



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Building Safety Division

m e m o r a n d u m

TO: Laurel Lunt Prussing, Mayor

FROM: Elizabeth H. Tyler, FAICP, Community Development Director

DATE: February 18, 2010

SUBJECT: Housing Review for 2009

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide a review of the housing activities of the Building Safety Division for 2009. Summary reports regarding certified housing, response to tenant complaints and rental registration activities are attached.

Discussion

Systematic Inspection Program

In 2009, a total of 1,385 multi-family dwelling units in 90 apartment buildings and 219 single and duplex dwellings were inspected, for a total of **1,604** units inspected. In addition to the initial inspections of these properties, 1,814 follow-up inspections were necessary to check compliance. The majority of the properties inspected received a “Class B” Certificate of Registration, three multi-family buildings were issued a “Class A” Certificate, and four received a “Class C” designation. This latter designation indicates that the buildings had violations of applicable City codes but that the violations did not pose an immediate threat or danger to the life, health, or safety of the occupants. Designations by address are posted on the City’s website.

The systematic multi-family inspection program took place in Areas 16, 17, and 18 in 2009, near the University of Illinois campus and south central Urbana. Currently, this program continues in Area 19, which includes Colorado Avenue, and Vawter and Silver Streets. In 2009, the systematic single- and two-family inspection program worked in Areas 4 and 5 in the campus area and is now in Area 6, in east central Urbana (see attached map for locations).

In 2009, city staff completed 63 re-inspections of common areas as a result of landlord failure to comply with violation notices sent through the Urbana Fire Department’s systematic inspection program.

Follow-up inspections continued at the Woodstone and Scottswood Manor properties. These properties each have new ownership and new names - Woodstone is now “Urbana Townhomes” and Scottswood is now “Aspen Court”. While there is still considerable work to be done, progress on the correction of the property maintenance code violations has been steady under the new ownerships.

Renovation continues at 901-903 E. Colorado following a roof collapse due to contractor error. This building remains vacant.

Certified Housing Inspections

Under a long-standing services contract, Building Safety Staff conduct annual inspections of Certified Housing at the University of Illinois. Inspections were started in September 2009 with final inspections completed in December 2009. There were 24 properties inspected. This is a reduction in one property from last year, as Theta Chi has temporarily vacated the house at 1404 S. Lincoln Ave. There were 69 significant violations discovered compared to 81 violations for the previous cycle. In 2007, the City required all certified houses to have sprinkler systems by 2012. To date, 18 of the 24 properties are protected with a sprinkler system. The number of properties that did not have any violations increased from seven to ten. There were 1,330 residents in certified housing this year. Approximately 25 percent of the houses received positive citations for individual rooms exceeding the University of Illinois housekeeping standards. A more detailed report on this program is attached.

Grant Program Inspections

The Building Safety Division provides inspection services for a number of HUD programs administered by the City and other agencies. A total of 22 inspections were completed for the Shelter Plus Care program which is administered by the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission. In addition, eight inspections were performed for the ADDI program and six properties were inspected for the Whole House Rehabilitation program, both of which programs are administered by the City's Grants Division.

Summary of Tenant Complaints for 2009

The Building Safety Division received a total of **39 tenant complaints** in 2009, nine fewer than the previous year. As required by our Adopting Ordinance for Property Maintenance, the majority of these violations were corrected within 30 days. Consistent with our requirements for more serious complaints affecting life safety or livability, four of the complaints were cleared the same day and nine were cleared within five days. The attached summary table shows that the average days for compliance has declined since the city reduced the required compliance timeframes in 2006 and 2007. In 2009, 73% of the complaints were addressed within 0 to 30 days (59% were addressed within 0 to 5 days) and the remaining 27% were addressed within 30 to 60 days. The average number of days for compliance was **16 days** in 2009. These percents and averages do not include properties which remained vacant, which received valid extensions, or where the complaints were determined to be invalid.

In addition to tenant complaints, a total of **332 miscellaneous complaints** from neighbors and other constituents were received in 2009 and followed up for compliance.

Vacant Properties

The City maintains a registry of vacant properties and requires that these properties be properly secured and maintained in a safe condition. Two vacant properties were referred to the City's legal division in 2009: 807 Hawthorne and 204 N. Wood St. for failure to file a vacant structure registration. The owner of 807 Hawthorne has subsequently filed the registration, and 204 N. Wood has been demolished.

