

Your Wausome Neighborhood

Resources & Information for Residents

Contact

Email: inspections@ci.wausau.wi.us

Website: www.ci.wausau.wi.us

Tel: 715.261.6780

407 Grant Street, Wausau,
WI 54403



YOUR GUIDE TO RESIDENTIAL ORDINANCES

There are numerous ordinances (or laws) in the City of Wausau that pertain to residential property. Most of these have been enacted to protect and preserve the basic character and quality of life in our residential neighborhoods. They are designed to control the accumulation of junk, trash, refuse, and vehicles, which are abandoned, inoperable and in disrepair. The City also has an interest in ensuring that businesses and industries do not operate where they are inconsistent and may compromise the residential character of our neighborhoods.

More than one department at the City, as well as State or County agencies may enforce these ordinances, where applicable. Copies of individual ordinances and sections of the City of Wausau Municipal Code may be obtained by contacting the City of Wausau Clerks Office at (715)261-6500. The entire Municipal Code is also available on the City's website located at www.ci.wausau.wi.us. Ordinances are updated periodically to reflect the changing needs of the City and its citizens.

We welcome any questions or comments that will keep the City of Wausau a safe, attractive and pleasant community. You may contact Mayor Katie Rosenberg at (715)261-6800 or mayor@ci.wausau.wi.us with any questions or comments you may have.



WHAT TO DO ABOUT NEIGHBORHOOD ISSUES

First – If you feel comfortable, try the “Good Neighbor” approach and talk with your neighbor about the nuisance, and ask for their cooperation to resolve it. For best results, always approach people in a friendly, rational manner. Many times, people appreciate their neighbors contacting them first before getting the City involved and will correct the problem. Other times, people may be offended and become defensive and uncooperative. Therefore, you must use your best judgment before and during the interaction with your neighbor.

REPORTING VIOLATIONS

Then – If your “Good Neighbor” efforts do not reach code compliancy, call or email the Inspections Department at (715)261-6780 or inspections@ci.wausau.wi.us. Please have the following information ready:

- The general type or nature of the complaint or nuisance.
- Your name, address, and telephone number (voluntary).
 - This information will allow us to call you if we need further information.
- The exact location of the problem:
 - Preferably house number and street. If the address is unknown, details that help identify the property are helpful, ex “northwest corner of South 3rd Avenue and Porter Street.”
- A detailed description of the offending situation or problem.
 - Be specific about the “type” of activity, or nuisance condition, and “where” on the property the activity or nuisance condition is located. Also, include any other details that may help us to observe an activity, such as, the “time” and “date” the activity is most likely to occur.

For example: “Vehicle repair activity in a residential neighborhood. The resident, Mr. Goodwrench, has been repairing cars on his driveway for a month, on Thursdays and Fridays, from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. There are car parts sitting in the front lawn.”

- In certain circumstances, we may need your assistance in pursuing violations where photos and records of events may be helpful. For example, certain alleged code violations may be taking place after normal City business hours.

NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION PROCESS

CITY FOLLOW-UP – The City will investigate complaints within 3 business days after they are received. Staff will first determine if the complaint is valid and is covered by the ordinances enforced by the City. If the complaint is valid, it is the City’s policy to issue a warning notice by mail to the owner(s), in order to give them an opportunity to correct or eliminate the code offence. An exception to this policy would be made in a case where there are immediate health or safety concerns, which require an immediate response or correction to reduce or remove a hazard to health or safety.

NON-COMPLIANCE – If the responsible party(ies) does(do) not comply, the City may use any, or all of the following processes to obtain the appropriate compliance:

- Issue a City of Wausau Municipal Citation
- Issue a City of Wausau Summons & Complaint with a mandatory appearance in Municipal Court
- If appropriate, cause the removal, or abatement of a violation

PROCESSES – These processes, individually or collectively, can remedy the violation in as little as a few days or several months depending on the circumstances, the nature of the violation, and the cooperation of the property owner and/or tenants.

ABATEMENTS – The City has the authority to remove, or abate property nuisances including, but not limited to: miscellaneous junk, refuse, garbage, and debris from a property, after the property owner has been notified and fails to comply. If an abatement action is necessary, the cost of abating a public nuisance by the city shall be collected as a debt from the owner, occupant or person causing, permitting or maintaining the nuisance, and if notice to abate the nuisance has been given to the owner, such cost shall be assessed against the real estate as a special charge. This is a legal process and could take an extended period of time for resolution through the court system.

PENALTIES – Failure to comply with any provisions of the Municipal Code may result in the issuance of a City of Wausau Citation and Complaint or Summons and Complaint. An infraction is punishable by a fine determined based on violation.

