

Austin Code Department

Town Hall Questions and Responses

1.No one to get loose dogs. Dog catchers for loose dogs (low priority). Many loose dogs in Copperfield Neighborhood. Police say they would respond prior to dog catcher but they are short on staff.

Lost pets are generally owned by someone. Therefore, don't keep or adopt out an animal without first making a real effort to locate the owner. Austin Animal Center will accept any pets found in Austin/Travis County.

- If you can keep the found pet temporarily, call or contact 3-1-1 online to submit a Found Animal Report which will appear on our website.
- Take the found pet to Austin Animal Center or nearest veterinarian to have them scanned for a microchip.
- If you cannot keep a found pet, then you can contact 3-1-1 or bring the pet in to our facility. We are open 11am to 7pm weekdays and 11am to 5pm on weekends,
- Please call 3-1-1 for loose dogs, so that Animal Services can respond.

2.Do you notify residents that a group home is being placed next door to them? And why not?

The City currently licenses boarding homes and rooming homes only. The City of Austin has no way of knowing when a group/board home is established. There is not a state or city notification requirement.

We do, however, participate in a task force composed of Austin Code, Police, Fire and Health and Human Services, that is looking at licensing and enforcement of standards at group homes.(Planning and Zoning may soon to be added to this effort.)

Also, a proposed ordinance on reasonable accommodations, which would allow us to license and enforce group home conditions, is in development and will be presented to the City Council in the future.

Sen. Kirk Watson announced he is going to try and get the Texas Department of Health and Human Services engaged in this issue, since the state, not the city, is better equipped to handle group homes, assisted living facilities, etc.

3.Are neighborhood associations able to find out what properties are considered repeat offenders?

Please visit the Code website at:

<http://austin.maps.arcgis.com/apps/SummaryViewer/index.html?appid=20874ab537454f988f6675f0a70b17f1>

Another option is to submit a Public Information Request at: <http://www.austintexas.gov/online-form/public-information-request>

4. Will code compliance be upgraded with new codes coming so compliance can actually do something? (code zoning changes/ Austin constituents) What about repeat offenders? Often they pay fines as the cost of doing business. (group homes).

The Austin Code Department is working with the Law Department to boost the enforcement authority of Code, particularly in relation to short-term rentals and our repeat offender program for multifamily dwellings. We are also looking to create a reasonable accommodation ordinance that will address some of the concerns related to group/boarding homes. The Austin City Council will need to approve any type of ordinance changes.

5. There are an excessive number of old cars in east Austin, that are not working, which results in these cars occupying space either in yards or on the streets near homes. I see Code Enforcement Officers and Police Officers drive by these areas, while never enforcing these violations. I believe if certain violations are enforced, then other violations will correct themselves.

The Austin Police Department, not the Austin Code Department, is responsible for abandoned/nonworking vehicles. Please call 3-1-1 to report abandoned/nonworking vehicles.