Building Safety and Fire Protection Division staff monitor larger vacant properties, such as the Denny's dry cleaning facility and the Historic Lincoln Hotel on a regular basis. This to prevent trespassing and to ensure that fire protection systems are maintained. In 2009, the City required code corrections to the Historic Lincoln Hotel following its closure, including repair of roof leaks. All of the requested corrections have been completed.

Utility Shut-Offs

As an outcome of the Tenant Relocation Task Force (formed in response to the events at Gateway Studio Apartments in Champaign), the City has been working closely with the Urbana-Champaign Sanitary District, Illinois American Water Company, and Ameren to monitor and prevent apartment building closures as a result of landlord nonpayment of utility bills. In 2009, early warnings by the utility companies and follow up actions by City staff have prevented closures at locations on Broadway (Country Club Apartments) and on Park Street. The city will continue to work with the utility companies to identify and track properties that may be vulnerable in order to prevent building closures and tenant relocations.

Target Area Inspections

In 2008, the Building Safety Division, working along with the Grants Management Division, initiated a program to identify severely blighted residential properties that need special attention and which may be eligible for City target area grant funds. The target area includes census tract areas 53 through 56, located in the older parts of north Urbana and east Urbana. The first review in 2008 identified a total of 12 structures. Of these 12, seven have been demolished, two have been repaired or are in the process of renovation, and one has been purchased by the City and is slated to be demolished in the very near future for future redevelopment with affordable housing. Of the remaining two, one will soon be purchased by Carle Foundation and demolished for future redevelopment within the MIC zone and the remaining one is in negotiations with the City for purchase and eventual demolition for redevelopment with affordable housing.

A second survey of the target area was conducted in 2009 and has resulted in the identification of an additional 10 houses and 10 garages that are potentially creating a blighting influence upon the neighborhood. A letter was mailed on January 27, 2010 to the owners of these properties requesting that the owners work with the City to remediate the areas of concern.

Rental Registration Program

The Rental Registration program has completed its second full year. For the 2009 program year, and as adjusted for vacancies, there were 6,960 multi-family units contained in 579 buildings, 1,351 single family units and 410 duplexes (820) units that were registered. This makes a total of **9,131** rental units registered in 2009.

As noted on the attached billing summary, the revenues collected from the Rental Registration Program for the most recent completed billing period (10/15/08—10/14/09) were **\$197,418**, including \$28,955 in late filing, failure to file and court costs.

For the current billing period (10/15/09-10/14/10), the total collected is \$170,967 through February 10, 2010, with accounts outstanding of \$17,452. After adjustments for vacancies, this current year has 9,111 rental units.

Conclusion

While the City of Urbana has been conducting systematic inspections of multi-family rental properties since the 1970's, the Rental Registration Program has allowed the city to expand the systematic program to single family and duplex units. The long standing nature of our systematic inspection program and the recent additions to the program are helping to ensure a safer rental building stock within the City. The results in these efforts include fewer tenant complaints, fewer condemnations, fewer fires and other life safety concerns, and an improvement in the quality of life for renters and for property owners who have invested in neighborhoods where rental properties are present.

Because the owners of multi-family buildings in Urbana are familiar with the inspection program, ongoing systematic inspections are generally routine and corrections are able to be made within an expedited time frame. The extension of systematic inspections to single-family and duplex rental dwellings has not resulted in any major problems. The goal to attain a minimum cycle of five years for inspections of multi-family buildings in Urbana is well on target. In this coming third year, staff will be concentrating the work effort towards attaining a five-year goal for single-family and duplex units as well.

