Ordnance (per Terry Rucker; road use compliance officer City of Tacoma) states that RVs, Trailers, Utility Trailers, and/or trucks w/trailers attached MUST be driven and/or used every 7 (seven) days and currently licensed.**

It is a violation if any vehicle is parked on sidewalk, alley, etc.

Telephone Numbers

To report an unkempt property	**591-5001**
Dumpster and Disposal	**591-5634**
Household Debris Removal	**573-2468**
TAGRO Mix	**502-2150**
Abandoned Vehicle	**591-5926**
Neighborhood Parking Problem (Police Non-Emergency number)	**798-4721 option 1 (one)**