

Volume V, Fall/Winter 2015

National Community Planning Month

Healthy Communities, Healthy People

The achievements of planning are celebrated in October with National Community Planning Month. This year's theme is Healthy Communities, Healthy People.

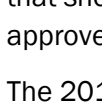
What is Planning?

Planning helps guide how a community grows and develops. Planning considers all residents' needs (seniors, children, workers, business owners). Planning looks at the "big picture" (current and future needs of the County). Planning examines issues from all angles (social, environmental, hazard, physical). Planning is comprehensive, community-focused, and enables greater choices for residents.

Planners do not just focus on where to locate (or site) a building, but also consider how that decision impacts the safety of the community and the existing character of the community, how it impacts the environmental balance, and if the decision encourages social and economic diversity.



Code Change Corner (Jeff Brown, Building/Fire Official)



The Virginia codes are based on the International Code Council's (ICC) series of I-codes (IBC, IRC, etc.). Once the ICC publishes a new edition of I-codes, Virginia begins reviewing the codes and considering any changes that should be made to the I-codes for adoption in Virginia. Once the changes are approved and adopted, the revised versions of I-codes become the Virginia codes.

The 2012 Virginia codes became effective throughout the state on July 14, 2014. From July 12, 2014 until July 14, 2015, permit applicants were given a one year grace period during which they could choose to construct under the 2009 or the 2012 codes. All permits applied for after July 13, 2015 must be issued under the 2012 edition of the code.

The 2015 edition of I-codes was published by ICC in June 2014. The regulatory process for the 2015 Virginia Codes will begin later this year or early next year. This will include opportunities to submit code changes to DHCD for consideration. Stay tuned for updates on the progress of the 2015 Virginia codes. If I had to guess, I would say we should expect the 2015 Virginia codes to become effective around March 2016.



[Click here for free 2012 Editions online!](#)

Please contact Jeff Brown at 804.722.8659 or by [email](#) for further information or if you have questions about the Virginia Codes.

Code Compliance: Property Complaint FAQs

Code Compliance is a division of the Community Development and Code Compliance department. The Code Compliance Division is responsible for enforcing various county laws and ordinances related to the maintenance and appearance of properties and structures.

WHAT TYPES OF ISSUES ARE INVESTIGATED BY CODE COMPLIANCE? Some of the most common issues are Property Maintenance, Zoning Violations, Discarded Materials/Trash, Tall Grass, Working Without a Permit, Fire Safety, and Open Burning.

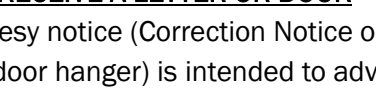
HOW DO I SUBMIT A COMPLAINT? If you suspect a violation, you may report violations to the Code Compliance Division by:

- Visiting the Code Compliance office in the County Administration Building
- Calling the Code Compliance office at 804-722-8659
- Submitting an online complaint at <http://epermits.princegeorgeva.org/CET/citizendefault.aspx>
- Sending an email to CitizenComplaint@princegeorgecountyva.gov

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I SUBMIT A COMPLAINT? Once a complaint is received, the Code Compliance Division begins investigating the complaint. Part of an investigation involves researching property ownership, title, occupants, past or current permits, prior Code Enforcement actions, etc. A significant portion of Code Enforcement investigations are performed "behind the scenes" by exchanging correspondence with the violator, sending legal notices, etc. If the violator fails or refuses to correct the violation, the Code Compliance Division initiates a formal legal process to compel compliance.

HOW CAN I CHECK ON THE STATUS OF A COMPLAINT?

Once a complaint is submitted, it is entered in the Code Compliance tracking system (INKforce). You can view the status of the complaint by visiting epermits.princegeorgeva.org, clicking on "Public Access", and "Search Code Enforcement Cases". You can also contact the inspector assigned to the case for an update on the status of a case or complaint.



WHAT DO I DO IF I RECEIVE A LETTER OR DOOR HANGER?

A courtesy notice (Correction Notice or Code Compliance door hanger) is intended to advise you that a violation has been observed and give you an opportunity to correct it before a Notice of Violation is issued. After receipt of a Correction Notice or door hanger, you should correct the problem or contact the Code Enforcement Officer assigned to your case to discuss the problem. Once the allowable time specified on your first notice has expired, and if you have not corrected the violation, you may be subject to additional enforcement action.

A "Notice of Violation" will state specific code sections for which you are in violation, the required corrective action, and a date that the items must be corrected by. If you receive an official "Notice of Violation," you should contact the Code Enforcement Officer assigned to your case as soon as possible.

PRINCE GEORGE COUNTY

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & CODE COMPLIANCE
804-722-8659
princegeorgecountyva.gov

ON _____, INSPECTOR _____
OBSERVED THE VIOLATION(S) LISTED BELOW:

- ☐ TALL GRASS
- ☐ TRASH OR DISCARDED MATERIALS
- ☐ PROPERTY MAINTENANCE
- ☐ OPEN BURNING
- ☐ WORKING WITHOUT A PERMIT

See reverse side of this hanger for an explanation of each violation category and the required corrective action.