Prepared by:

Gordon R. Skinner, Building Safety Division Manager

Clay Baier, Housing Inspector

Stephen Chrisman, Housing Inspector

Attachments: Housing Activity Report
2009 Certified Housing Results
Rental Registration Summary
Tenant Complaint Summary
Systematic Inspections Areas

**BUILDING SAFETY DIVISION
HOUSING ACTIVITY
JANUARY – DECEMBER 2009**

ADDI Inspections (Grants)	7
Occupancy Complaints	5
Rental Registration Program Verifications	97
Rehabilitation Inspections (Grants)	6
Rehabilitation Follow-up Inspections	5
Consultations/Meetings	260
Personal Service	4
Fire Alarm Tests	-
Fire Damage Assessment	20
Certified Housing Inspections (# residents)	1330
Follow-up Certified Housing Inspections	23
Carle Initial Inspections	-
Follow-up Carle Inspections	-
Miscellaneous Inspections (requests, etc)	332
Mobile Home Inspections	-
Mobile Home Inspections for C of O	-
Follow-up Mobile Home Inspections for C of O	-
Annual/Follow-up Inspections of Mobile Home Parks	9
New Construction Inspections	7
Shelter Plus Inspections	22
Shelter Plus Reinspections	8
BSD Reinspections of UFD Inspection Results	63
Check Security of Vacant Structures	12
Initial Systematic Inspections /Apts. (# Units)	1355
Follow-up Systematic Inspections/Apts. (# Units)	1589
Initial Systematic Inspections (SFR/Duplex)	219
Follow-up Systematic Inspections (SFR/Duplex)	225
Follow-up Complaint Inspections	137
Complaints	43
Total Number of Working Cases:	
UFD Engine Company Residential Inspections	1
Certified Housing Inspections	-
Complaints/Miscellaneous Inspections	16
Systematic Inspections	875
Vacant Structures	1
	893

Clear Notices

UFD Engine Company Residential Inspections	9
Certified Housing (# residents)	1325
Complaints/Miscellaneous Inspections	31
Systematic Notices (# of units cleared)	<u>1746</u>
	3111

Cases Referred to the Legal Division:

Active Cases Working	1
Cases Dismissed	-
Amount of Fines	-
Community Service Sentence	-

Notices Referred to Legal Division:

02/23/2009	204 North Wood	Vacant Structure
03/12/2009	807 Hawthorne	Vacant Structure



DEPT. OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Building Safety Division

M e m o r a n d u m

TO: Gordon R. Skinner, Building Safety Division Manager
Mari Anne Brocker, Director of Housing for Certified Housing

FROM: Clay R. Baier and Stephen Chrisman, Housing Inspectors

DATE: February 8, 2010

SUBJECT: 2009 Certified Housing Results

During this inspection cycle, there were 24 properties inspected, one less than last year. Theta Chi vacated the house at 1404 S. Lincoln Ave. There were 69 significant violations discovered compared to 81 violations from the previous cycle.

The definition of a significant violation such as an exit light not illuminated on the checklist may have more than one location on a property but count as one significant violation.

To date, 18 of the 24 properties are protected with a sprinkler system.

The number of properties that did not have any violations increased from seven to ten! They were:

Europa House	603 S. Busey
Brown House	703 S. Cedar
Alpha Chi Omega	904 S. Lincoln
Delta Gamma	1207 W. Nevada
Alpha Gamma Delta	1106 S. Lincoln
Kappa Kappa Gamma	1102 S. Lincoln
Sigma Delta Tau	1104 W. Nevada
Christian Campus	810 W. Oregon
Kappa Delta	1204 S. Lincoln
Gamma Phi Beta	1110 W. Nevada

There were 1330 residents this year, a decrease of 4 residents from last year. Approximately 25 percent of the houses were cited for individual rooms exceeding the University of Illinois' housekeeping standards

The following is a list of violations with the percentage of properties in which they were noted.

Type of Violation	2009	2008	2007
Misuse of extension cords	33%	23%	8%
Electrical problems (improper fuses, taps, etc.)	16%	7%	12%
Electrical panel with openings	---	4%	---
Worn electrical equipment/wiring/plugs	---	23%	24%
Missing or broken cover plates	12%	7%	12%
Ceiling tile missing/broken	16%	7%	12%
Holes in walls, ceilings, floors	16%	11%	---
Exit lights (inoperable /damaged)	25%	35%	20%
Emergency lighting units, inoperable	33%	31%	40%
Windows lacking insect screens	8%	4%	---
Stairwell enclosure doors propped open or Not positive latching	16%	8%	12%
Junk and debris	---	4%	12%
Electrical panel lacks clear access	---	4%	4%
Exit access blocked or impeded	21%	---	32%
Fire extinguishers overdue for annual inspection	4%	31%	8%
Extinguisher has been discharged	---	---	---
Fire extinguisher missing	---	---	---
Plumbing problems	4%	4%	4%
Poor housekeeping (individual rooms)	---	8%	12%
Boiler certificate expired	8%	11%	4%
Heat/smoke detector/alarm inoperable	12%	27%	40%
Panic hardware broken	---	---	4%
Flammable liquids not in approved safety containers	---	11%	4%
General Maintenance	16%	19%	32%
Kitchen not sanitary	---	---	8%
Handrail loose or missing	4%	---	---
Fire alarm problems	8%	11%	24%
Sprinkler heads blocked or misaligned, etc.	4%	8%	---
Carbon Monoxide detector missing/inoperable	8%	4%	24%
Hot plates, toaster, etc.	16%	8%	---