CONFIDENTIALITY – It is not the City's intent to increase neighborhood animosity, nor to prolong personal feuds whenever there is a need to enforce these ordinances. Toward that end, we will make every effort to keep the names and identities of complainants confidential. Residents are advised, however, that persons who file complaints may be asked to appear as witnesses if their case goes to court. Also, the Public Records Act allows for the release of some public records, which may include the complainant’s information. However, the decision to release this information is that of the City Attorney.

ADDRESSES ON BUILDINGS

Each house and building in the City shall have address numbers conspicuously displayed. These numbers must be placed on the building in such a manner that the number is clearly visible from the public right-of-way. Identification of premises is very important for emergency responses of the Police and Fire Departments. For more information, or to make a complaint about inadequate house numbers, please call the City Inspections Department (715) 261-6780.

ANIMALS

ANIMAL CONTROL - Animals running at large are prohibited. Animal owners shall not allow their animals to disturb any person by continuous barking or howling. Municipal ordinance prohibits



owners from allowing dogs and cats to roam at large. Pet owners are also responsible for picking up any pet excrement left by their pets on another's property. Persons disturbed by an animal can call the Wausau Police Department non-emergency number: (715) 261-7795

ANIMALS PROHIBITED - No person shall bring into, keep, harbor or maintain in the city any bees, wasps, hornets, poisonous snakes, farm animals, wolves or any animal which

is in part of the canis lupis species or any animal raised for fur-bearing purposes, unless otherwise permitted in the Wausau Municipal Code.

KEEPING OF HONEY BEES - No person shall keep honey bees in the city without being a beekeeper and obtaining a valid permit issued by the city clerk.

KEEPING OF CHICKENS - No person shall keep chickens or establish or maintain any henhouse upon any premises in the city without obtaining a valid permit issued by the city clerk.

CATS AND DOGS ALLOWED – Please note: the pet limit is two dogs and/or three cats per household within the City of Wausau, unless your household has the appropriate Pet Fancier Permit.

- **CAT LICENSING** – All cats, within the City of Wausau, over the age of 4 months must be licensed. License applications are available at the City's website located at <https://evolveportal.ci.wausau.wi.us/?portal=clerk>, the City's licensing partner. Proof of current rabies shots and vaccinations must be included at the time of license application. For more information, please call the Customer Service Office at (715)261-6500.
- **DOG LICENSING** - All dogs, within the City of Wausau, over the age of 4 months must be licensed. Licenses are available at the City's website located at <https://evolveportal.ci.wausau.wi.us/?portal=clerk>. Proof of current rabies shots and vaccinations must be included at the time of license application. For more information, please call the Customer Service Office at (715)261-6500.

For more information, please call the Animal Control Officer at (715)261-7842

BUILDING PERMITS

Building Permits are required for safety reasons for most home improvements including fences, swimming pools, decks, driveways, roofs, siding, garages, yard sheds, building additions and interior remodeling.

Prior to starting a new project always contact the City Inspections Office at (715)261-6780 or visit our website at

<http://www.ci.wausau.wi.us/Departments/Inspections.aspx> to find out if your proposed project requires a building permit.



RENOVATION ASSISTANCE

The City values homeowners and local investment. Wausau has a long track record of assisting in redevelopment and physical improvements of homes and neighborhoods. We have a variety of programs which can help homeowners and rental landlords with the renovation of their properties. Most are very low interest loans which can fund needed improvements. Please contact the Planning, Community and Economic Development Department at 715-261-6680 or www.ci.wausau.wi.us/Departments/CommunityDevelopment.aspx to learn more about what options might exist and ways that the City can help.

RESIDENTIAL RENTAL UNIT REGISTRATION

The city of Wausau has many rental units within our city limits. Property maintenance and decent, safe, and sanitary living environments are a top concern, therefore, the city has adopted a residential rental unit registration program that was initially implemented in 2010.

This ordinance requires the owner(s) of residential rental properties to register with the City of Wausau, providing the owner's contact information, or at the option of the owner, a primary contact person for the property. The owner is responsible for ensuring that the contact information is current at all times, and any updates are submitted within thirty (30) days of any changes.

A registration fee of ten dollars (\$10.00 dollars) per building shall be paid by the owner at the time of initial registration, a change of ownership, and/or a change of contact information.

A residential rental dwelling unit means any independently rented living space whose term of lease is 30 days or greater. It does not include rest homes, convalescent homes, nursing homes, hospitals, assisted living centers, community based residential facilities, adult homes and other facilities licensed or certified by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, or properties owned or operated by the City of Wausau or its Community Development Authority.

The complete ordinance can be found in Chapter 16.04.030 Residential Rental Contact Registration of the Wausau Municipal Code.