PROPERTY ADDRESS: _____
NOTES: _____

ESTIMATED REINSPECT DATE: _____
Please correct the items listed above as soon as possible to prevent further administrative enforcement action. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

If you have any questions please contact Code Compliance at inspections@princegeorgecountyva.gov or 804-722-8659.

Prince George County.... A global community where families thrive and businesses prosper

The picture above is a **Code Compliance Door Hanger**.

We issue these sometimes, as an alternative to sending a letter in the mail, to notify property owners of non-hazardous violations.

How to Prevent Frozen Pipes

Turn Off the Water, Turn Up the Heat

When liquids freeze, they expand. When water freezes in a pipe, it can cause extensive damage. There's nothing worse than coming home to major water damage due to a few frozen pipes.

250,000 HOMES damaged by frozen pipes each year.

There are three main reasons pipes freeze:

- 1 Drastic changes in temperature**
- 2 Poorly insulated pipes**
- 3 Thermostat set too low**

Everything from plastic to copper can freeze—and then burst.

Pipes most at-risk of freezing:

- Close to exterior walls
- Near swimming pools and water sprinkler supply pipes
- In unheated places like crawl spaces, attics and garages

UP TO 250 GALLONS of water can discharge through a 1/8" crack in one day.

Use these easy tricks to help you avoid frozen pipes:

- ✓ Insulate pipes located in a crawl space or attic.
- ✓ Use pipe sleeves, heat tape or heat cables on exposed water pipes.
- ✓ Caulk or insulate cracked or seals around pipes.
- ✓ Open cabinet doors leading to exposed pipes or pipes close to exterior walls to allow warm air to circulate.

- ✓ Use an indoor shut-off valve to drain water from pipes leading to outside faucets.
- ✓ If it's extremely cold, keep your thermostat at the same temperature day and night.

< 20 DEGREES FAHRENHEIT
Turn off outside water or insulate at-risk pipes as a precaution.

If you're going to be traveling in the winter months:

- ✓ Disconnect and drain garden hoses.
- ✓ Shut off and drain the water system before you leave.
- ✓ Never set your home's thermostat lower than 55°F (12°C).

- ✓ If you're concerned, ask a trustworthy neighbor to stop by your home from time-to-time to ensure there are no problems.

What to do if the worst occurs:

- 1 Try to locate the section of pipe that is frozen and try to unfreeze it yourself.**
An electric heating pad wrapped around it, a hair dryer or a space heater might work. Do not use a torch or open flame of any kind. If necessary, call a professional plumber.

- 2 If a pipe has already burst:**
 - Turn off the water at the main shut-off valve in the house.
 - Leave the water faucets turned on.
 - Do not use any electrical appliances in standing water.
 - Call us – we're here to help.

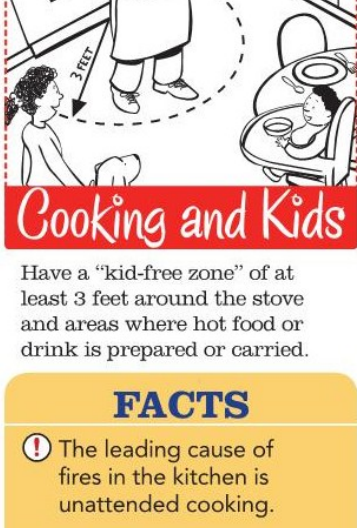


Working SMOKE ALARMS SAVE LIVES
Change Your Clock, Change Your Battery



"COOK WITH CAUTION"

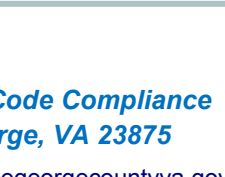
- » Be on alert! If you are sleepy or have consumed alcohol don't use the stove or stovetop.
 - » Stay in the kitchen when you are frying, grilling, boiling, or broiling food.
 - » If you are simmering, baking, or roasting food, check it regularly, stay in the kitchen while food is cooking, and use a timer to remind you that you are cooking.
 - » Keep anything that can catch fire — oven mitts, wooden utensils, food packaging, towels or curtains — away from your stovetop.
- If you have a small (grease) cooking fire and decide to fight the fire...**
- » On the stovetop, smother the flames by sliding a lid over the pan and turning off the burner. Leave the pan covered until it is completely cooled.
 - » For an oven fire, turn off the heat and keep the door closed.
- If you have any doubt about fighting a small fire...**
- » Just get out! When you leave, close the door behind you to help contain the fire.
 - » Call 9-1-1 or the local emergency number from outside the home.



Have a "kid-free zone" of at least 3 feet around the stove and areas where hot food or drink is prepared or carried.

FACTS

- ❗ The leading cause of fires in the kitchen is unattended cooking.
- ❗ Most cooking fires in the home involve the stovetop.



Prince George County Community Development & Code Compliance Department

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County of Prince George
Department of Community Development and Code Compliance
6602 Courts Drive, PO Box 68 - Prince George, VA 23875

Questions or comments? E-mail us at inspections@princegeorgecountyva.gov or call 804.722.8659