The majority of violations are property maintenance issues.



To: Gordon Skinner, Building Safety Manager

From: Liz Walden, Accounting Supervisor

Date: February 11, 2010

Subject: Rental Registration Summary

Billing Period 10/15/09-10/14/10

Single Family	1,395 units @ \$45.00	=\$62,775.00
Duplex	416 units @ \$50.00	=\$20,800.00
Apartments	7,012 units @ \$10.00	=\$70,120.00
Buildings	587 units @ \$40.00	<u>=\$23,480.00</u>
Total Billed		\$177,175.00

Adjustments for vacancies:

Single Family	(59) units @ \$45.00	=(2,655.00)
Duplex	(3) units @ \$50.00	= (150.00)
Apartments	(63) units @ \$10.00	= (630.00)
Buildings	(8) units @ \$40.00	<u>= (320.00)</u>
Total Adjustments		<u>=(3,755.00)</u>

Late Fees (Late Filing, Failure to File, Fines, Court Costs)	=15,000.00
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Total Net Billing	\$188,420.00
Total Dollars Collected	\$170,967.50

Accounts Outstanding as of 02/10/10	\$ 17,452.50
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(92 Outstanding Accounts. Of those, 12 owe only late fees).

Note: There is a difference of 135 SFR units between this year and last year. Last year's vacancy adjustments included around 100 SFR units that were really owner occupied units, not vacancies. These were corrected in the October 2010 billing. In addition, we reviewed the billing database in advance of the actual

billing and eliminated some units that were vacant or for sale. This action eliminated a lot of adjustments after the billing.

Billing Period 10/15/08-10/14/09

Single Family	1,531 units @ \$45.00	=\$68,895.00
Duplex	419 units @ \$50.00	=\$20,950.00
Apartments	6,995 units @ \$10.00	=\$69,950.00
Buildings	588 units @ \$40.00	<u>=\$23,520.00</u>
Total Billed		\$183,315.00

Adjustments for vacancies:

Single Family	(180) units @ \$45.00	=(8,100.00)
Duplex	(9) units @ \$50.00	= (450.00)
Apartments	(35) units @ \$10.00	= (350.00)
Buildings	(9) units @ \$40.00	<u>= (360.00)</u>
Total Adjustments		=(9,260.00)

Late Fees (Late Filing, Failure to File,
Fines, Court Costs) =28,954.51

Total Net Billing \$203,009.51
Total Dollars Collected \$197,417.85

Accounts Outstanding as of 02/10/10 \$ 5,591.66
19 accounts-3 in Legal, 16 owing \$50 late fee

Billing Period 10/15/07-10/14/08

Single Family	1,332 units @ \$45.00	=\$59,940.00
Duplex	413 units @ \$50.00	=\$20,650.00
Apartments	6,644 units @ \$10.00	=\$66,440.00
Buildings	574 units @ \$40.00	<u>=\$22,960.00</u>
Total Billed		\$169,990.00

Adjustments for vacancies:

Single Family	(51) units @ \$45.00	=(2,295.00)
Duplex	(1) units @ \$50.00	= (50.00)
Apartments	(9) units @ \$10.00	= (90.00)
Buildings	(2) units @ \$40.00	<u>= (80.00)</u>
Total Adjustments		=(2,515.00)

Late Fees (Late Filing, Failure to File,
Fines, Court Costs) =15,593.86

Total Net Billing	\$183,068.86
Total Dollars Collected	\$183,068.86

Accounts Outstanding as of 02/29/10	\$.00
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Billing Period 2/15/07-10/14/07 (8 months)

