

2008 Private Property Code Violations Summary

This summary report was prepared by staff to track progress on code compliance issues in the City of Kent. This is the third year that these statistics have been analyzed so this report includes a comparison across several years – 2006, 2007 and 2008.

With three years of data this reports begins to identify common themes that re-appear year after year, e.g., high incidence of grass and weed citations, and it also notes new trends that have emerged, e.g., changes in the distribution of violations between rental occupied and owner occupied properties.

2008 was the first year that the City had a full time Code Enforcement Officer and the numbers reflect the extra attention that this employee was able to devote to code issues. Citations were up and code enforcement activity had a broader reach across the City than ever before. The results of this increased effort are evident in the level of detail that is now available in the compliance data and more importantly in how the neighborhoods look.

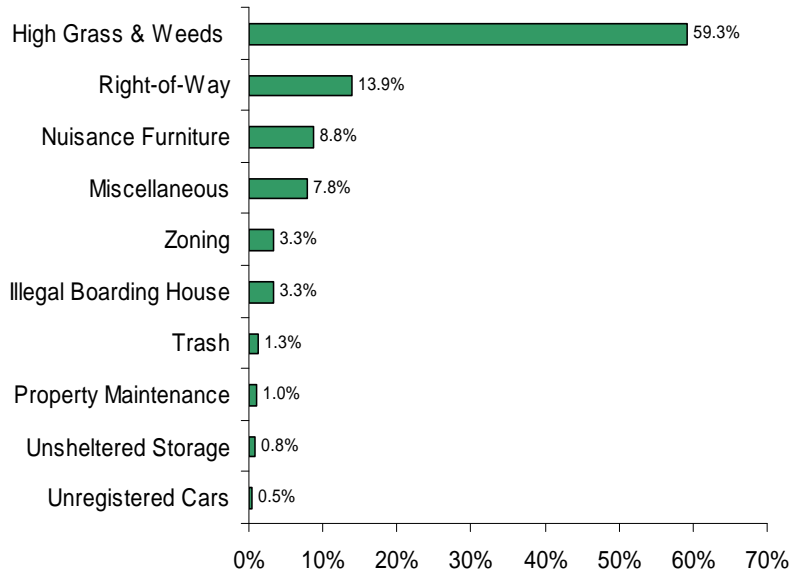
For the first time rental property citations surpassed owner occupied citations for the total number of citations issued – with weeds and grass problems remaining the most significant problem for all property owners. This year the City was also able to combat public right-of-way (sign) violations more aggressively.

Using this data we hope to be able to continue to introduce new code initiatives, e.g., equipment rental program, new exterior maintenance code, to better target solutions to specific problem areas in the future.

tall grass and weeds zoning nuisance furniture trash exterior maintenance

Code Inspection Results in 2008

Code Violation Distribution by type



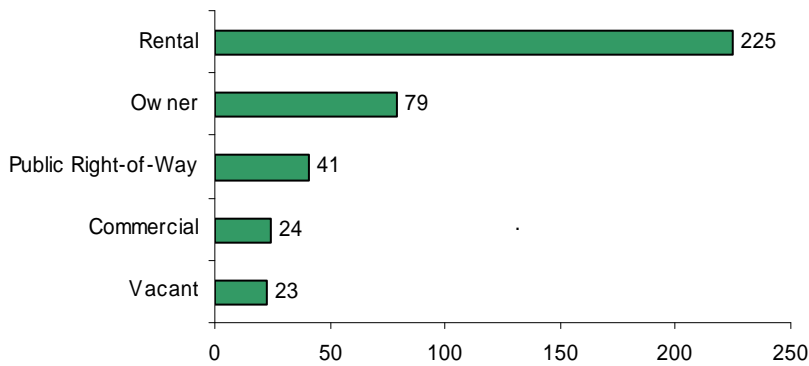
2008 Summary

1 out of 1.7 code complaints in 2008 were in response to high weeds and grass

The top 5 most common complaints made up 93% of all complaints

The average City response time from complaint to inspection was less than one day

