

Minimum Housing and Property Maintenance

JoseMaria Donoso and Matt Tucker, Building Inspection Division
Housing Policy Committee, July 23, 2026





Minimum Housing and Property Maintenance

Madison General Ordinance Chapter 27

This ordinance was created to protect the health, safety, and well-being of everyone in our city.

- Existing Buildings
 - General Property Maintenance Standards
 - Minimum Housing Standards
-
- Around 12,000 inspections per year



Where are cases coming from?

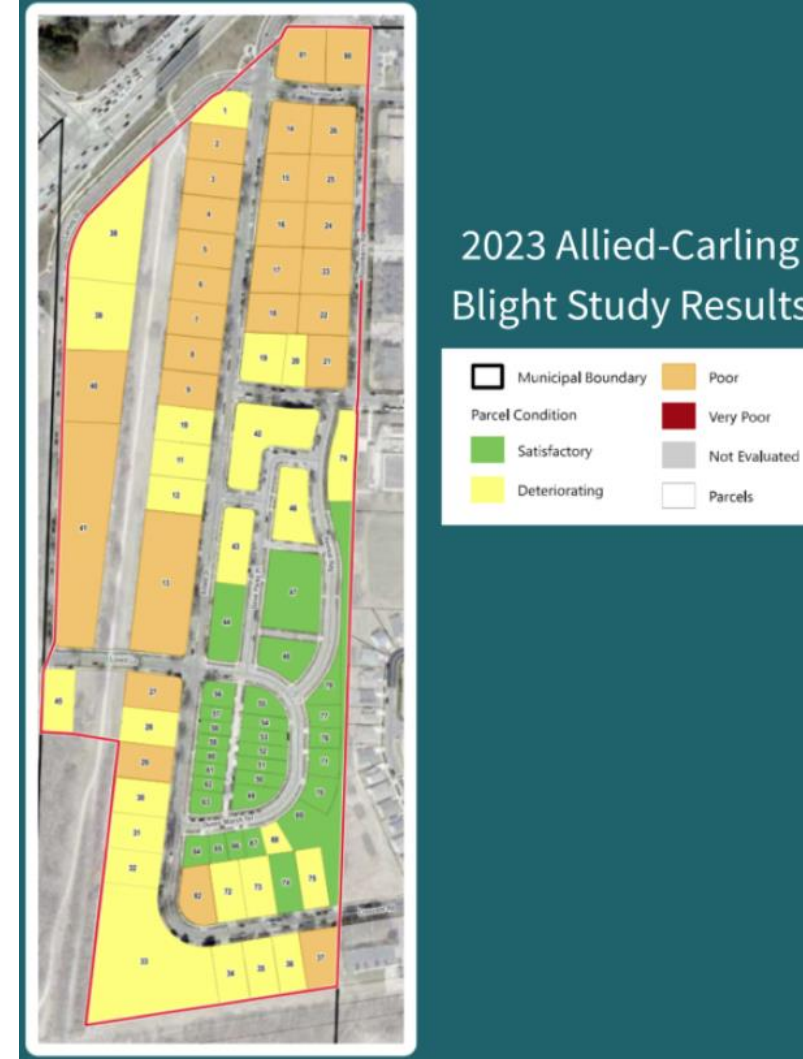
- Complaints (tenants, public in general)
 - Interior (need name and phone number)
 - Exterior (anonymous)
- Referrals (in conjunction with other City's agencies)
 - Madison Police Department
 - Madison Fire Department
 - Madison & Dane County Health Department
 - Common Council (Alders)
- Field Observations
 - When properties next door have same violation
- Community Development Division (CDD) Inspections

Systematic / Programmed Inspections



- State Law changed in 2017 to limit systematic inspections
 - Conversion of owner-occupied dwellings to rental
 - Large amount of enforcement case activity
 - Property value decline
 - Property Condition "Blight Study"

Allied-Carling Programmed Inspection area



General Property Maintenance



- Junk, trash, and debris
- Trash and recycling containers
- Graffiti
- Tall grass
- Noxious weeds
- Private Trees
- Snow/ice removal from public sidewalks
- Erosion control for 1 and 2 families
- Large items
- Obstructions of the right-of-way



