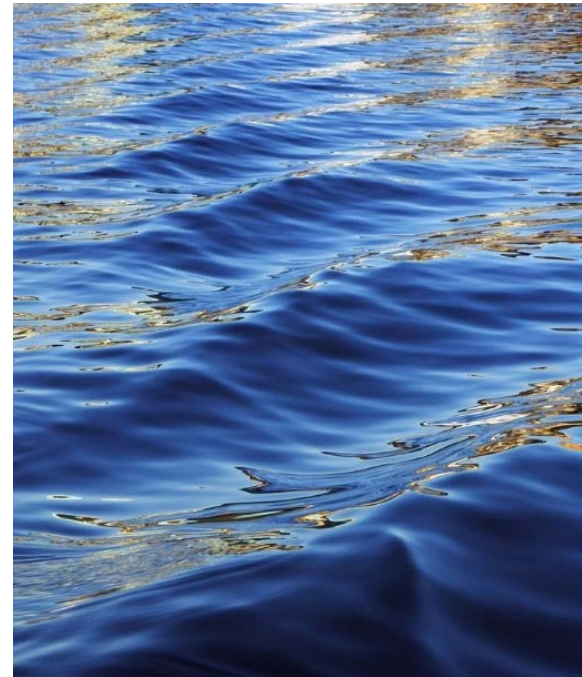


Public Health Nuisances: Overview

McHenry County Board of Health

July 24th, 2017



Public Health Nuisance: A condition, activity, or failure to act that adversely affects public health

- Emphasis on Public Health: limit of authority
- Ordinance impacts whole county: incorporated and unincorporated
- Typically is not addressed under another program/ordinance
- Ordinances typically written broadly to cover a variety of issues
- Typically not mandated
 - Exception: noxious weeds and solid waste management for Illinois counties

Summary of Article II: McHenry County Public Health Ordinance

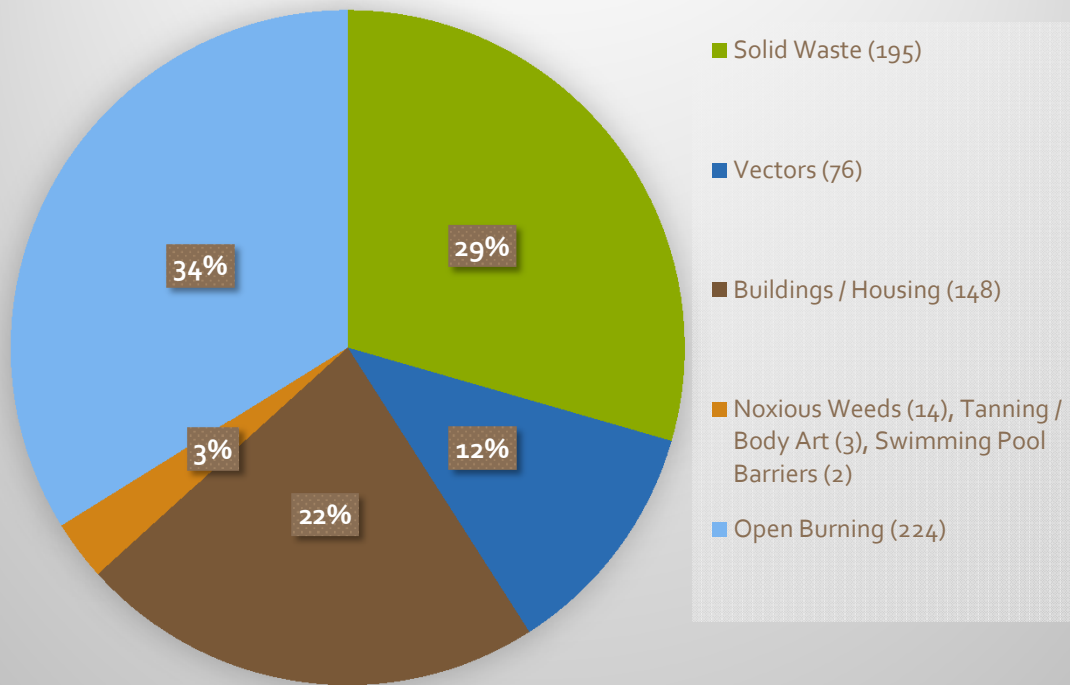
- Solid Waste Issues (non-hazardous)
 - Animal, human, industrial
 - Litter
 - Vehicles, appliances that are safety hazard
 - Storage of garbage containers
- Vectors: infestation or conditions conducive to infestation in building or on property
 - Potential for disease transmission
 - Mosquitoes, cockroaches, rodents, bats, etc.
- Noxious weeds within 150 feet of a property line
 - Thistle, ragweed, Johnson grass
- Buildings in a condition prejudicial to the health and safety of the public
 - Unsanitary conditions
 - Indoor air
 - Mold
 - Water intrusion
 - Unsecured, vector harborage

