

TITLE III COMMUNITY PROTECTION

CHAPTER 2 NUISANCES

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3-2-1 DEFINITIONS. For use in this Ordinance, the following terms are defined:

1. The term "nuisance" means whatever is injurious to health, indecent, or unreasonably offensive to the senses or an obstacle to the free use of property, so as essentially to unreasonably interfere with the comfortable enjoyment of life or property. The following are declared to be nuisances:

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 657.1)

a. The erecting, continuing, or using any building or other place for the exercise of any trade, employment, or manufacture, which by occasioning noxious exhalations, unreasonably offensive smells, or other annoyances, becomes injurious and dangerous to the health, comfort, or property of individuals or the public.

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 657.2(1))

b. The causing or suffering any offal, filth, or noisome substance to accumulate or to remain in any place to the prejudice of others.

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 657.2(2))

c. The obstructing or impeding without legal authority the passage of any navigable river, harbor, or collection of water.

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 657.2(3))

d. The polluting or rendering unwholesome or impure the water of any river, stream, or pond, or unlawfully diverting the same from its natural course or state, to the injury or prejudice of others.

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 657.2(4))

e. The obstructing or encumbering by fences, buildings, or otherwise the public roads, private ways, streets, alleys, commons, landing places, or burying grounds.

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 657.2(5))

f. Houses of ill fame, kept for the purpose of prostitution and lewdness, gambling houses, or houses resorted to for the use of controlled substances or houses where drunkenness, quarreling, fighting or breaches of the peace are carried on or permitted to the disturbance of others.

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 657.2(6))

g. Billboards, signboards, and advertising signs, whether erected and constructed on public or private property, which so obstruct and impair the view of any portion or part of a public street, avenue, highway, boulevard or alley or of a railroad or street railway track as to render dangerous the use thereof, especially near intersecting streets.

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 657.2(7))

h. Cotton-bearing cottonwood trees and all other cotton-bearing poplar trees in the City.

i. Pools of stagnant water.

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 657.2(8))

j. The depositing or storing of inflammable junk, such as old rags, rope, cordage, rubber, bones, and paper, by any person, including a dealer in such articles, unless it be in a building of fire resistant construction.

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 657.2(9))

k. The emission of dense smoke, noxious fumes, or fly ash.

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 657.2(10))

l. Dense growth of all weeds, grasses, vines, brush, or other vegetation in the City so as to constitute a health, safety, or fire hazard including any City owned property between the abutting property line and the street right-of-way.

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 657.2(11))

m. Trees infected with Dutch elm disease.

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 657.2(12))

n. Effluent from septic tank or drain field running or ponding on the ground in the open.

o. Any article or substance placed upon a street, alley, sidewalk, public ground, or in any ditch, waterway, or gutter so as to obstruct the drainage.

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 716.1)

p. Accumulations of rubbish or trash tending to harbor vermin, rodents, and rank growth of weeds or other vegetation and plants, which is conducive to hazard.

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 657.2)

q. All diseased animals running at large.

r. Television or radio interference. Operation or use by any person of any electrical device that causes interference with normal radio or normal television reception.

s. All wires which are strung less than sixteen (16) feet above the surface of the ground excepting clotheslines, and excepting wires strung by enfranchised public utilities, which enfranchised public utilities shall, in all instances when stringing wires comply with the standards established by the proper federal and state regulatory agencies.

t. All explosives and inflammable liquids and other dangerous substances stored in any manner or in any amount other than that provided by ordinance.

u. All unnecessary noises and annoying vibrations.

v. The operation of any sound equipment, machine, or amplifier, amplifying sounds, music, or talking of any kind within the City of Scranton, Iowa, whether the same be located upon mobile equipment or permanently located. The Mayor may issue a permit under such reasonable restrictions as he or she may prescribe to permit and limit the use of such equipment so as not to interfere with the comfortable enjoyment of life or property by residents of the City of Scranton, Iowa.

w. Gambling devices, slot machines, and punch boards.

x. Any violation of the Ordinances of the City of Scranton, Iowa, designated as a misdemeanor in which a continuing offense can only be cured through abatement as a nuisance.

2. The term "property owner" means the contract purchaser if there is one of record, otherwise the record holder of legal title.

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 364.1)

3-2-2 NUISANCES PROHIBITED. The creation or maintenance of a nuisance is prohibited, and a nuisance, public or private, may be abated in the manner provided in this chapter.

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 657.3)

3-2-3 OTHER CONDITIONS REGULATED. The following actions are required and may also be abated in the manner provided in this Ordinance:

1. The removal of diseased trees or dead wood, but not diseased trees and dead wood outside the lot and property lines and inside the curb lines upon the public street.