Minimum Housing - Existing Buildings





Minimum Housing: *What we look at*

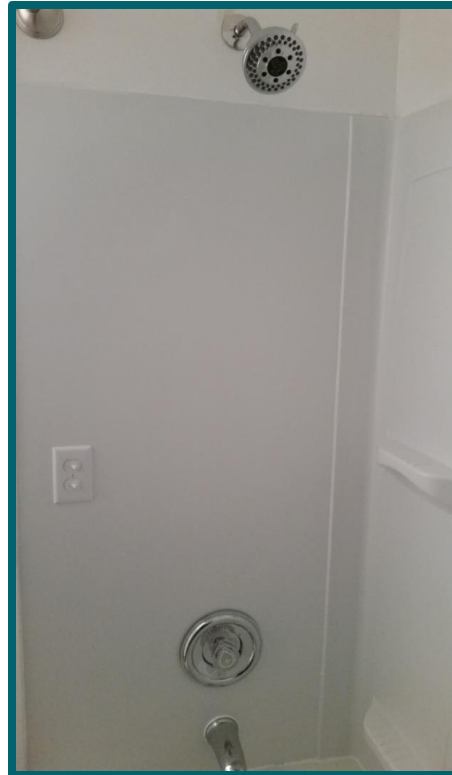
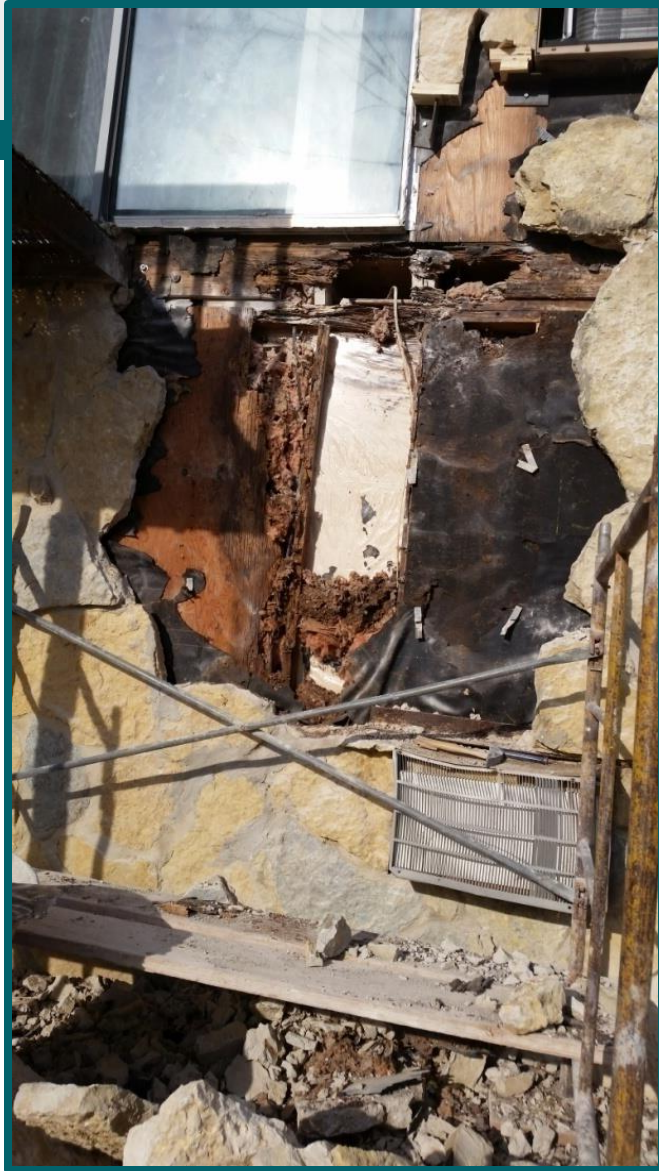
- Water issues
 - Infiltrations
 - Leaking
- HVAC
 - Heating
- Construction
 - Stairs/decks/interior and exterior walls/porches/chimneys, floors
 - Secondary exits
 - Common hallways
- Electrical
 - Interior light switches and electrical outlet receptacles
 - Electrical wiring
- Outdoor lighting
- Plumbing
 - Condition of fixtures
 - Water leaks and clogged drains



Minimum Housing: *What we look at*

- Safety and security
 - Smoke alarms
 - Carbon monoxide detectors
 - Doors and windows
 - Locks
 - Broken windows and doors
- Lack of basic equipment
 - No electricity
 - No water
 - No hot water

Minimum Housing. What we look at



Case Progression



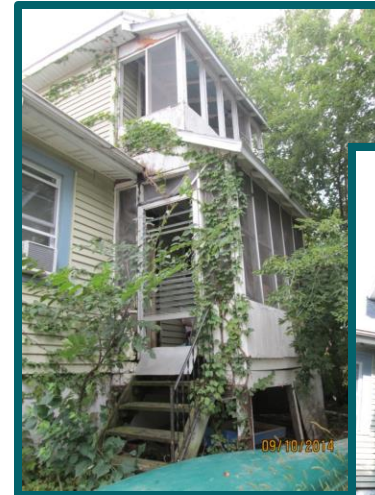
- Receive complaint
 - By phone, website, in person
- Review and open a case
- Schedule an appointment with tenant (interior concerns)
 - Exterior complaints do not need an appointment
- Review history (in office)
- Initial inspection
 - Taking notes
 - Taking pictures (if necessary)
- Write and send an Official Notice with a dateline to correct violation/s
- Reinspection
 - Compliance
 - Rent Abatement
 - Extension (if qualify)
 - Citation
 - City Attorney prosecution

Rent Abatement



- Madison General Ordinance **Chapter 32** (32.04).
- **Rent Abatement** is a process through which tenants may be eligible to recover a portion of their rent when landlords fail to address certain building violations. It provides a way to ensure that tenants are not paying full rent when their place is not in good or safe shape.
- Building Inspection is the **facilitator** of the process
- Tenants must keep paying rent and complying with lease
- Need a case, official notice issued, re-inspection after due date and RA eligible items identified
- Tenant needs to follow up with BI after receiving the eligibility letter
- "Default award" identified
- Hearing requested if parties do not agree with default award etc.

Enforcement Cases Success



How to contact us



In our website more information of services:

www.cityofmadison.com/bi

By phone: 608.266.4551

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How to submit complaints



<https://www.cityofmadison.com/reportaproblem/>

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Report a Problem

Please use this service to report non-emergency issues only.

Emergencies: In an emergency, please **call 911**.

Water Emergencies: Please call Madison Water Utility 24/7 at [\(608\) 266-4665](tel:6082664665).

[Expand All](#)

Abandoned Bicycle	Parking Enforcement
Abandoned Vehicle on Private Property	Pothole Concern
Animal Collection (Dead)	Recycling Collection +
Animal Collection (Deer Killed by Car)	Trash Collection +
Animal Control (Live) +	Trash & Recycling Carts +

Q & A

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