

Village of Lake Isabella Codified Ordinances

Article VI – General Nuisance Regulations

Chapter 642 – Blight

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642.01 Statement of Purpose

It is the purpose of this Chapter to prevent, reduce or eliminate blight in the Village of Lake Isabella by the prevention or elimination of contributing factors and causes of blight which exist or which may in the future exist in the Village of Lake Isabella. No person, firm or corporation shall maintain or permit to be maintained any of these causes of blight upon any property owned, leased, rented, possessed, controlled, or occupied by such person, firm or corporation in the Village of Lake Isabella.

It is hereby found that:

1. Areas of the Village are, or may become, blighted with the resulting impairment of taxable values upon which operating revenues to the Village of Lake Isabella and other local units of government depend;
2. Such blighted areas are detrimental to the health, safety, and general welfare of the citizens, property owners, and economic welfare of the community;
3. In order to improve and maintain the general character of the Village, it is necessary to rehabilitate such blighted areas;
4. The purposes of this Chapter are to rehab such areas by eliminating blight and the factors that contribute to blight for the protection of the health, safety, and general welfare of the Village of Lake Isabella; to preserve existing property values, and to ensure neighborhoods remain aesthetically desirable for single-family residential development.

642.03 Definitions

For the purposes of this Chapter of the codified ordinances of the Village of Lake Isabella the following definitions shall apply;

1. **Blighted Structure:** This shall mean any dwelling, garage, building, outbuilding, accessory building, swimming pool, pond, or structure of any nature or part of any building or structure which, because of disrepair, fire, wind, or other natural disaster or physical deterioration is no longer habitable, if a dwelling; or useful for any other purpose for which it is intended of other than a dwelling, and/or which involves or has any one of the following characteristics:
 - a. **Deterioration or deteriorated:** means the status of an item, process of decay, or degeneration has progressed to the point where it has resulted in or will soon result in making an object or mechanism unsafe, unsanitary, inoperable, or unusable or unsuitable for its intended use, including but not limited to, the advanced stage of rot, rust, mold, vermin, ingestion, dilapidation, infestation, or destruction.
 - b. **Vacant Structure:** This shall mean any building or structure which is unoccupied and which is not securely locked, with the windows glazed, or otherwise protected against the elements and/or from vandals, rodents and other animals or otherwise maintained in accordance with all of the Village's ordinances.
2. **Building Material(s):** This shall mean include, lumber, brick, concrete or cinder blocks, plumbing materials, electrical wiring or equipment, heating ducts or equipment, shingles, mortar, concrete or cement, windows, doors, nails, screws or any other materials used in constructing any building or structure.
3. **Code Enforcement Officer:** This shall mean any person designated by the Village Council of the Village of Lake Isabella to enforce any of the provisions of this Chapter.
4. **Junk:** This shall mean the storage or accumulation of any junk, trash, garbage, rubbish, or refuse of any kind, or any abandoned, discarded, unusable, or unused objects or equipment of any kind outdoors. The term "junk" shall include, but is not limited to, broken or unusable furniture, mattresses, stoves, refrigerators, freezers, or other appliances stored in the open; cans, implements, parts of motor

vehicles, machinery, un-mounted motor vehicle tires, cloth, rubber, bottles, any metals, boxes, cartons, or crates, remnants of wood, metal, or any other materials, broken toys and bicycles, broken lawn furniture, and other castoff material of any kind whether or not the same could be put to any reasonable use.