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 364.12(3)(b))

2. The removal, repair, or dismantling of dangerous buildings or structures.

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 364.12(3)(c))

3. The numbering of buildings.

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 364.12(3)(d))

4. The connection to public drainage systems from abutting property when necessary for public health or safety.

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 364.12(3)(e))

5. The connection to public sewer systems from abutting property, and the installation of sanitary toilet facilities and removal of other toilet facilities on such property.

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 364.12(3)(f))

6. The cutting or destruction of weeds or other growth which constitutes a health, safety, or fire hazard.

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 364.12(3)(g))

7. Drug Paraphernalia as defined in Title III, Chapter 12 of these ordinances.

8. The maintenance, by the property owner, of all property outside the lot and property lines and inside the curb lines upon public streets, including maintaining a fifteen (15) foot clearance above the street from trees extending over the streets, except as provided in Section 3-2-3(1).

3-2-4 NOTICE TO ABATE NUISANCE OR CONDITION. Whenever the Mayor or other authorized municipal officer finds that a nuisance or other condition exists which is listed in Section 3 of this Chapter, the Mayor or officer shall cause to be served upon the property owner as shown by the records of the County Auditor a written notice to abate the nuisance within a reasonable time after notice.

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 364.12(3)(h))

3-2-5 CONTENTS OF NOTICE TO ABATE. The notice to abate shall contain:

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 364.12(3)(h))

1. A description of what constitutes the nuisance or other condition;
2. The location of the nuisance or condition;
3. A statement of the act or acts necessary to abate the nuisance or condition;
4. A reasonable time within which to complete the abatement; and

5. A statement that if the nuisance or condition is not abated as directed and no request for hearing is made within the time prescribed, the City will abate it and assess the costs against such person.

3-2-6 METHOD OF SERVICE. The notice may be served by certified mail or personal service to the property owner as shown by the records of the County Auditor.

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 364.12(3)(h))

3-2-7 REQUEST FOR HEARING AND APPEAL. Any person ordered to abate a nuisance or condition may have a hearing with the officer ordering the abatement as to whether a nuisance or prohibited condition exists. A request for a hearing must be made in writing and delivered to the officer ordering the abatement within the time stated in the notice, or it will be conclusively presumed that a nuisance or prohibited condition exists and it must be abated as ordered.

At the conclusion of the hearing, the hearing officer shall render a written decision as to whether a nuisance or prohibited condition exists. If the officer finds that a nuisance or prohibited condition exists, the officer must order it abated within an additional time which must be reasonable under the circumstances. An appeal from this decision may be had by immediately filing a written notice with the hearing officer. This appeal shall be heard before the City Council at a time and place fixed by the Council. The findings of the Council shall be conclusive and, if a nuisance or prohibited condition is found to exist, it shall be ordered abated within a time reasonable under the circumstances.

3-2-8 ABATEMENT IN EMERGENCY. If it is determined that an emergency exists by reason of the continuing maintenance of the nuisance or condition, the City may perform any action that may be required under this Chapter without prior notice, and assess the costs as provided herein, after notice to the property owner under the applicable provision of Sections 3-2-4 and 3-2-5 and hearing as provided in Section 3-2-7.

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 364.12(3)(h))

3-2-9 ABATEMENT BY MUNICIPALITY. If the person notified to abate a nuisance or condition neglects or fails to abate as directed, the City may perform the required action to abate, keeping an accurate account of the expense incurred. The itemized expense account shall be filed with the City Clerk, who shall pay such expenses on behalf of the municipality.

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 364.12(3)(h))

3-2-10 COLLECTION OF COST OF ABATEMENT. The City Clerk shall mail a statement of the total expense incurred to the property owner who has failed to abide by the notice to abate, and if the amount shown by the statement has not been paid within one month, the City Clerk shall certify the costs to the County Treasurer and they shall then be collected with, and in the same manner, as general property taxes.

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 364.12(3)(h))

3-2-11 INSTALLMENT PAYMENT OF COST OF ABATEMENT. If the amount expended to abate the nuisance or condition exceeds one hundred dollars (\$100.00), the City may permit the assessment to be paid in up to ten (10) annual installments, to be paid in the same manner and at the same rate of interest charged delinquent real estate taxes by the County Treasurer.

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 364.13)

3-2-12 CONDEMNATION OF NUISANCE. The City may condemn a residential building found to be a public nuisance and take title to the property for the public purpose of disposing of the property under Section 364.7 by conveying the property to a private individual for rehabilitation or for demolition and construction of housing.

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 364.12A)

