

**TOWN OF STRAFFORD
MUNICIPAL ORDINANCE**

Adopted March 18, 2009

OUTDOOR STORAGE OF JUNK AND JUNK VEHICLES

WHEREAS, the Town of Strafford has, by authority granted in 24 V.S.A. §§ 1971 et seq., 2246, and 2291, the powers to adopt, amend, repeal, and enforce ordinances, and to manage and regulate outdoor storage of junk and junk motor vehicles within its boundaries;

NOW, THEREFORE, to protect the public health, safety and well being, and to promote the responsible use of resources and protection of the environment, the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Strafford hereby adopts this ordinance to regulate outdoor storage of junk and junk motor vehicles.

ARTICLE I. Definitions.

1. "Abandon" means to leave without claimed ownership for 30 days or more.
2. "Abutting property owner" means any person or persons, corporation or other entity that owns, leases, or in any other way uses or controls the real property abutting any portion of the property of another.
3. "Enforcement Officer" means any municipal official, zoning administrator, the town manager, if there is one, police officer, constable, health officer, etc. appointed by the Selectboard to enforce the provisions of this ordinance.
4. "Highway" means any highway, road, street or other public way, regardless of classification.
5. "Household appliance" means any range, stove, refrigerator, washing machine, microwave oven, computer, clothes dryer, water pump, power tool and the like.
6. "Junk" means old or discarded scrap copper, brass, iron, steel or other metals, or materials including but not limited to tires, household appliances, furniture, rope, rags, batteries, glass, rubber debris, waste, trash, construction debris, plumbing fixtures, or any discarded, dismantled, wrecked, scrapped, or ruined motor vehicle or parts thereof.
7. "Junkyard" means any place of outdoor storage or deposit that is maintained, operated or used in connection with a business for storing, keeping, processing, buying or selling junk or as a scrap metal processing facility. "Junkyard" also means any place of outdoor storage or deposit, not in connection with a business, which is maintained or used for the storing or keeping of four or more junk motor vehicles that are visible from any portion of a public highway. However, the term does not include a private garbage dump or a sanitary landfill that is in compliance with 24 V.S.A. §§ 2201 et seq. and any applicable state regulations. "Junkyard" does not mean an operating repair facility where wrecked or disabled motor vehicles are stored for inspection, repairs, or sale.

8. "Junk motor vehicle" means a discarded, dismantled, wrecked, scrapped or ruined motor vehicle or parts thereof, an unregistered motor home not connected to water and/or sewer, or a vehicle other than an on-premise utility vehicle which is allowed to remain unregistered and uninsured for a period of 30 days from the date of notice to the owner of the land where the junk motor vehicle is situated.
9. "Motor vehicle" means any vehicle propelled or drawn by power other than muscular power, including trailers. Functional vehicles and equipment used for agricultural and construction operations are excluded from this definition.
10. "Notice" means notice given by first class mail or delivery in hand by any enforcement officer as defined in the ordinance. First class notice shall be deemed sufficient if sent to the owner of the land at the last known address for such person. Such notice shall be deemed to have been received by the owner of the land five (5) days from the date of the posting if the notice is given by first class mail.
11. "Traveled way" in this ordinance refers to that portion of a public highway designed for the movement of a motor vehicle, shoulders, and roadside parking, rest, or observation areas, and other areas immediately adjacent and contiguous to the traveled portion of the roadway.

ARTICLE 2. Requirements.

1. It shall be unlawful to place, discard or abandon junk or four or more junk motor vehicles in a place where any such item is visible from the traveled way of a highway or town road. Any such item so placed, discarded or abandoned is hereby declared to be a public nuisance.
2. For safety reasons, the owner of any junk motor vehicle or household appliance must secure the same so as to disallow unauthorized entry by other persons, especially children. Any doors large enough for a child to crawl through on any household appliance must be removed. Junk motor vehicles' doors must either be chained or locked shut.
3. It shall be unlawful to place, discard or abandon junk or four or more junk motor vehicles upon the land of another with or without the consent of the landowner, when any such items are visible from the traveled way of a highway or town road. Any such item so placed, discarded or abandoned is hereby declared to be a public nuisance.
4. All junkyards, scrap yards, and places of outdoor storage of junk shall be effectively screened from public view by a fence or evergreen vegetation. Any fence shall be of sound construction and of solid vertical board or 'stockade' type construction, and shall be maintained neatly and in good repair. Height is to be determined by the Selectboard. Screening may be inspected at any time by the Selectboard or the enforcement officer to make sure it is appropriately maintained and in good repair. The owner will be notified in writing should repairs or upgrades of the fencing be required. Such a fence shall not be used for advertising signs or other displays which are visible from the traveled way of a highway. Any vegetation used for screening shall be of sufficient height and density (as

determined by the Selectboard) so that it effectively screens the area from view during all seasons. Failure to provide screening as required herein shall be considered a violation of this ordinance.

