



Community Environmental Resource Program

Serving the St. Louis and East St. Louis Communities

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What Can We Do About Illegal Dumping?

Illegal dumping is defined as the disposal of solid and hazardous waste in an area not permitted by law. It continues to be a serious problem in the St. Louis metropolitan area.

Solid waste is garbage, refuse, or sludge from a waste treatment plant, water supply treatment plant, or air pollution control facility. It also includes the solid waste that is discarded by homes and businesses everyday.

Waste (both solid and liquid) is considered hazardous if it can cause an increase in death or serious illness to people if not properly disposed of, stored, or otherwise managed. Generally, environmental experts say that solid waste is a hazard if it is ignitable (can catch on fire easily), corrosive (can rust), reactive (doesn't mix well with other waste), or toxic.

Illegal dumping is sometimes called "open dumping," "fly dumping," and "midnight dumping" because materials are often dumped in open areas, dumped from cars along roadways, and/or dumped late at night. Illegally dumped waste is often dumped to avoid either a disposal fee or the time and effort required for proper disposal.



CITY OF ST. LOUIS

If you suspect an illegal dumping is in progress, call 911 immediately! They will notify the proper authorities that can secure and investigate the scene. If possible, make note of the people doing the dumping, the vehicle, and the license plate number. Also, contact the Citizens' Service Bureau at (314) 622-4800. You may be eligible for a \$100 reward if the suspect is convicted!

If you see an illegal dumpsite, contact the Citizens' Service Bureau at (314) 622-4800. They will: 1) contact the authorities for proper cleanup of the illegal dumpsite, and 2) contact the Environmental Investigations Divi-

sion to investigate those who are guilty. Again, you may be eligible for a \$100 reward if the suspect is convicted!

If you are trying to dispose of waste, but are unsure of how to properly do it, contact the Citizens' Service Bureau at (314) 622-4800. They will give you the necessary information and assistance.

CITY OF EAST ST. LOUIS

If you suspect an illegal dumping is in progress, contact Mr. Delbert Marion, Chief of Police, at (618) 482-6790, or Police Dispatch at (618) 482-6700 right away! Also, you can contact Mr. Kelvin Ellis, Director of Regulatory Affairs, at (618) 482-6820. He will contact the appropriate people for proper cleanup of the dumpsite.

If you see an illegal dumpsite, contact Kelvin Ellis at (618) 482-6820. Mr. Ellis' Regulatory Affairs Department will: 1) get the necessary information to start an investigation, 2) report the incident to the Police Department, 3) report the incident to the Public Works Department or proper authorities for clean-up.

If you are trying to dispose of waste, but are unsure how, contact Mr. Ellis at (618) 482-6820. His department will give you the necessary information and assistance for the proper disposal of the waste.

Vacant and Abandoned Buildings: The Legacy of Urban Sprawl

Contributed by Ron Smith - Building Commissioner for the City of St. Louis

At one time, the City of St. Louis had approximately 142,300 buildings which accommodated a population of over 800,000 people. But due to steady population loss over four decades, there has been an expanding inventory of vacant and abandoned buildings. According to the March 2001 Vacant Building Survey done by the Department of Public Safety Building Division, there are currently about **5,990** vacant/abandoned buildings in the City; approximately **5,000** are residential and **990** are commercial, industrial and mixed-use buildings. The **5,990** vacant buildings represent about four percent of the total building stock.

Buildings abandoned by property owners eventually become the city's responsibility. The Land Re-utilization Authority (LRA) acquires tax-delinquent properties after three years. LRA currently owns more than 3,000 buildings - the majority of which are vacant. Of the almost 6,000 vacant buildings, 4,110 are privately owned. Of the 1,900 condemned buildings, 1,060 are privately-owned and 840 are owned by LRA. There are approximately 1,900 condemned vacant buildings (32 percent of the total vacant building inventory) that are damaged beyond repair or are structurally unsound and need to be demolished.

Over the past five years, over

2,700 buildings have been demolished by the City (LRA and the Building Division) at a cost of over \$15.5 million (an average cost of about \$5,700 per building). There were an additional 1,538 "private wrecks" done by the building owners. In 1998, the voters approved an \$11 million Public Safety Bond Issue providing for the demolition of approximately 1,500 derelict, unsafe buildings over a three year pe-



riod (1999 through 2002). These funds became available in September, 1999. Prior to that date, all demolition activity was funded from City general revenue funds, Federal block grant funds and special emergency demolition funds.

Between September 1999 and June 2001, 790 buildings have been demolished by the City (LRA and Building Division) using Bond Issue funds at a total cost of \$6.6 million. Through September 2002 the City intends to demolish an additional 700 buildings using the remaining bond issue funds.

