



## More information about the Code Compliance Division

The Longview Code Compliance Division enforces the City's Property Maintenance Code, which covers safety and livability requirements in housing and property. The division investigates community standard complaints on issues such as inoperable vehicles, junk or trash, overgrown vegetation, graffiti, and improper occupancies.



### How to contact us

Code Compliance ..... 442-5093  
 Solid Waste and Recycling ..... 442-5223  
 Building Division ..... 442-5084  
 Permits ..... 442-5087  
 Zoning ..... 442-5092

Visit us at 1525 Broadway, Longview, WA 98632, or check out our website at [www.longviewcode.com/](http://www.longviewcode.com/). You can also submit code compliance questions at ASK Longview at [www.mylongview.com](http://www.mylongview.com), or on your mobile device.



# Garage Sale Guidelines . . . Move over Five and Dime, we are opening up shop!

- Residents may conduct "garage," "yard," "estate," and/or "moving" sales from their residence for up to 20 days a calendar year. Each sales event may not exceed four consecutive days, and goods must be removed between sales.
- No sale shall commence prior to 8 a.m. or continue beyond 9 p.m.
- No goods or merchandise shall be offered for sale which consist of goods or merchandise not owned and used by the persons conducting the sale.
- Garage sale signs shall not be placed more than six blocks, or 2400 feet from the place of the sale and shall not be placed on utility poles or trees in the public right-of-way. Signs must be removed within 24 hours of the event.



## Other Common Violations

### Exterior wall and roof violations

*Commonly thought of as: Feeling the outside breezes inside your living room even when the window is closed.* Roofs and exterior walls must be weather-tight. Non-weather resistant siding must be protected from elements by painting or sealing. Both must be maintained and kept in good repair. Emergency tarp use is limited to 30 days.



### Window violations

*Commonly thought of as: Just because the neighbor's kid broke the window doesn't mean you don't have to fix it.* Code requires that every habitable room of a dwelling must have at least one window, skylight or glass door facing directly outdoors. Windows must open and close freely, and be in good repair and weather-tight. (Other regulations may apply).



### Garbage or recycling cart violations

*Commonly thought of as: Hoping that the recycling fairy will return your cart to your yard after pickup day.* All solid waste and recycling carts placed in the public right-of-way for collection should be removed from those public areas within 24 hours of the time of collection. It is also unlawful to dispose of garbage in any container that is not assigned for your use, or to discard garbage or other contaminants in a recycling container, or discarding large, unwanted items such as mattresses and couches, yard waste, or other types of vegetation in any alley.



### Commercial vehicles in a residential area

*Commonly thought of as: When the yard becomes an all-night truck stop.* Truck tractors and semi-trailer or commercial equipment may not be parked or stored in residentially zoned areas or on sites that have not been permitted, improved, and approved for such use.



### No building permit

*Commonly thought of as: I need a permit to build that?* Building permits are required for almost all work or improvements done to any property located inside the city limits of Longview. This includes, but is not limited to, new residential construction, additions and alteration, all fences, re-roofs, siding, window replacement, sheds of all sizes (whether it is pre-built or site built), concrete or other hard surface flatwork, decks, signs, swimming pools, and demolitions of and within all existing structures. Those projects that do not require a building permit are painting, cabinet installations, floor covering only installation, and landscaping. Please call Community Development to determine if your project qualifies for or is exempt from acquiring a building permit.



### Lack of smoke detectors

*Commonly thought of as: Relying on your dog or cat to wake you if there is a fire in your house (not a good idea!).* State and local codes requires operational smoke detectors be placed inside and outside of all bedroom doors within a reasonable distance, and that they be mounted in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.

### Obscured Public Facilities

*Commonly thought of as: Could you please trim your tree so I can get by!* Any tree, bush or shrub overhanging any street, alley or right-of-way within the city shall be pruned so that such branches shall not obstruct use of the street, alley, sidewalk or right-of-way or obstruct the view of any street intersection. Trees and shrubs overhanging the street and alley shall be pruned to allow a minimum 14-foot clearance above the entire surface of the street or alley. Trees and shrubs overhanging the sidewalk and/or right-of-way shall be pruned to allow a minimum 8-foot clearance above the entire sidewalk surface and/or right-of-way to the adjoining property line. No person shall cut, prune or remove any tree in any public right-of-way, park, planting/parking strip or other public place in the city.

### Improper business in residential zone

*Commonly thought of as: A home is not a home when you are operating a business out of it. \*Some restrictions may apply.* Zoning regulations define the type and location of businesses and housing throughout Longview. The major categories of land uses are commercial, residential, agricultural, and mixed-use. Some business-type activities are allowed within residential districts. Please contact the Zoning Division for details at 442-5092.