Summary of Article II: McHenry County Public Health Ordinance (continued)

- Offering personal items for sale that haven't been sanitized
 - Mattresses, wigs, etc.
- Failing to provide a potable water supply where people live, work, assemble
 - Inoperable water well
 - Community water supply shut off
- Unpermitted tanning facility or unregistered tattoo/body art facility
 - Commercial establishment operating without approval
 - Facility operating out of home, trailer, etc.
- Open burning
 - Refuse / garbage / construction debris
 - Landscape waste
- Pool barriers for private swimming pools

2016 Complaint Files

Total Complaints: 1,014
Public Health Nuisance Complaints: 662



- Complaint files for public health nuisances = 65% of the total
- Crossover between programs, multiple issues at a site
- FTEs: 4.65 (excluding the planning portion of the County's solid waste manager)
- Funding: General Fund, IEPA Solid Waste Enforcement Grant, WNV/Vector Prevention Grant, Tanning/Body Art Grants

Goals

1. Resolve public health concerns in timely manner
2. Manage resources efficiently
3. Manage public expectation

Resources:

- Resource intensive / time consuming: lots of contact with property owners, complainants, other agencies, multiple visits, formal enforcement action
- Extensive documentation: photos, reports, notices, correspondence
- Ownership issues: deceased, foreclosures, abandonment, out of state, no other address, identifying responsible party
- Lengthy to resolve if taken to court

Public Expectation:

- "It is a potential health issue; the Health Department should resolve it."
- "It impacts my property values, trying to sell my house."
- "No one should have to look at that."
- All activities are prioritized
- **Not all nuisance complaints are public health issues**
 - Repetitive unsubstantiated complaints
 - Neighbor disputes
 - Tenant / landlord issues

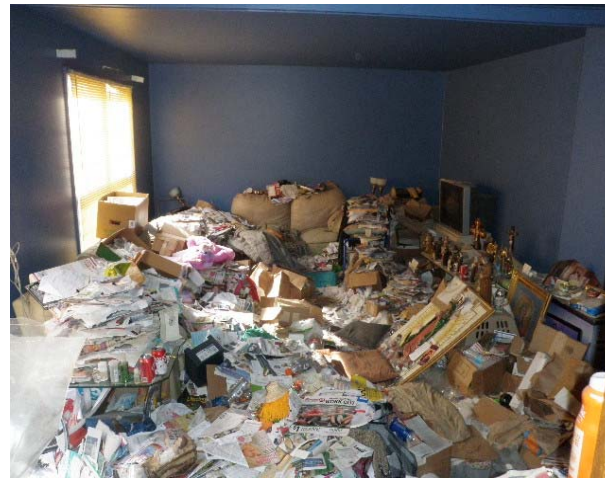


Example Scenarios



Housing / Hoarding Issues

- Accumulations of refuse, garbage, and animal waste
- Filthy conditions, unsanitary
- Water intrusion and mold
- Lack of potable water and/or sewage disposal





Housing / Hoarding Issues (continued)

- Hoarding not necessarily a public health violation:
 - ingress / egress
 - Life Safety
 - Fire Safety
- Personal belongings / clutter vs. discards
- Housekeeping vs. unsanitary
- Bugs vs. vectors
- Odors
- Owner occupied vs. tenant
- Deteriorating conditions / monitoring



Accumulations of Solid Waste

- Potential for vector harborage
- Safety concerns (abandoned vehicles / appliances)
- Soil or groundwater contamination
- Artificial containers – vector mosquitos
- Air quality concerns – open burning



Accumulations of Solid Waste (continued)



- Items perceived to have value
- Plan to use it in future
- Health ordinance does not prohibit outside storage of personal items
- Health ordinance does not address aesthetic issues
- Over time, unused items become discards



Mosquitoes

- Vector mosquitoes
- Artificial containers, rimless tires
- Stagnant water, high in organic content
- Catch basins, sewage effluent, unmaintained swimming pools



Mosquitoes (continued)

- Floodwater mosquitoes
- Temporary flooding
- Detention / retention basins
- Roadside ditches
- Brush, long grass

Moving Forward

- Current procedure for investigating complaints
- Define and manage the process better
- Development of comprehensive policy by type of public health nuisance
 - Supervisor to triage files
 - Re-evaluate response times
 - Decision tree for staff
 - Examples
 - Anonymous complaints?
 - Repetitive unsubstantiated complaints
 - Insufficient information
- Bring to Board of Health for Review and Approval

Questions ?? Concerns??