Total Code Violations by Property Type

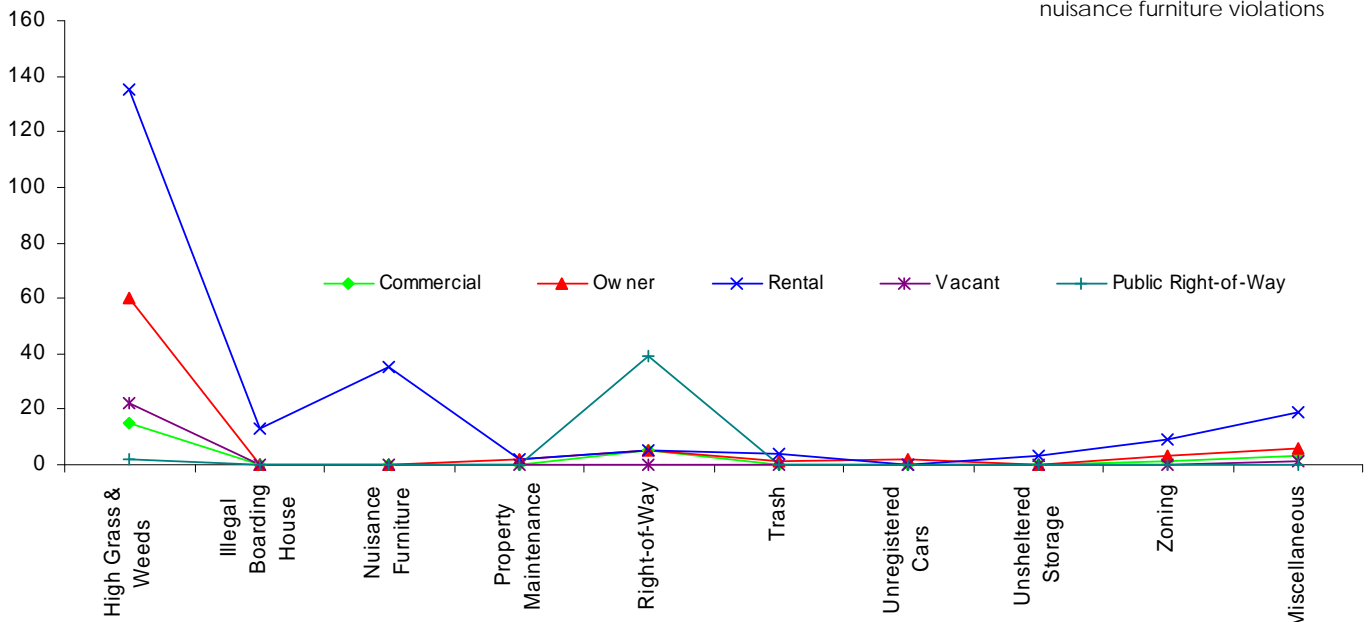


2008 Summary

61% of all violations occurred at rental properties

Rental properties had the highest number of violations for tall weeds and grass than any other category

Code Violations By Property Type



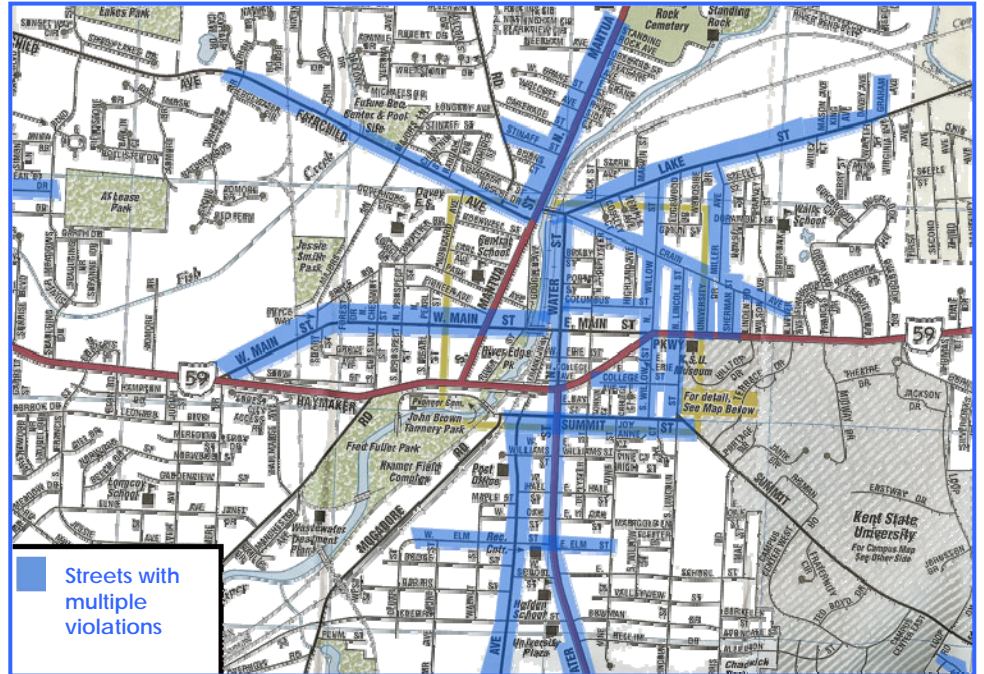
Rental properties also had the highest incidence of nuisance furniture violations