HOME BUSINESS

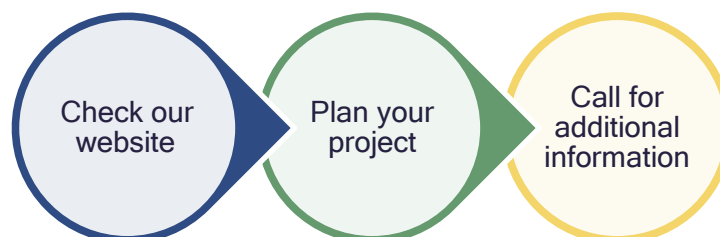
Home Occupation is defined as economic activities performed within a residential dwelling unit. Examples include personal and professional services, handicrafts, and retail conducted online. Home Occupations are intended to provide a means to accommodate a small home-based family or professional business without the necessity of a rezoning from a residential to a business district. Home Occupations are limited to low intensity businesses and businesses with limited overlap of customer visits. A permit is required for Home Occupation. See City Ordinance Section 23.03.28(4) for regulations. Additional information can be found on the City of Wausau website. You may also contact the City Zoning Administrator at (715)261-6780.

RESIDENTIAL/RECREATIONAL BURNING PERMITS

It is the intent of the city that citizens shall have the opportunity to have recreational fires at single-family and two-family dwellings provided that such fires are in strict compliance with restrictions relating to recreational fires. No recreational fire may be started or allowed to continue burning unless such recreational fire is contained in a fire pit located at least 25' from any building and a permit has been obtained. Recreational fires are allowed from noon to midnight, but must be under control and out by midnight. Recreational fires are not allowed when the Fire Department has issued a burning ban for the City. For more information concerning recreational fires or to issue a complaint about a recreational fire in your neighborhood, please contact the City Fire Department at (715)261-7900. Please contact the City Clerk's office at (715)261-6620 to obtain a permit.

FENCES

A building permit is required for all fences constructed in the City of Wausau. Fence height is regulated depending on where the fence is located on the property. In general, no fence shall exceed six (6) feet in height. A fence can be built up to your designated non-street property lines. Fences located in the back yard and side yards (non-street yard) can be up to six feet in height. A fence located in the front yard can be up to 4 feet high. See City Ordinance Section 23.06.40 for fencing regulations for more information. For questions about fence height, placement or to obtain a building permit for a fence, please contact the City Inspections Office at (715)261-6780.



GARBAGE, TRASH, JUNK, AND DEBRIS

The accumulation of garbage, trash, junk, and debris help spread disease, harbor insects and rodents, and detracts from the appearance of your property. You can help control these problems by placing your trash in proper containers. Storing your trash and recycling containers out of public view helps to enhance the visual image of the neighborhood and the quality of the community. Chapter 6.44 of the Municipal Code requires the use of garbage containers by all City residences and businesses. For questions or to report the improper disposal of garbage by a property owner in the City please contact the City Inspections Office at (715)261-6780.

Accumulation of garbage, trash, junk, and debris (not properly enclosed within a garbage container or dumpster), including vehicle parts and equipment, are not allowed to be stored outside in a residential area. The City may abate those items not removed after notification by the City, and the cost of removal plus administrative fees will be charged to the property owner. For more information or to report garbage accumulation on a property, please call the City Inspections Office at (715)261-6780.

GARBAGE ACCUMULATION

All occupied premises within the City are required by ordinance to have weekly garbage service. Harter's Fox Valley Disposal is the City's current garbage removal provider (1-500-804-8556). For more information, to begin service at your new home, or to report lack of garbage service, please call the City Customer Service Office (715)261-6500.

GARBAGE SERVICE

Burning trash or garbage is prohibited in the City of Wausau. For more information or to report the burning of trash or garbage, please call the City Fire Department at (715)261-7900.

BURNING OF TRASH AND GARBAGE

RECYCLING AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Your participation in the City's Recycling Program is important for Wausau. The City provides recycling pickup through our current garbage service through Harter's Fox Valley Disposal (1-888-804-8556) every other week on your garbage pick-up day ([schedule](#)). For more information, to begin service at your new home or, to purchase recycling containers or to report lack of garbage/recycling service, please call the City Customer Service Office at (715)261-6500.

A Guide to Recycling for Owners of Apartments & other Multi-family Dwellings can be found at <https://dnr.wi.gov/files/PDF/pubs/wa/WA1638.pdf>

Marathon County accepts hazardous materials at their Hazardous Waste Facility located at R18500 E Hwy 29 - Ringle. To drop off hazardous items you must call and make an appointment. A list of acceptable items is available on the Marathon County Health Departments website located at www.marathoncountysolidwaste.org or by calling the Hazardous Waste Facility at 715-446-3101 Ext 100.

SNOW REMOVAL

Homeowners are required to remove snow and ice from the public sidewalk abutting their property within 24 hours of a snowfall or development of icy conditions. Icy or snow-covered sidewalks can be reported to the Engineering Department at 715-261-6740. Property owners will be sent a notice to remove the snow/ice, and if they do not comply within 48 hours, the walks will be cleared by City crews and the property owner will be billed. Repeated offenses may result in a citation being issued to the property owner. The current minimum charge is about \$90 per property, but the actual charge could be more depending on the amount of work involved.

