



# Public Services

128 North Second Street · Fourth Floor Courthouse · Yakima, Washington 98901

(509) 574-2300 · 1-800-572-7354 · FAX (509) 574-2301 · [www.co.yakima.wa.us](http://www.co.yakima.wa.us)

## **What is Code Enforcement?**

State and county regulations governing the use of private property are intended to protect the public's health, safety and welfare. The Yakima County Public Services Department is responsible for enforcing the provisions of Washington State's laws, codified in the Revised Code of Washington (RCW), Yakima County ordinances related to building, health, fire, public nuisances, dangerous buildings, and zoning & land use matters. These laws also contain penalties that may be imposed when a property owner refuses to correct a cited violation of county or state law.

Balanced against this regulatory framework are constitutional and legal protections intended to secure our citizen's personal and property rights. County code enforcement officers must investigate and take appropriate action to enforce state and county laws while respecting and upholding those important personal and property rights.

Yakima County is obligated to uphold all state and county laws on behalf of the public, including those laws regulating land use, construction, the use of buildings and property maintenance. However, this is a duty owed to the public and not necessarily to you as an individual or property owner. You should not expect that by making a complaint the county has undertaken a duty to represent you or to keep you informed of the progress of any investigation. Moreover, any decision on how to proceed is within the discretion of the county, including whether to undertake enforcement action and the scope of any such action.

You should also be advised that Yakima County cannot intervene in private property disputes, such as enforcement of private covenants, conditions or restrictions; boundary disputes; trespass and some noise issues or general disagreements between neighbors over the use of their properties. You should consider seeking independent legal advice if you have questions regarding issues involving your individual property rights.

## **Who may file a complaint and when may it be filed?**

Any person may file a complaint with the Yakima County Code Enforcement office when they believe there has been a violation of county or state property or land use laws. Misdirected complaints may be forwarded to a more appropriate department or agency for their review and possible action. (i.e. Sheriff's Department, Clean Air Authority, Animal Control, Health District etc.).

## **How is a complaint filed?**

Except where an immediate hazard exists, compliance actions begin with either a signed complaint or e-mail form from a citizen or another public agency. The appropriate form for filing a complaint can be acquired by calling 509-574-2300 or by visiting the Yakima County Code Enforcement web page <https://www.yakimacounty.us/FormCenter/Public-Services-15/Code-Enforcement-Complaint-Form-133>, or in person at our office: Public Services 4<sup>th</sup> Floor in the Courthouse located at 128 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> St. Yakima, WA.

## **What happens once I've submitted my written complaint?**

Except for issues where an immediate threat to health and safety exist, initial action on your complaint will normally begin within 2 or 3 days of receipt and an inspection of the site will normally occur within 5 working days. Resolutions, however, can take weeks, months and sometimes longer depending on their complexity and the legal process pursued. Every complaint is carefully and thoroughly reviewed. However, the decision and method of review and action on a complaint, including the priority and timing of action, is wholly within the discretion of Yakima County.



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**THIS SECTION MUST BE COMPLETED FOR YAKIMA COUNTY TO ACT ON THE MATTER.** (Please print)

Complainant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Tax Parcel ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*Under the Public Records Act, chapter 42.56 RCW, the information provided on a complaint investigation request form is subject to public disclosure. Information revealing the identity of persons who are witnesses to crimes or who file complaints with investigative agencies may be withheld from disclosure under RCW 42.56.240(2) if the complainant indicates a desire for nondisclosure of their identifying information at the time the complaint is made.

☐ I want my information to be redacted under the PRA pursuant to RCW 42.56.240(2).

\*\*\* Please note, your name must be disclosed if you are identified as a witness in an administrative or court proceeding concerning this matter, or if otherwise required by an administrative or court order.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



PROPERTY OWNER AND/OR OCCUPANTS:

NATURE OF THE COMPLAINT: \_\_\_\_\_

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on its right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.

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