Building demolition is prioritized first on structural deterioration, then on

the degree that it is a public safety hazard, then by the proximity to occupied adjacent properties (homes, schools, day-cares, etc.) and finally by those properties slated for redevelopment. The Building Division and LRA receive regular input from the Fire and Police Departments, Aldermen, neighborhood groups, and concerned citizens about derelict buildings. Emergency demolitions are routinely performed on extremely dangerous and often fire-damaged buildings. Special Federal block grant funds are being used to demolish buildings close to schools and day care centers. Current Federal EPA regulations prohibit the City from demolishing more than one building per block per year unless additional funds are spent for the inspection, testing and possible abatement of any hazardous materials (such as asbestos) which may be found in these abandoned buildings.

The City of St. Louis now focuses on efforts to discourage building abandonment and encourage reinvestment in older building stock and neighborhood redevelopment. A large part of this effort is to rid the neighborhoods of condemned buildings which cannot be saved. The City's partnership with CERP will further advance these efforts.

No One Should Die from Carbon Monoxide Poisoning! What Everyone Should Know

Recent deaths and injuries because of carbon monoxide poisoning underscore the need to fully understand this invisible danger in and around your home.

WHAT IS CARBON MONOXIDE?

Carbon Monoxide (also known as “CO”) is a colorless, odorless, tasteless and toxic gas produced as a by-product of combustion. **Any fuel burning appliance, vehicle, or gasoline powered equipment can quickly produce dangerous carbon monoxide levels in confined spaces!**



EFFECTS OF EXPOSURE TO CARBON MONOXIDE (CO)!



CO poisoning reduces the blood’s ability to carry oxygen to body tissues and organs such as the heart and brain. When CO is inhaled it combines with your blood’s oxygen-carrying hemoglobin making it unable to transport oxygen. The buildup of CO in the body is dependent on the concentration and duration of the exposure. Symptoms include **headache** and **nausea**, with the symptoms getting worse as concentration and exposure time increase. A concentration of COHb (carboxyhemoglobin) above 45 percent can cause unconsciousness, and above 50 percent can cause death. **If you experience symptoms, see a doctor as soon as possible!**

HOW CAN I PROTECT MYSELF FROM CO?

The use of a good and well maintained UL listed CO detector - available at any hardware or home improvement store - is your best line of defense against exposure to dangerous levels of CO in the home. Two types of alarms are available (electric and battery operated). Check them often to make sure they are working. Having more than one detector is highly recommended. It is also recommended that your home’s heating equipment be inspected by a heating contractor or the local utility. Also, have your car’s exhaust system inspected for leaks that might cause CO to enter the passenger compartment.



PREVENTION IS THE BEST SOLUTION!

Never operate a motor vehicle or any other combustion equipment in a confined space! All fuel fired equipment burns much more air than fuel and exhausts carbon monoxide as a by-product of the fuel combustion process. A human being exposed to the buildup of carbon monoxide in a confined space could become ill, lose consciousness, and even die. Always make sure that you have a means for venting equipment outside and enough fresh air is being supplied to the confined space to replace that which is being burned. Open a window or door slightly or, when possible, directly vent equipment to avoid CO buildup.

Who Are We? How Can You Contribute?

The Community Environmental Resource Program (CERP) was launched in September 2000 to provide needed environmental information to the people of St. Louis and East St. Louis. CERP is funded through the Environmental Protection Agency's EMPACT program - a national initiative aimed at providing communities across America with better access to information about the environment.

The program's goal is to empower citizens with information about potential environmental hazards. We want to become the community's leading source for environmental information!

CERP cannot do this without the help of the community. If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, please contact us. **Is there an area of concern that you would like us to address?? Just let us know!**

Where Can I Get More Information?

City of St. Louis

Citizens' Service Bureau	(314) 622-4800
Trash Task Force	(314) 622-4628
St. Louis Health Department	(314) 612-5300
Missouri Department of Natural Resources	(573) 526 4752

East St. Louis

Rebecca Perkins, Neighbors United for Progress	(618) 274-6772
Kelvin Ellis, Director of Regulatory Affairs	(618) 482-6820
City of East St. Louis Police Dispatch	(618) 482-6700
St. Clair County Health Department	(618) 233-7769
East Side Health District	(618) 271-8722

Phone: (314) 421-4220 ext. 236 / (618) 274-2750 ext. 236 Fax: (314) 231-6120 Email: cerp@ewgateway.org
Website: <http://stlouis.missouri.org/cerp/>

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