ARTICLE 3. Enforcement and Penalties.

1. Upon receiving written notice from the Selectboard to do so, the owner of any junk or junk motor vehicles discovered in violation of Article 2 of this ordinance shall remove or screen the item(s) or vehicles from the view of the traveled way of the highway or town road. If the owner of the junk or junk motor vehicles does not remove or screen the items from view within 30 days from the date of mailing of the written notice by the Selectboard, the designated enforcement officer may pursue an enforcement action pursuant to Article 3.3 of this ordinance, and may notify the Agency of Transportation.
2. Additional Provisions for Junk Motor Vehicles.
 - A. If the owner of the land on which junk motor vehicles are discovered in violation of Article 2 of this ordinance does not hold title or disclaims title to the vehicle, and the true owner of the vehicle is known or can be ascertained, the true owner shall move, screen or dispose of the vehicles upon receiving written notice from the Selectboard via certified mail or personal service.
 - B. If the last known registered owner fails or refuses to reclaim the vehicle upon receiving said written notice, or if after an investigation the owner of the vehicle cannot be ascertained, the Selectboard may notify the Agency of Transportation.
 - C. Further procedures by the Agency of Transportation are specified in 24 V.S.A. § 2272.
3. A violation of this ordinance shall be a civil matter enforced in the Vermont Judicial Bureau or in the Orange County Superior Court, at the election of the Selectboard.
 - A. A municipal ticket will be issued 30 days after written notification of violation is mailed or delivered by the Selectboard if the violation has not been corrected in accordance with this ordinance.
 - B. Violations enforced in the Judicial Bureau shall be in accordance with the provisions of 24 V.S.A. §§1974a and 1977 et seq. Violations enforced in the Superior Court shall be in accordance with the Vermont Rules of Civil Procedure. For purposes of enforcement in Superior Court, the Selectboard may pursue all appropriate equitable relief. For purposes of enforcement in either the Judicial Bureau or the Superior Court, a civil penalty of \$100 shall be imposed for the initial violation of this civil ordinance. A second offense of the ordinance shall occur if the violator fails to comply with this ordinance within 30 days of receiving the \$100 civil penalty. The penalty for the second offense shall be \$250. A third offense of this ordinance shall occur if the violator fails to comply with this ordinance within 30 days of receiving the previous civil penalty. The penalty for the third offense shall be \$500. Each day that the violation continues beyond

receiving the \$500 civil penalty shall constitute a separate violation of this ordinance and shall be subject to a \$500 penalty for each violation. In the event of failure to pay fines and penalties imposed by this ordinance within thirty (30) days, the Town may file a Notice of Lien against the owner of the land which is subject of the violation, which Notice of Lien shall specify the amount of the fine or penalty remaining unpaid and that such amounts not paid shall bear interest at the rate of 1% per month from and after the date of filing.

- C. The waiver fee shall be set at \$50 for the first offense, \$75 for the second offense, and \$150 for each subsequent offense.
- D. For purposes of enforcement in the Judicial Bureau, the Town zoning administrator, the town manager, if one exists, constable, any sheriff, police officer, or other law enforcement official shall be the designated enforcement officer(s). Said designee(s) shall issue tickets and may be the appearing officer at any hearing.

ARTICLE 4. Severability.

If any section of this ordinance is held by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such finding shall not invalidate any other part of this ordinance.

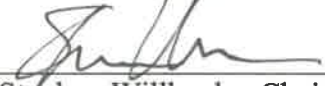
ARTICLE 5. Toxic and Hazardous Materials

Notwithstanding any provision of this ordinance, no provision of this ordinance shall be either expressly or by implication be construed to allow or permit the storage, discharge, leak, spill, emission, or concealment of any toxic or hazardous material or substance as defined in any state or federal law, statute, rule, or regulation except in a manner specifically permitted by any such applicable state or federal law, statute, rule, or regulation.


ARTICLE 6. Effective Date.

This ordinance shall become effective 60 days after its adoption by the Strafford Board of Selectmen. If a petition for a vote on this ordinance is filed under 24 V.S.A. § 1973, that statute shall govern the taking effect of this ordinance.


ENACTED AND ORDAINED ON THIS 18 DAY OF March, 2009.



Stephen Willbanks, Chair



Earl Silloway



Karl D. Johnston