



# 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 Building and Fire Safety Division and the Planning Division is responsible for enforcing the provisions of Washington State's laws, codified in the Revised Code of Washington (often referred to as "RCW's"), Yakima County's code and county ordinances related to building, health, fire, and regulating 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 web page Building and Fire or Planning Divisions <https://www.yakimacounty.us/27/Government>, 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 COMPLETE FOR YAKIMA COUNTY TO ACT ON THE MATTER

(Please print)

Your Name:

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Your Street Address:

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City, State, Zip:

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Your phone number(s):

Daytime:

Evening:

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Your Tax Parcel ID Number:

(i.e.: Range, Township, Section)

11-digit parcel number

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We appreciate the information you have provided. **Please be aware** that state law (Chapter 42.56 RCW) states that all records held by public agencies are disclosable unless exempt from disclosure.

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

