

Code Enforcement Report May 2012

May gave us two weeks of beautiful weather. That brought out many contractors to do storm repair or improvements to private residencies.

Memorial Day weekend filled our Vacation Rentals and our motels. Our restaurants and other businesses were busy. The combination of the three day holiday, the Ladies Club Pie Social on Saturday, the Lion's Club breakfast on Sunday, the Crafts on the Coast Festival on both days and the Yachats Farmer's Market on Sunday, flooded the Village for the whole weekend.

I am sure this was a welcomed change for all of our businesses. It is kind of a dry run for summer. There were no reported incidents. Parking near and around the Commons was an issue, but the weather allowed people to park a block or two away and walk and enjoy all of the events.

The City does have an Ordinance that requires contractors or anyone doing business in the City, whether for pay or trade, to obtain a City Business License. It is inexpensive and only takes a few minutes to fill out the application. This is pretty standard in most Municipalities and most building contractors are aware of it. If I see work being done on a property or a vehicle with a company name that is not on our City Business License list, I will stop, introduce myself with a business card and give the individual the application. With only a few exceptions, most contractors take care of it immediately. No citations have had to be issued for non-compliance. As a property owner, you can help by asking your hired contractor, if they have a City Business License. I would appreciate that.

Memorial Day gave us a taste of what summer might be like. I am sure the Business Community is ready for some positive economic influx. Most of our Vacation Rentals were occupied.

Last year, the City appointed a Transient Rental Task Force. They reviewed the existing Ordinance and made some suggestions to the City Council. City Council adopted these suggestions with a few minor changes. There were no major changes to the existing Ordinances.

The four areas that were of most concern last year and drew the formal complaints were:

1. Too many occupants for the property.
2. Too many vehicles on the property and the City Right of Way.
3. Garbage containers of the wrong size, not bear-proof and being left out and visible for days.
4. Pets (mainly dogs) running loose and doing business on neighboring properties.

The Task Force and the Council addressed all these.

1. The occupancy limit by the existing Ordinance is two people per bedroom, plus two, i.e. (three bedroom house would allow eight people) Children under the age of four are not included in that count.

2. All parking for the Vacation Rentals must be on the subject property, garage or designated, hard surface parking areas. No parking on City Right of Way is allowed. A maximum of six vehicles on a R-1 or R-2 lot is allowed, if there are adequate designated parking areas.

On these first two issues, I have completed almost half of the Vacation Rental inspections. The rest will be completed in the next couple of years, unless there is a property owner change. That requires a new inspection. The inspection is good for five years. The inspection includes the number of bedrooms and occupancy limits and the number of designated parking spaces. This data is being put into the GoYachats.com database. It is possible to look up the address and see the maximum occupancy and the number of vehicles allowed on the property.

Vacation Rental Agents participated on the Task Force and this information has been disseminated to the other Rental Agencies.

Hopefully, this will eliminate some of the past problems or bring quick solution, if they occur again.

3. The Ordinance requires that Vacation Rental properties have a bear-proof garbage container, available from Dahl's and that the container only be visible on collection day.

Most agents had already signed on to this. We have very smart bears, raccoons, crows and seagulls around here. A couple of experiences of gathering up a weekend of garbage, teaches a quick lesson. Neighbors, the Public Works Director and his crew and myself are not hired for that task. We do it because it is unsightly for the Village and poses a hazard. This issue should resolve itself as soon as there is compliance with the bear-proof containers.

4. We do not have a leash law in the Village. The Ordinance requires the pet owner to be in control of the pet at all times. Most yards are not fenced in, so if the pet is let out, it will follow its own interests. We'll have to see how this works out.

We have another garbage related issue in the Village. As a public service and at no expense to the Village, Dahl's Disposal has placed several trash receptacles at several strategic sites. These are meant for casual trash, candy wrappers, to-go coffee cups, etc. They are not intended for resident's personal home garbage. I have received complaints of residents emptying their trunks with home garbage and filling up these containers.

If you do not require weekly pick-up service from Dah's, maybe you can make a deal with one of your neighbors that does have the service. Maybe \$5.00 a month will cover it,

if you create very little garbage. Again, our very wise crows are on to this and can easily get into these bins and throw out what is edible. I will treat it as a Code Violation

Letters are going out to property owners that are harboring invasive plant species. There was an excellent compliance last year, not 100%, but more than I expected. There is a 30-day time limit on compliance, but if you contact City Hall or me, on your plans with dealing with the problem, there can be extensions. The City appreciates your cooperation and will work with you on your schedule.

Wally Orchard and the Yachats Invasive Plant Sub-committee (YIPS), part of the Parks and Commons Commission, are doing stellar work and making some inroads on some of these plants. If you have a couple of hours a month to give a hand, it would be appreciated.

I just spent 13 hours clearing a property in Quiet Water of Scotch Broom. It was exhausting work by myself. These group efforts are almost fun and the camaraderie is great.

I heard a second-hand concern from a resident from one of our business owners. The resident has seen me drive by her house on several occasions. The business owner assured her of my activities. I do try to do a drive-by on every street in the Village, at least once or twice a month. There are other "rounds" I make almost daily, because of previous problems. We have had three illegal dumping on Kenah Circle off from Horizon Hill Road, as well as on Overlook Drive. We have had Vacation Rental properties where there have been multiple complaints. It is also a way to see if there is anything out of the ordinary; broken windows, unknown vehicle, storm damage, unlicensed contractors, etc. I drive a red Ford pickup with a red canopy.

If you have concerns, please call City Hall 541-547-3565 or call me 541-961-6695. I would be happy to talk with you.

I wish all a good summer.

Donald W. Niskanen
Code Enforcement Officer
City of Yachats