5. **Litter:** This shall include, without limitation, debris, tin cans, waste paper, waster rubbish, garbage, filth, refuse, vermin, decaying or dead matter, or deteriorated signs. “Trash,” “rubbish,” and/or “garbage” shall include any and all forms of debris not herein otherwise classified.
6. **Motor Vehicle:** This shall mean and include cars, trucks, tractors, automobiles, motorcycles, vans, boats, snowmobiles, ATVs, motorhomes, and other similar items.
7. **Public Nuisance:** Any condition, matter, or item that annoys, injures, or endangers the safety, health, comfort or repose of the public or any person; offends public decency; interferes with, obstructs, or renders dangerous any street, public place, highway, or navigable stream; depreciates or lowers property values; or in any way renders the public insecure in life or property, is hereby declared to be a Public Nuisance. Any violation of this Chapter shall also constitute a Public Nuisance.
8. **Tall Weeds and Grass:** This shall include Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), Dodders (any species of *Cuscuta*), Mustards (charlock, black mustard and Indian mustard, species of *Brassica* or *Sinapis*), Bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*), Perennial Sowthistle (*Sonchus arvensis*), Hoary Alyssum (*Berteroa incana*), Poison Ivy (*rhus toxicodendron*), Poison Sumac (*toxicodendron vernix*) Ragweed (*ambrosia elatior*), Poison Ivy, Milkweed, Bitterdock, Burdock, Goldenrod, Wild Carrots (*Daucus carota*), and all other noxious weeds, and grasses or other similar vegetation of a height/length of eight inches (8”) or more. Such weeds and grasses are hereby determined and declared to be noxious, dangerous, and unhealthy, tending to cause and promote disease and allergies, and to thereby constitute a public nuisance.
9. **Person:** This shall mean any natural person, firm, association, partnership, entity, limited liability company, trust, or corporation. All persons who violate any of the provisions of this Chapter, whether as owner, occupant, lessee, agent,

or employee shall, except as herein otherwise expressly provided, be equally and jointly liable as principals and perpetrators.

642.05 Blight Restricted

It shall be unlawful for any of the following to occur and/or to be allowed to occur, and such is hereby declared to be a public nuisance:

1. It shall be unlawful to keep, own, or possess any Blighted Structure or part of any Blighted Structure which, because of disrepair; fire, wind, or other natural disaster; physical deterioration; vandalism; unfinished demolition; or equity stripping is no longer habitable, if a dwelling; or useful for any other purpose for which it is intended.
2. It shall be unlawful whenever a structure used or intended to be used for dwelling purposes is unfit for human habitation because of dilapidation, decay, damage, faulty construction, act of God, or otherwise, or is in a condition that is likely to cause sickness, disease, or physical harm when so determined by the Health Department or appropriate building official. If a dwelling, this includes having the structure connected to a working and approved potable water supply and sewer or septic system.
3. It shall be unlawful to own, keep, possess, or maintain a vacant structure, building, dwelling, garage, outbuilding, factory, shop, store, or warehouse, unless such structure is in the course of construction in accordance with a valid building permit, issued by Isabella County, and unless such construction is completed within the required time limits of the Village of Lake Isabella and/or building permit.
4. It shall be unlawful when any building or part thereof, either before or after the effective date of this Chapter, is not completed in accordance with any permit(s) issued pursuant to the Village of Lake Isabella zoning or other code. If not so completed, the property owner shall immediately put the property back in a safe condition (“safe condition” shall be at the discretion of the Village Code Enforcement Officer) or alternately, it shall be torn down and removed from the property and returned to the grade level that existed before excavation.
5. It shall be unlawful when any building, structure or uninhabited dwelling, whether now existing or hereafter erected, shall be left in a dangerous or

hazardous condition by virtue of disrepair, depreciation, damage by fire, collapse, or act of God, or by virtue of any other cause. Any such building or structure shall be forthwith repaired or rehabilitated; and the dangerous or hazardous condition removed by the owner or occupant thereof, or in the alternative, torn down and removed, and any open excavation shall be immediately filled to grade level. Such repairs and rehabilitation shall comply in all respects with the provisions of the zoning, building, plumbing, mechanical, and electrical codes governing such buildings. If a building or structure is left in such disrepair, any excavation or repair done to the property will be at the cost of the property owner.

