

Code Compliance



*Building a Better
Community
Together!*



City of Bowie
2614 Kenhill Drive
Bowie, MD 20715
(301) 809-3008
www.cityofbowie.org

City of Bowie
2614 Kenhill Drive
Bowie, MD 20715

PROCESS FOR APPEALS

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW BOARD -

To ensure the fair application of the City Code, the City Council created a process for residents who receive a municipal infraction to have a forum for the review of such actions. The Administrative Review Board (ARB) was established in 1990 and is made up of seven residents appointed by the City Council. They meet monthly to hear cases brought before them by residents who file a written application for hearing. The public hearings are held in the evening at City Hall, and decisions of the ARB are rendered within 30 days of the hearing. Residents receive an application for a hearing upon the issuance of a municipal infraction and must file the application for hearing at City Hall within 15 days. Notices of the hearing date and time are mailed from City Hall.

BOARD OF APPEALS -

In 1994, the City Council established the Board of Appeals to review and render decisions on applications for variances from the City Code. If a resident wishes to construct a fence or shed outside the limits allowed by Code, the resident may obtain a variance application from the Department of Community Services. The written request for variance application and a site plan or other graphic illustration of the request must be submitted to City Hall. These matters are heard before the Board monthly, and written notification of the hearing date and time are mailed from City Hall. The Board must render a written decision within 30 days of the public hearing.



Code Compliance - 301-809-3008

Please contact the Code Compliance office if you have any questions or concerns. This brochure is a general guide. It does not address all possible Code violations. You can access the complete City Code on our website at www.cityofbowie.org
Alternate format available 301-809-3008

RENTAL LICENSING & INSPECTIONS

All residential property owners wishing to lease a dwelling must first obtain a City rental license. The annual license fee is established by Ordinance of the City Council. No license is required when at least one of the property owners resides at the residence, or when the landlord/tenant relationship is between parent and child. All rental properties are subject to a periodic inspection, which is conducted by a City Code Compliance Officer. Minimum maintenance standards have been established by Ordinances of the City Council for interior and exterior property areas. Upon completion of the inspection, a report is sent to the owner and tenant, notifying them of any conditions on the property which are in violation of the City Code. The owner is responsible for ensuring compliance with City Codes.



BUILDING PERMITS

Residents must obtain County and City building permits for home improvement projects, including but not limited to fences over 4 feet high, additions, basements, driveways, garage renovations, decks, and porches. Before applying for a City permit, one must obtain a Prince George's County Permit. Please call (301-883-5784) to obtain information about County requirements. Once the County permit has been issued, bring the following documents and information to Room 203 at Bowie City Hall (301-809-3008):

- County Permit
- Copy of the stamped site plans and stamped construction plans of the property where work is to take place.
- Estimated cost of construction.

Do not begin work until all permits have been issued. Please remember, many Homeowners' Associations require approval from their Architectural Review Committee prior to any exterior home improvement project.

Code Compliance Program



The City of Bowie has a staff of five full-time and two part-time Code Compliance Officers who are charged with enforcing property standards adopted by the City Council in the City Code. They conduct curbside surveys in neighborhoods, and respond to concerns brought to their attention. The officers issue field correction notices, work with residents to find solutions to Code related problems, and write municipal infractions when violations persist. Staff is on duty from 8:30 a.m. - 10 p.m. M-F and weekends from 7 a.m. - 6 p.m.

FENCES

On residential lots, fences up to 6 feet high may be placed in the rear and side yard on the property line. All other fences are prohibited beyond the front building line of any residential property. Residents on corner lots may not place a fence between the side yard building restriction line and the side street. This is usually 36 feet from the curb. Certain exceptions apply.

EXTERIOR PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

All exterior structures must be maintained. Peeling paint, rotting or missing sections of roof or siding, and broken windows must be repaired or replaced. No storage is allowed on the front porch or carports. Gutters and downspouts must be maintained free of obstructions. Sump pumps may not be installed so that they direct water to run into the City rights of way or neighbor's property.