Single Family	1,216 units @ \$30.00	= \$36,480.00	
Duplex	414 units @ \$33.33	= \$13,798.62	
Apartments	6,655 units @ \$ 6.67	= \$44,388.85	UI at the Pointe
Buildings	575 units @ \$26.67	= <u>\$15,335.25</u>	
Total Billed		\$110,002.72	

Adjustments for vacancies:

Single Family	(59) units @ \$30.00	=(1,770.00)
Duplex	(7) units @ \$33.33	= (233.31)
Apartments	(23) units @ \$ 6.67	= (153.41)
Buildings	(3) units @ \$26.67	= (80.01)
Florida House 50% Adjustment for remodeling		= <u>(560.25)</u>
Total Adjustments		=(2,796.98)

Late Fees (Late Filing, Failure to File, Fines, Court Costs)	= 6,382.39
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Total Net Billing	=\$113,588.13
Total Dollars Collected	\$113,588.13

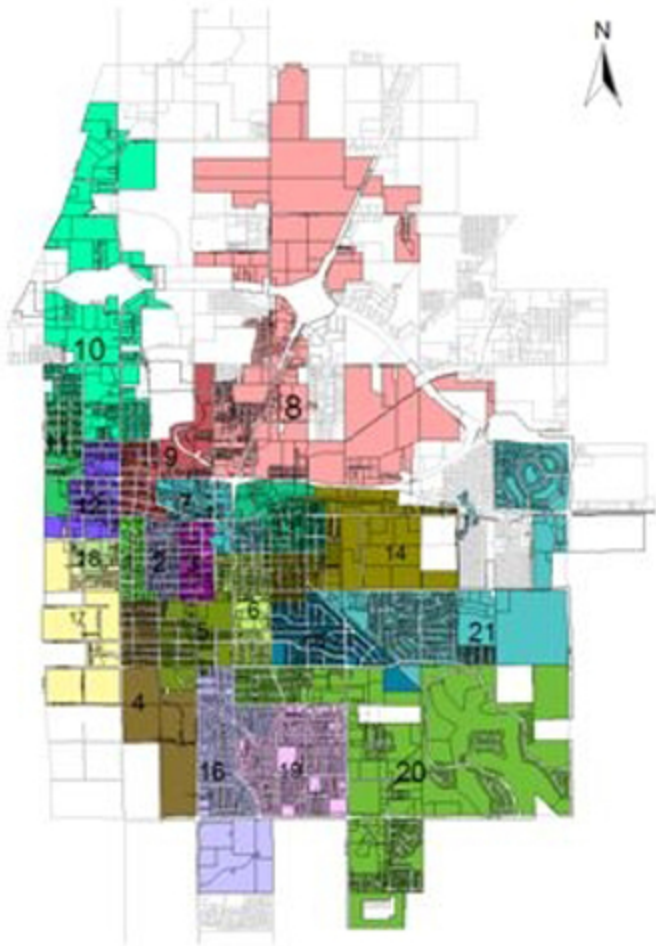
Accounts Outstanding as of 02/10/10	\$.00
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TENANT COMPLAINT SUMMARY

YEAR	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Days Allowed Per Operating Procedure	30/30/30	30/30/30	30/21/14	1-30 days	1-30 days	1-30 days
Total Complaints	45	36	47	48	48	39
Remained Vacant Until Complete	3	5	9	18	17	8
Valid Extension Granted	2	2	3	4	0	8
Complaints Not Valid	2	0	1	1	0	1
Adjusted Total	38	29	34	25	31	22
Compliance 0-30 days	19 (50%)	19 (65%)	26 (75%)	21 (84%)	27 (87%)	16 (73%)
24 hours	3	2	2	1	1	4
1-5 days	2	4	4	9	8	9
6-30 days	14	13	20	11	18	3
Compliance 30-60 days	12 (32%)	8 (27%)	9 (25%)	4 (16%)	3 (10%)	6 (27%)
Compliance 60-90 days	7 (18%)	2 (8%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)
Average # of days for compliance	34	27	21	16	20	16
NOTE: The years 2004-2005 compliance time was 3-30 day notices. Year 2006 compliance times were reduced to a 30/21/14 day notice. Years 2007-2009 compliance times were reduced to 1-30 days notice.						

Systematic Inspections Map

City of Urbana, Illinois



Prepared by Community Development Services - es

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