6. Every lot and parcel of land within the Village shall at all times be kept clean and free from the following:
 - a. Refuse and household trash.
 - b. Junk.
 - c. Commercial or industrial waste.
 - d. Unfinished excavations.
 - e. Unfinished alteration, construction or demolition of structures.
 - f. Used building materials.
7. It shall be unlawful when the exterior of any structure used or intended to be used for single-family residential habitation is not maintained in a condition such that there are no broken windows. All openings for windows and doors shall be maintained and kept in sound working condition. Likewise, exterior surfaces are required to be maintained and kept free from chipping or peeling paint, grime, dirt, or mold.
8. It shall be unlawful for the outdoor display or use of upholstered or other furniture, including vehicle seats, which were not designed and/or manufactured or intended for outdoor use.
9. It shall be unlawful when any graffiti is allowed remain on any structure, fence, sign, vehicle, or other outdoor surface. It shall be the responsibility of the property owner to remove graffiti.

10. It shall be unlawful to utilize plywood, or other building materials not intended or designed as window treatments as permanent window coverings for more than thirty (30) days. All interior window coverings, hardware and mechanisms shall be maintained in good repair and working order.
11. Every lot or parcel of land within the Village shall at all times be kept free and clear of junk, wrecked or abandoned motor vehicles. The storing or parking of any motor vehicle, or body or chassis of a motor vehicle, not bearing a currently valid license and registration is prohibited in any Residential District unless such motor vehicle, body or chassis is enclosed in a structure or other enclosure so as not to be visible from any adjoining property or public right-of-way.
12. The Village Manager is hereby appointed to serve as the commissioner of noxious weeds. The commissioner of noxious weeds is hereby empowered to enforce the following provisions:
 - a. It shall be unlawful when any parcel or lot with a structure is not kept free and clear of all noxious weeds as well as all tall weeds and grass that exceed eight inches (8”) in height. Any such plants or weeds exceeding such height are hereby declared to be a Public Nuisance. It is the responsibility of the property owner to have the parcel or lot properly maintained and cared for at all times. The property owner will be responsible for the cost of the removal of all tall weeds and grass and all noxious weeds. Notification will follow the same process as the Municipal Civil Infraction Ordinance.
 - b. The commissioner of noxious weeds shall send the owner of any parcel or lot found to be in violation of this Chapter notice, via first class mail, of any such violation and informing them that they must bring the parcel or lot into compliance with this Chapter. The notice shall also describe methods of treating and eradicating the noxious weeds and a summary of the provisions of this Chapter.
13. It shall be unlawful when a person knowingly dumps, deposits, places, throws, leaves, causes, or permits the dumping, depositing, placing, throwing or leaving of litter, garbage, or household trash on any public or private property or waters, other than property lawfully designated and set aside for such purposes.

14. It shall be unlawful for any person to maintain or permit to be maintained an unclean building, yard or premise. All manure and excreta shall be lawfully removed and disposed of in such a manner so as to prevent the breeding or harboring of insects or vermin.
15. It shall be unlawful when a yard or area where animals are kept is not well drained, maintained in a sanitary condition, and treated so as to effectively prevent the breeding or harboring of flies, mosquitoes or rodents.
16. It is unlawful to store firewood except in a neat, orderly stack to a height no greater than six (6') feet. The storage of firewood shall be restricted to the rear yard or any side yard of the premises.
17. It shall be unlawful in any residential district to keep or maintain any compost pile consisting of materials other than grass, leaves, or other organic plant materials. In residential districts, all compost piles shall be located inside a structure or bin.
18. The stockpiling and non-removal of cut or fallen trees, shrubbery, and brush on any parcel or lot with a structure, building, or dwelling is hereby deemed to be a public nuisance and unlawful as it is a threat to the public health and safety and as such is hereby prohibited. The removal and lawful disposal of any and all cut or fallen trees, tree-limbs, tree-branches, shrubbery or brush shall be done within thirty days (30) from the date of the incident.
19. The storage upon any parcel of building materials, unless there is in place a valid permit and the building materials are intended for use in said construction.