OVERGROWN TREES & SHRUBS

Trees and shrubs must be trimmed to 9 feet above City streets and sidewalks. Limbs and branches may not overhang to cause street lights or street signs to be blocked. Trees and shrubs must be trimmed to prevent obstructions of the view of a driver in any vehicle. Dead trees and limbs must be removed from the property. On Wednesdays, the City will pick up yard waste. It must be cut into 4-foot lengths and bundled. The maximum branch diameter is 3 inches.

TALL GRASS & WEEDS

Grass, weeds, and brush may not be allowed to grow in excess of 8 inches on any lot in the City. If this occurs, the property will be posted, allowing the property owner 7 days to correct the violation. If the violation is not corrected, the City will cut and clean the property and the owner will receive a bill for the cost. If the bill is not paid within 30 days, it will be forwarded to Prince George's County for collection with the property tax bill. Grass and weeds which grow from a residence onto abutting streets or sidewalks must be trimmed by the property owner. Residents are also responsible for maintaining any right of way which abuts their property.

ACCESSORY BUILDINGS

Sheds used for residential storage, excluding the keeping of vehicles, boats, or trailers are permitted on residential lots. On lots consisting of less than 20,000 square feet, the maximum allowable floor space of the shed is 200 square feet. Bigger sheds may be permitted on lots larger than 20,000 square feet. The maximum height of the shed allowed is 15 feet. Detached accessory structures may only be constructed in the rear yard and must be at least 2 feet from the rear and side property lines. You must acquire both County and City permits for all sheds over 150 square feet, and for any size shed if more than one is present.



TRASH & RECYCLING CONTAINERS YARD WASTE

Bags or containers used for household refuse, recycling, or yard waste may not be placed at the curb in front of residential properties prior to 5 p.m. the day before the scheduled pickup and must be at the curb by 7 a.m. the day of scheduled pickup. All empty containers must be removed from the curb by 10 p.m. the day of pickup. At all other times, containers must be stored out of public view. Appliances and other larger metal objects will be picked up on Wednesday by appointment only. The same rules apply to placing these items at the curb. Contact Public Works (301-809-2344) before noon on Tuesday to arrange removal of those items.

PEDDLING & SOLICITING

A Solicitor's License is required for any person who sells or takes orders for merchandise or service upon the streets of the City, or any person who goes from house to house to vend, sell, or take orders for wares, merchandise or service. A Solicitor's license is available at City Hall. Certain exceptions apply.

EQUIPMENT & NOISE

To preserve peace and quiet of the neighborhood, normal noise generating activities should be limited to the hours of 7:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m. However, no person should generate noise that would cause unreasonable disturbance to those living nearby.

SIGNS

ALL signs erected in the City require a permit, except directional real estate signs which are allowed in the City right of way from 12 noon Saturdays to 12 noon on Mondays.

PARKING VIOLATIONS

Common parking violations include parking over the curb, parking in violation of a City sign, blocking the sidewalk, parking in non-designated locations, parking on the grass, and parking of commercial vehicles.

COMMERCIAL VEHICLES

One commercial vehicle is allowed on a residential lot in the City subject to the following restrictions: it does not exceed 7500 pounds gross vehicle weight; does not have lettering in excess of 4 inches in height; does not have more than 300 cubic feet of load space; and does not have rear dual wheels. Stake platform body trucks, cranes, and tow trucks are prohibited.

INOPERATIVE VEHICLES

Inoperative vehicles may not be stored or parked in residential areas of the City unless within an enclosed garage. An inoperative vehicle is one which does not have a valid license plate or registration, is missing tires, engine, windows or other major parts, or is otherwise observed to be inoperative. Inoperative vehicles parked on City streets will be impounded after 48 hours.



This brochure highlights some of the most common Code Compliance problems. For an entire text of the City Code, please go to www.cityofbowie.org.