# Longview's Code Compliance Program

## OUR TOP 10 VIOLATIONS . . . and how to avoid them.



Longview voted one of the top ten prettiest towns in America by Forbes March 29, 2012



# Longview's Top 10 Code Violations



## Keeping cool in the pool

- Please do everything possible to protect your children and the children in your neighborhood.
- State law requires that all pools, spas and ponds with a water depth of 24 inches or greater be surrounded with a barrier that is a least 48 inches in height. A building permit is required.
- Contact the Code Compliance Division for additional requirements and/or information.

**I**n 2011, the Longview Code Enforcement Division issued notices for over 1,175 violations in the city limits of Longview, citing a variety of community standard, public health, and public safety issues. In addition to possibly affecting neighboring property values, these violations can also affect the appearance of our community and can lead to fines and, in extreme cases, liens placed on a property. The City has established a list of minimum property maintenance standards that are called the Longview Property Maintenance Code. It is important that you understand the code and regulations and how they affect your property.

In an effort to keep our residents up to date, we have put together a list of the most common violations, and an explanation of the related code or regulation.

**#1: Junk, trash, and debris**  
*Commonly thought of as: All the stuff that belongs in the dump, but never seems to make it there.*  
 Longview City Code states that it is a public nuisance for any owner or occupant to allow the accumulation, abandonment or storage of trash, rubbish or junk on private or public property. These conditions affect public health and can result in dangerous and unsanitary conditions.



**#2: Address identification violation**  
*Commonly thought of as: I know where my house is... doesn't everyone else?*  
 Fire code requires that all structures have approved address numbers placed in a position to be plainly legible and visible from the street, and at the rear of the property if there is an improved alley.



**#3: Overgrown conditions**  
*Commonly thought of as: When you cannot see Uncle Larry's "classic" truck because the grass is too tall.*  
 Property owners are required to maintain their property so that grass remains no taller than 12 inches in height. This also applies if you have an alley behind your property. Additionally, weeds and overgrown vegetation are to be kept under control.



**#4: Parking vehicles on an unapproved surface**  
*Commonly thought of as: Parking in the grass.*  
 All vehicles are required to be parked on an approved surface. Approved surfaces include concrete, concrete pavers (bricks) or asphalt. Exceptions would include properly maintained pre-existing graveled parking surfaces that were consistent with those approved at the time the residence was built.



**#5: Improper occupancy**  
*Commonly thought of as: Semi-permanent camping in the ol' RV.*  
 Longview City Code makes it unlawful to occupy a trailer, RV or any other temporary movable dwelling within the city, except in a trailer park. Other improper occupancies include residence without city services and most garages and outbuildings.



**#6: Inoperable vehicles**  
*Commonly thought of as: Uncle Larry's "classic" truck (motor not included).*  
 Inoperable vehicles may not be kept in any location where they are publicly visible. This applies to any vehicle that is in an abandoned, wrecked, dismantled, scrapped, junked or in a partially dismantled condition that includes having un-inflated tires, no wheels or lacking other parts necessary for the legal and normal operation of the vehicle.



**#7: Outside/open storage**  
*Commonly thought of as: It's time to build a shed if you're going to store that much stuff.*  
 A building permit is required regardless of size or type of construction. The storage of materials, supplies, merchandise, appliances or equipment outside of a building is not allowed in residential zoned areas.



**#8: Poor right-of-way maintenance**  
*Commonly thought of as: Just because it is on the other side of the fence doesn't mean you can let the grass grow tall enough to hide the old couch lying in the alley.*  
 Property owners are responsible for maintaining their property up to the apparent centerline of the alley and/or right-of-way. This includes controlling overgrown vegetation as well as the removing debris, garbage, furniture, mattresses and other items, even if they are the result of illegal dumping, that can cause a blighting problem or adversely affect the public health, safety and/or welfare.

**#9: Fence violations**  
*Commonly thought of as: When your property looks like a fortress because of the barricade around it.*  
 Fences may not exceed 42 inches in height in the "required" front yard, or eight feet in the side and rear yard. A fence may not be leaning, sagging, falling or in any other decayed, dilapidated or other unsafe condition. Constructing a fence requires a permit, and the project will be inspected for post holes and at completion.

**#10: Discarded appliances**  
*Commonly thought of as: Why can't I use the old washer for a mailbox?*  
 Discarded appliances can become an entrapment danger to children. Except when stored within a building, refrigerators, household appliances, and similar equipment shall not be discarded, abandoned or stored on any premises within the city.



**Animal Complaints** - If you have a complaint regarding an animal, call the Humane Society of Cowlitz County at 577-0151.

**Noise Complaints** - If you have a complaint regarding noise, call the non-emergency number for the Police Department at 577-3098.

