



Public Health
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MEMORANDUM

TO: City of West Allis License & Health Committee
FROM: Bob Leischow, Health Commissioner, and members of the Nuisance Abatement Team
DATE: December 13, 2022
SUBJECT: Communication regarding Nuisance Abatement Program – Action Plan Progress

PLAN FOCUS: GARBAGE CART STANDARDIZATION

(Strategic Plan item: 1.4.4)

Summary: Require all residential properties to have a city issued garbage cart. If they do not currently have one, they can purchase a cart at 50% off the total cost.

Progress to date: As of August 1, 2022, all residential properties having 3 or less living units have in their possession a city provided garbage cart.

PLAN FOCUS: CODE ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS – CONSOLIDATED/REORGANIZATION

(Strategic Plan item: 1.4.5)

Summary: Improve quality of life through code enforcement. The City has multiple departments engaged in various aspects of code enforcement and nuisance abatement. Restructuring of how code enforcement is accomplished through increased collaboration, streamlining and efficiencies. The multiagency Rodent Task Force continues to meet bi-weekly to discuss progress and plan for next steps. All code enforcement processes and complaints completed through OpenGov.

Progress to date: Further strides have been taken to increase rodent tracking within OpenGov. Internally, staff flag 'Let Us Help' entries as rodent related and can indicate if rodent information was discussed during the follow up. The Health Department has finalized the rodent nuisance enforcement platform in OpenGov to issue letters and abatement orders directly through OpenGov.

Public Works recycling/refuse crews continue to report rodent activity during collection routes to Code Enforcement/Health Department staff. The municipal code addressing refuse and recycling collection continues to be enforced relating to storage and collection issues at residential properties. Since January 2022, approximately 1,500 (+600 since last report) violation notices related to non-contained garbage, improper containers and carts have been issued. Of the 1,500 violation notices sent, 9 resulted in citations. Five (5) were related to issues with garbage/food content stored on the ground, insufficient containers, and animal waste on the ground not contained.

Code Enforcement Director hired and on-boarded in September.

PLAN FOCUS: RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP

(Strategic Plan item: 1.4.6)

Summary: Engage with neighborhood residents to increase awareness of causes for a rise in the presence of nuisance animals and organize neighborhood clean-ups to eliminate locations for nuisance animals to inhabit and eliminate access to food sources.



Progress to date: Phase one of the social media campaign has concluded and a total of 67,927 people were reached through the WAHD FB Rodent Posts and a total of 51,175 people were reached through the City of West Allis FB Rodent Posts. We are in the process of creating posts for phase two of the social media campaign. Our first post for phase two was on the proper disposal of pumpkins since they are a food source for rodents. The WAHD FB Post reached a total of 2,700 people, raising awareness.

PLAN FOCUS: NUISANCE ANIMAL ABATEMENT/MITIGATION PLAN + METRICS

(Strategic Plan item; 1.4.2/1.4.7)

Summary: In conjunction with the previous three initiatives and the previous and current programs focused on nuisance animal abatement, implement a plan to mitigate the issue. Provide increased funding for nuisance animal abatement and control, explore options to disrupt the reproductive cycle and possible involvement of a pest control company, and advanced trapping tools.

Progress to date: We are tracking resident complaints/communications, notices of violations, and neighborhood rodent outreach including neighborhood walk-throughs, door hangers and mailings.

- 580 properties fell under the umbrella of the walk-through areas.
 - 28 people joined the 1st neighborhood walk-through and 12 people for the 2nd/3rd walk-through.
 - One enforcement walk through was conducted on August 25th in Zone 1 where Orkin Pest Control Services were implemented. Approximately 40 Orders to Abate were issued based on violations identified during the walk through.
- 196 (+41 since last report) rodent related complaints were received through OpenGov (As of 11/30/2022). Initial inspections were conducted for each of the complaints. As conditions warranted, follow up to verify the completion of necessary actions were conducted.
 - 1,205 neighborhood notice letters (+136 since last report) sent to residents related to rodent complaints, with educational packets included for all (As of 11/30/2022).
 - 13 Notices of Violation related to rodent infestations sent to property owners between 10/01/2022 – 11/30/2022.
 - One Notice to Abate was issued to a rental property with children that had an infestation inside of the home and required professional pest control services to be engaged.
- One Licensed restaurant was ordered by the Health Department to cease operations for a total of 31 days due to a confirmed rodent infestation inside of the building.
 - 7 inspections conducted at this facility between 9/20/2022 – 11/23/2022.
 - A total of 6 rodents were exterminated prior to being deemed pest-free.
 - A total of \$1,176 in penalties were assessed to the facility.
- One residential property received a Cease-and-Desist Order for feeding the birds due to a history of repeated offenses (issued on 5/7/2021).
 - Summons and complaint was filed on 6/30/2021 with court hearing on 1/20/2022. Judgement found the property owner guilty and +\$6,000 in fines were assessed.
 - Due to non-compliance an updated Health Order was issued on 6/30/2022; summons and complaint filed on 8/1/2022.
 - A total of 6 inspections were done at the property in 2022.
 - This residential situation prompted a neighborhood wide Cease-and-Desist Order for bird feeding, issued on 6/28/2022 to 45 properties due to escalated rodent activity in the area.
- 98 rodent bait stations placed in 3 different zones identified as hot spots for rodent activity and in Income Eligible Neighborhoods, supported by CDBG funds.
 - Zone 1: 57th-66th Streets between Mitchell and Burnham (54 bait stations in 9 alleyways).



- The alley between 61st & 60th showed the most activity, followed by 66th & 65th, 62nd & 61st, 64th & 63rd, and 65th & 64th.
 - Every alleyway showed activity.
 - Zone 2: 60th-66th Streets between National and Mineral (28 bait stations in 6 alleyways).
 - The alley between 62nd & 61st from Washington St. to Madison St. showed the most activity, followed by 65th & 64th from Washington to Madison, and between 62nd & 61st north of Washington St..
 - Every alleyway showed activity.
 - Zone 3: Liberty Heights neighborhood (16 bait stations in 3 alleyways).
 - The alley between Liberty Heights Park and 60th Street showed the most activity, followed by the alley between 63rd & 62nd north of Lapham St..
 - No activity was observed in the alley south of Walgreens.
- DPW added 7 additional bait stations to Liberty Heights Park, now a total of 10 bait stations.
 - Increased monitoring of bait stations from biweekly, to weekly.
- In 2022, Code Enforcement Department:
 - Conducted 1,572 tall grass and weeds inspections.
 - 496 orders were issued (+69 since last report)
 - Contractors were sent to cut grass and weeds 162 separate times
 - Conducted 800 Proactive inspections in the Six Points Area.
 - 362 orders were sent out.
 - Approximately 195 letters regarding rodent harborage were issued (+70 since last report).
 - Issued a total of 9 citations.
 - 112 cases were sent to municipal court for all reasons (rodent and non-rodent).
 - 4 properties were taken to Circuit Court (rodent and non-rodent).
 - Currently maintaining 27 nuisance abandoned properties.

PLAN FOCUS: ORDINANCE CHANGES

(Strategic Plan: 1.4.8)

Summary: Work with the Common Council to adopt summary abatement laws to allow for immediate removal of items that cause nuisance animal harborages.

Progress to date: West Allis Code Section 7.145 – Rodent Control was adopted by the Common Council implemented into the code on August 2, 2022. The intent of the code update is to provide various code enforcement departments with the ability, authority, and discretion to issue citations, summarily abate remedial problems, or require abatement practices be employed for more nuanced issues.