During the winter, sand is available from the many sand barrels which are placed throughout the City. Please click [here](#) for a list of sand barrel locations. Sand is also available at the Department of Public Works, 400 Myron Street, from 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday (stop at the “Office” for assistance; proof of City of Wausau residency required).



In accordance with City ordinance, residents are not permitted to deposit snow on any public street or alley. Snow removed from driveways, driveway approaches, and public sidewalk may be deposited on the boulevard area or on private property but not in streets or alleys. When snow is shoveled, blown, or plowed into a street, the additional snow packs down and eventually causes rough driving conditions.

The City will be responsible for clearing sidewalks, walkways, driveways, and parking lots around City-owned and maintained buildings and properties. All other sidewalks of the City, not listed above, will be the responsibility of the property owners of a building or lot. For complaints about snow removal, please call the Engineering Department at (715)261-6740.

VEHICLE PARKING AND STORAGE

Parking regulations are designed to maintain and promote safety on our public streets. Parking regulations also improve the look of the neighborhood and the value of your property by preventing accumulations of abandoned and inoperable vehicles.

VEHICLE PARKING

ON PUBLIC STREETS – Between the hours of 2:30 a.m. and 6:00 a.m., alternate side parking regulations shall be in effect on all streets in the city. All vehicles shall be parked only on the even-numbered side of the street on even-numbered calendar days, and only on the odd side of the street on odd-numbered calendar days, unless otherwise posted or exempted in the municipal ordinance. No person shall park a vehicle in any area where parking during a snow removal emergency has been prohibited. The police chief or director of public works may declare a snow removal emergency where the parking of vehicles would impede snow removal operations. All vehicles parked on the public roadway must have a current license and registration. Please call the Wausau Police Department non-emergency number for enforcement: (715) 261-7795

ON RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY – Motor vehicles must be parked on the driveway, garage apron, or similar all-weather paved surface, directly adjacent to the driveway, and not on the lawn or other landscaped open space not designed for parking. Inoperable or unlicensed motor vehicles may not be kept on a residential lot unless parked in a garage. Motor vehicles may not overhang along public sidewalks, designated bicycle paths or rights-of-way. Please call the City Inspections Office at (715)261-6780 for enforcement.

VEHICLE REPAIRS

The registered owner of a vehicle may perform routine maintenance to his/her vehicles, or to vehicles belonging to immediate family members, in private garages at his/her residence. Routine maintenance includes: changing the oil, tires, replacement alternators, brakes, shocks, oil, air filters, spark plugs and similar work. Major repairs, including: pulling engine blocks, repair, or replacement of transmissions or front and rear axles, major body repair, dismantling, and similar work, is not permitted. For complaints about vehicle repair, please call the City Inspections Office at (715)261-6780.

VEHICLE STORAGE

INOPERABLE VEHICLES – Inoperable vehicles or junk vehicles are defined as those that are not street operational or do not have current vehicle registration. On private property, an inoperable or junk vehicle may only be parked within a garage or carport. Otherwise, the vehicle is subject to tow. All operable vehicles must be parked on an all-weather surface. Inoperable vehicles left on the street or in parking lots are subject to tow. To report violations on [private property](#), please call the City Inspections Office at (715)261-6780. To report violations on a [public street or public property](#), please call the Wausau Police Department non-emergency number: (715) 261-7795.

RECREATIONAL VEHICLES – Motor homes, camping and travel trailers, boats, boat trailers, snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles, utility trailers, etc. cannot be parked or stored in any required front yard or corner side yard of any residential property, except for on a designated driveway which meets the City's hard-surfacing requirements.

Equipment or trailers that are longer than 30' (measured from back bumper to tongue) must be parked within enclosed structures. For more information or to report violations, please call the City Inspections Office at (715)261-6780.

WEEDS AND TALL GRASS

No person owning property within the City shall allow to grow or pollinate on his property any weeds, grasses or brush that causes or produces or exhales unpleasant or noxious odors or may conceal filthy deposits or provide a place for the accumulation of trash or litter. The existence of noxious weeds on any property in the City is prohibited. Noxious weeds include Canada thistle, leafy spurge, field bindweed (creeping jenny), goldenrod, bull thistle, poison ivy, poison sumac and poison oak. Lawns shall be maintained to a height not to exceed 12 inches. Landscaping shall be maintained so as not to present hazards to adjoining properties or to persons or vehicles traveling on public ways and shall be maintained so as to enhance the appearance and value of the property on which located and thereby the appearance and value of the neighborhood and the City. For more information or to report violations, please call the City Inspections Office at (715)261-6780.