642.07 Responsibility of Owner and Tenant

1. It is the responsibility of all of the owners of each and every lot or parcel of land within the Village, and any person occupying or controlling the property, to keep the entire premises free and clear from all unlawful items and conditions as described in this Chapter. The responsibility of an occupant shall not relieve the owner or owners thereof from complying with this Chapter.
2. The Village of Lake Isabella may remove or cause to be removed any junk, trash, rubbish, junk automobile or abandoned vehicle, or parts of either, from any property, after having served written notice of its intention to do so, on the owner

or occupant of such property, at least seven (7) days prior to such removal. Such notice shall be served (as shown on the property tax records) by registered mail, or may be posted in a conspicuous place upon vacant or unoccupied property. Such removal by the Village of Lake Isabella shall not excuse or relieve any person of the obligation, imposed by this Chapter, to keep the property free from the storage or accumulation of junk, trash, junk automobiles, or abandoned vehicles, or parts of either, nor from the penalties for violation thereof.

3. If the Village of Lake Isabella has caused the removal of any such matter or paid for its removal, it shall be the duty of the Village Manager to forthwith demand payment thereof from the owner, possessor, or occupant of such lands, either personally, or by notice by mail. If the owners, possessor, or occupant of such lands shall fail or neglect to pay the said charges within thirty (30) days after presentation of a statement, either personally or by mail, the Village Manager shall certify said account to the Village Assessor, who shall cause such expenditure to be levied upon the lands on behalf of which said expenditure was made, and the same shall thereupon become a lien upon said land and shall be added to the next Village tax roll and be collected in the same manner as other Village special assessments are collected.

642.09 Violations and Penalty

1. Any person, firm, corporation, trust, partnership, or other legal entity who or which violates or refuses to comply with any provision of this Chapter shall be responsible for a municipal civil infraction and shall be subject to fines, costs, and other relief as provided for in Chapter 222 of the codified ordinances of the Village of Lake Isabella and by law.
2. In addition to any other penalties or remedies available, the Village is authorized and empowered to order the property owner to remove or otherwise abate the Public Nuisance. If such notice is given, it shall be in writing, addressed to the property owner as it appears on the latest ad valorem property tax assessment roll, or current owner if such is different and known to the Village, and be mailed via first class mail or posted at the property in violation, and shall inform the property owner of the following:
 - a. The nature of the violation/Public Nuisance.
 - b. The time in which the violation/Public Nuisance must be abated.

3. Upon the failure, neglect, or refusal of any property owner to fully comply with the provisions of this Chapter, the Village or its authorized contractor, or other designee, is authorized and empowered to enter the property in violation to abate the Public Nuisance, or to provide and to make payment for the abatement of the Public Nuisance.
3. When the Village abates a Public Nuisance as provided herein, the cost of any abatement, including legal expenses and any authorized administrative fees, will be billed to the property owner. Such costs and fees will be a debt of the property owner to the Village, which may be assessed as a single lot special assessment in accordance with Chapter 214 of the codified ordinances of the Village of Lake Isabella, and shall constitute a lien against the property, including interest, until paid, and enforced and collected in the same manner as ad valorem property taxes.
5. The failure to receive the notice as provided for in subsection (2) is not a defense to any action brought by a member of the public for injury or by the Village to collect the costs of abatement or impose penalties or other fees or proceedings as authorized by this Chapter.

642.11 Request for Variance

1. Should the owner or occupant of such land within the Village of Lake Isabella, before or after receiving any notice as referenced within this Chapter, desire to seek a variance from any of the requirements of this Chapter, such person shall have the right to seek a variance from any or all of the requirements contained within this Chapter, pursuant to the manner and method of filing for a variance as provided for by the Village of Lake Isabella Zoning Code. The same standards shall apply as if a nonuse variance were involved.
2. The filing of a proper application for a variance, together with the payment of any required fees for the same, shall temporarily suspend the obligation to comply with any noticed violation of this Chapter, until a decision on any such variance application has been rendered by the Village.
3. Any person who files such an application for a variance, which is later denied, shall have five days after notice of said denial, in which to comply with all the provisions of this Chapter.