Code Inspection Results in 2008

TOP 20 Streets for Code Violations in 2008

The following 20 streets are listed in descending order for the most violations in 2008:

STREET	# VIOLATIONS
S. Water	41
University	29
E. College	19
N. Willow	15
W. Main	15
Crain	14
Fairchild	12
Vine	12
Lake	11
N. Lincoln	11
E. Summit	10
Bruce	8
Franklin	8
Sherman	8
Cherry	7
Harris	7
Mogadore	7
N. Mantua	7
Dodge	5
Silver Meadows	5



Street Summary

A total of 102 streets had violations in 2008

The top 20 streets accounted for 63% of the total violations

49% of the streets had only one violation

The map illustrates streets with multiple violations. It's important to remember that the inspection process is mainly complaint based so heavily trafficked streets are likely to have a disproportionately high number of violations called in.

Property Summary

396 violation notices were issued in 2008

254 different property owners received violation notices

50 properties or 18% of properties (1 out of 6) were repeat offenders in 2008

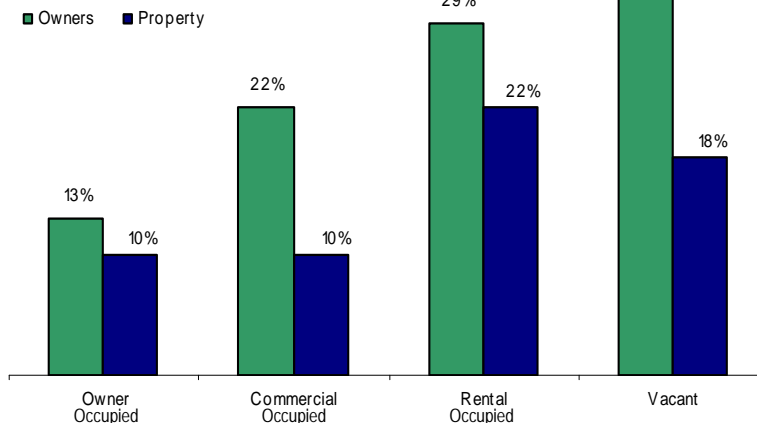
The single owner with the most violations had 9 in the course of the 12 month period

Overall 22 owners had violations at multiple properties (9%)

Only 3 vacant properties were repeat offenders in 2008

1 out of 3 rental property owners were repeat offenders

Percent of Repeat Violations



Code Inspection Results 2006 to 2008

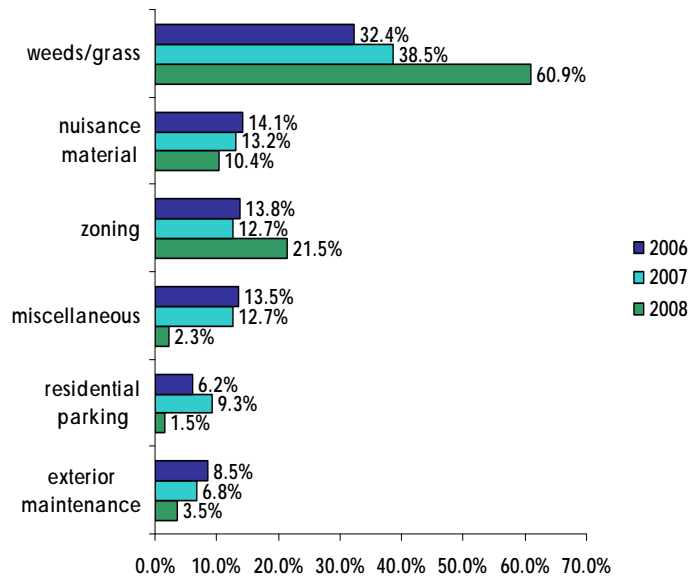
Code Violation Distribution by Type (2006 to 2008)

