

SUBJECT: COMPREHENSIVE CODE ENFORCEMENT POLICY
POLICY NO.: 900-10
EFFECTIVE DATE: December 2, 1991

BACKGROUND:

The enforcement of municipal codes has become a more important City service as greater regulation has been deemed necessary and as citizens have become increasingly concerned with the quality of life and preservation of their neighborhoods. Within the past few years, there has been growing recognition of the emergence of the code enforcement profession and acknowledgement of the variety of skills needed to effectively enforce codes. Code enforcement, which was often a part-time or secondary function, is now the focus of entire divisions and because of the variety of codes, is often quite specialized. This specialization requires greater inter-departmental coordination and cooperation.

PURPOSE:

To establish clear direction regarding the enforcement of municipal codes and to establish guidelines to ensure that code enforcement services provided by the City of San Diego are consistent and coordinated.

POLICY:

Code Enforcement Priorities

It is the City's policy to respond to all code violations and gain compliance in as timely and expeditious a manner as possible. However, given the limits on resources, the system-wide priorities are as follows:

Priority 1:

- 1) Imminent health and safety hazards.
- 2) Illegal activity or development which is underway and is causing environmental damage, causing an imminent hazard or is potentially irreversible.
- 3) Illegal activity or development which has already occurred but is causing environmental damage by its continued presence.

Priority 2:

- 1) Health and safety issues (other than imminent hazards).

- 2) Illegal activity or development underway (other than as described in Priority 1) or which has already occurred but is highly visible or otherwise obvious and has the potential to establish an undesirable precedent.

It is furthermore the City's policy that revenue raised from the assessment and collection of penalties and fines be used for the enhancement of code enforcement efforts and to supplement the funding of code enforcement activities as appropriate.

Enforcement Options

It is the City's policy to foster and encourage the development and use of a wide variety of code enforcement remedies, both judicial and administrative, which are designed to address various types of violations and situations to effect timely compliance.

Training

It is the City's policy to recognize code enforcement as a profession which requires specific skills and to develop training programs related to those skills which include, but are not limited to, communication skills, knowledge of applicable codes and regulations, public relations, computer literacy, report writing and ability to provide testimony and to coordinate efforts with other departments.

Effectiveness

It is the City's policy to:

- 1) Respond to reported violations as expeditiously as possible;
- 2) Enforce the City's codes in the most effective manner possible and implement a variety of code enforcement programs that are realistic and effective and can be applied to the wide range of code violations which occur;
- 3) Monitor the effectiveness of the code enforcement program on a regular basis and institute changes as necessary to improve effectiveness;
- 4) Enhance the existing code enforcement data base to provide case tracking and monitoring capability as funding is available.

Compliance vs. Penalties/Deterrence

The main goal of the City's code enforcement system is to ensure compliance with municipal codes and other applicable regulations related to the use and development of property. It is the City's policy to educate the public about applicable codes and regulations and to gain voluntary compliance whenever possible. However, it is also the City's policy to enforce its codes and regulations through aggressive enforcement actions, including the imposition of monetary and other penalties when appropriate.

HISTORY:

Adopted by Resolution R-279068 12/02/1991