

## Why It's Important

In South Bend, Indiana, a significant number of unoccupied buildings are not maintained and constitute a hazard to public health, safety and welfare.

Vacant and abandoned (V&A) properties can adversely impact a neighborhood because:

- ◇ They attract children, harbor vermin, shelter vagrants and criminals
- ◇ They are likely to be damaged by vandals or arsonists
- ◇ Unkempt grounds invite dumping of garbage, trash and other debris
- ◇ Close proximity to neighboring properties increases the risk of fire, insect or rodents spreading
- ◇ V&A properties contribute to blight, decrease property values
- ◇ They discourage neighbors from making improvements to their own properties
- ◇ Discourage people from moving into the neighborhood



Uncontrolled Dumping at Vacant & Abandoned Building

## Did You Know...

### Environmental Facts

72% of all environmental violations cited between December 2015 and December 2016 existed on properties that were non-owner-occupied.

Continuous enforcement properties are the properties that regularly have litter, grass, housing, and vegetation violations. Of the 1,613 properties under continuous enforcement in 2016, 77% of those were non-owner-occupied.

Violation Type	Owner Occupied	Non Owner Occupied	Grand Total	% Non Owner Occupied
Continuous Enforcement	374	1,239	1,613	77%
Graffiti	72	114	186	61%
Grass & Weeds	884	2,518	3,402	74%
Litter	2,076	5,118	7,194	71%
Vegetation	488	1,160	1,648	70%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>3,894</b>	<b>10,149</b>	<b>14,043</b>	<b>72%</b>

### Vacant & Abandoned Facts

Of all properties identified as vacant and abandoned (V&A), 81% of those properties were owned by someone living outside of South Bend.

91% of the V&A properties that warranted demolition (due to such an advanced state of disrepair) were also owned by someone living outside of South Bend.

# Vacant & Abandoned Registration



**The Department of Code Enforcement asks for your cooperation in keeping your neighborhood a clean and pleasant place to live.**

### **Contact Us!**

Code Enforcement  
 13th Floor County-City Building  
 227 W. Jefferson Blvd.  
 South Bend, IN 46601  
 574-235-9486

Office Hours:  
 Monday - Friday  
 8:00 AM - 4:45 PM

Website: <https://www.southbendin.gov/>



## Overview

Everyone who owns a property in the City of South Bend, that has been vacant for 90 or more days AND is the subject of an unresolved repair or demolition order must register the property.

To register a Vacant and Abandoned (V&A) property, you will need to fill out a registration form for each property as well as pay applicable registration fee(s).

The fee structure is as follows:

- Residential properties with three (3) or less residential units = \$300 per property per year
- Residential properties with four (4) or more residential units:
  - ◊ \$500 fee for the first year;
  - ◊ \$750 for the second year;
  - ◊ \$1,000 for third year and each subsequent year
- Non –residential properties:
  - ◊ \$500 fee for the first year;
  - ◊ \$750 for the second year;
  - ◊ \$1,000 for third year and each subsequent year

**Registration is due every year before December 31st.**

Each registration is valid for one year.

Registration forms are available online at: [https://www.southbendin.gov/sites/default/files/files/Code\\_VacantPropertyRegistrationForm0315.pdf](https://www.southbendin.gov/sites/default/files/files/Code_VacantPropertyRegistrationForm0315.pdf)

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: What is a vacant property?**

**A:** A building/structure that has had no legal occupancy/habitual presence for 90 days.

**Q: What is an abandoned property?**

**A:** A property that has had a violation order issued against it, that has not been resolved, for 30 days. For example, an environmental, housing, and/or continuous enforcement order.

**Q: What information is needed?**

**A:** Please see ordinance Sec 6-37.1(f) “Vacant building maintenance and registration” for detailed information. Online at: [https://www.municode.com/library/in/south\\_bend/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=SUHITA\\_CH6BU\\_ART8PRMACO\\_S6-37.1VABUMARE](https://www.municode.com/library/in/south_bend/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=SUHITA_CH6BU_ART8PRMACO_S6-37.1VABUMARE)

**Q: Am I required to have a property manager?**

**A:** Yes, you must have a property manager residing within fifty (50) miles of the property. The property manager may be the owner or an agent of the owner. Must be 18 years of age or older.

**Q: What are the standards for maintenance to the property?**

**A:** At least once a week, the property manager/owner should inspect the property to ensure:

- Property is secured against unlawful entry (windows and doors)
- Property is clean (free of litter and debris)
- Vegetation is mowed

**Q: Am I responsible for removing snow and/or ice from the sidewalks?**

**A:** Yes. According to Sec. 18-7, you must remove any snow and/or ice from sidewalks within twenty-four (24) hours after accumulation.

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: Am I allowed to board the property?**

**A:** Yes. You may temporarily board a building to protect it against unlawful entry or vandalism. Please see ordinances Sec 6-37.1(g)(3) and Sec 6-37.1(g)(4) for specifications on boarding.

**Q: What happens if I don't register?**

**A:** An ordinance violation citation shall be issued. Fine structure will be as follows:

- First day of violation - \$250
- All subsequent violations - \$600-\$2,500

**Q: What happens if I provide false information?**

**A:** An ordinance violation citation shall be issued. Fine structure will be as follows:

- First day of violation - \$250
- All subsequent violations - \$600-\$2,500

**Q: How long is a registration valid?**

**A:** One year. Each property will need to be registered every year before December 31st.

**Q: Do I still have to register if my property is vacant but not abandoned?**

**A:** No. However, you may voluntarily register it at no charge. If it happens to become abandoned within the same calendar year as your voluntary registration, there will be no registration fee assessed for that year.

For complete information on V&A Registration, please see the municipal code Sec 6-37.1 online at: [https://www.municode.com/library/in/south\\_bend/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=SUHITA\\_CH6BU\\_ART8PRMACO\\_S6-37.1VABUMARE](https://www.municode.com/library/in/south_bend/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=SUHITA_CH6BU_ART8PRMACO_S6-37.1VABUMARE)