3 out of 6 of the main violation types have decreased every year

Weed and grass complaints continue to increase each year with an increase of over 22% in 2008

Nuisance material, miscellaneous, residential parking, and exterior maintenance violations all decreased in 2008

Zoning violations increase over 8% in 2008



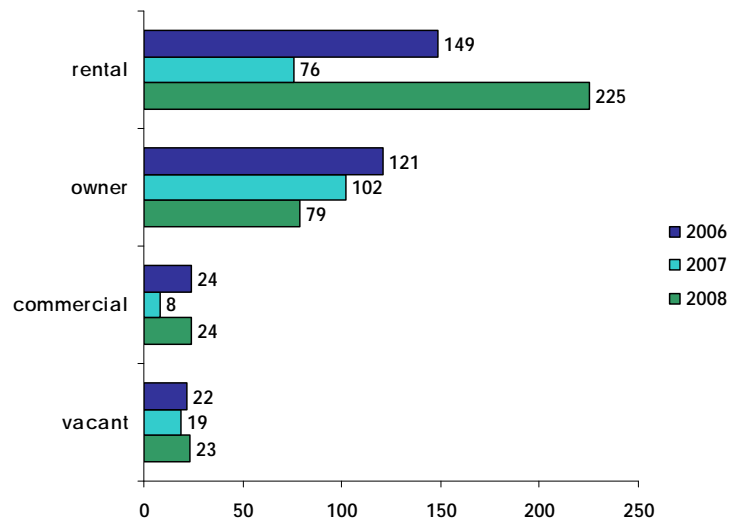
Code Violations by Property Type (2006 to 2008)

Total rental violations increased by 149

Total owner violations decreased by 23 incidents

In 2008 rentals had the highest number of grass and weed violations, in 2006 & 2007 owner occupied was the highest

Owner occupied total violations continue to steadily decrease



Street Violation Summary (2006 to 2008)

7 out of 20 streets with the highest violations changed from 2007 to 2008

Only 1 (S. Water Street) of the top 5 were the same in 2007 and 2008

In 2008 the number of streets with violations increased by 28 or 27%

10 streets have remained in the top 20 every year

Property Violation Summary (2006 to 2008)

Total citations increased by 191 or 48% from 2007 to 2008

In 2006 the total number of violations by property owner was 254, then a decrease of 88 owners or 35% in 2007, and in 2008 the total number increased by 88 back to 254

Repeat offender property owners increased by 5%

Commercial properties have remained the lowest for repeat violations every year

Code Inspection Duties in Kent

The City's code inspection functions are decentralized with responsibilities spread out among several city departments:

- The Health Department manages the enforcement of the state health code, e.g., food service, swimming pools, licensed boarding houses, trash.
- The Fire Department has a range of building inspection duties related to upholding the state fire code, e.g., electrical, ingress/egress, etc.
- The Police Department handles a number of nuisance activities such as enforcement of the noise ordinance and nuisance parties.
- The Community Development Department performs all inspections related to construction activity, administers the zoning code, and responds to a number of exterior maintenance types of complaints, e.g., tall weeds and grass, graffiti, fencing, etc.

Code Inspection Policy

The City's code inspection efforts are governed by national/state laws and adopted City policy that seeks to protect public health and safety. Where national/state laws establish standards, e.g., building code, fire code, etc., the City ensures private activities comply with those standards through routine permitting, licensing and inspection procedures.

In addition, the City has adopted a range of property requirements that establish local standards for maintenance of private property, e.g., tall weeds and grass, exterior maintenance, etc. These requirements were created as a means to uphold the community's expectations for their investment in their homes, businesses and quality of life enjoyed in the community.

Clean, well-maintained neighborhoods do much more than just make Kent a pleasant place to live. Neighborhoods whose homeowners perform routine, basic maintenance on their structures and yards consistently enjoy lower crime rates and higher property values.

Code Inspection Practices

For those activities that require permits and licenses, the City has procedures in place that govern the necessary application, notification, and inspection of regulated activities.

For the local code matters, the City has historically used a complaint driven practice, whereby inspections are performed only in response to a complaint. This practice was in part due to the lack of staffing available to patrol neighborhoods and seek out violations fairly, but it was also a policy established by City Council in an effort to maintain a more customer-friendly community.

Since the hiring of a full-time Code Enforcement Officer in 2008 the City has been able to take a more pro-active approach to Code matters while maintaining good customer service.