

FAQ'S

THE CITY INSPECTION FOUND DEFICIENCIES WITH MY SIDEWALK, BUT I CAN'T AFFORD TO REPLACE MY SIDEWALK RIGHT NOW, IS THERE AN ASSISTANCE PROGRAM TO HELP PAY FOR THE REPAIRS?

There is not an assistance program available to help with repairs to the sidewalk adjacent to your property. One option that is available is to have the sidewalk repaired by the City of Storm Lake, and assessed to your property for payment with your tax bills. If you choose this route, the work will be contracted by the City of Storm Lake and you will be charged for the work completed, an administrative fee for doing the work, and interest. **These charges would be spread over two (2) years.**

MY SIDEWALK WASN'T REPAIRED ON TIME, NOW WHAT?

For those properties where deficiencies that were found in the initial inspection were not repaired at the time of the follow-up inspection, **the City shall prepare a "Notice to Public Assessment" that is filed with the Buena Vista Country Record's office and mailed to each property owner in violation.** The City will then make sure the work is done, and **the property owner will pay the cost of work, administrative fees, and interest with their tax bill over a maximum period of two (2) years.**

CAN I USE AN ALTERNATIVE METHOD TO REPAIR THE SIDEWALK SUCH AS GRINDING OR PATCHING?

You can use an alternative method but the method must not create any further deficiencies and must be a solution that resolves the deficiency found during the inspection. If the City of Storm Lake does the repair due to failure to comply with the abatement notice or because the property owner elects to have the City do the work the repairs that are made will be permanent repairs done through removal and replacement of the **affected sections of the sidewalk.** If you are wondering if your repair method will meet the requirements of replacement, you are encouraged to contact the City of Storm Lake at 712-732-8002.

THE SIDEWALK ADJACENT TO MY PROPERTY IS HEAVED BECAUSE OF THE ROOTS FROM A GIANT TREE, CAN I REMOVE THE TREE TO RESOLVE THE ISSUE?

The property owner may elect to remove the tree at their expense. The tree will not be removed by the City of Storm Lake unless it is located **between the sidewalk and the street and is dead, or declared a public nuisance,** and in those cases trees are typically removed in January and February.

MY SIDEWALK HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED AS NEEDING REPAIRS CAN I JUST REMOVE THE SIDEWALK?

No, once you have sidewalk in front of or adjacent to your property you can not remove the sidewalk to comply with the sidewalk inspection program.

I HAVE SIDEWALK AND MY NEIGHBOR DOESN'T CAN I JUST REMOVE MINE SINCE IT DOESN'T GO ANYWHERE?

No, once you have sidewalk in front of or adjacent to your property you can not remove the sidewalk.

LAST REVISED MARCH 2014

FAQ'S

I CAN NOT FIND A CONTRACTOR WHO WILL DO THE WORK WITHIN THE REQUIRED PERIOD OF TIME PROVIDED BY THE CITY, WHAT OPTIONS DO I HAVE AVAILABLE?

You can choose to have the City contract for the work to be done and be assessed for the work or you can request an extension (in a letter from a contractor) provided you have a date by which the work will be done.

HOW DO I APPEAL THE FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION?

In order to file an appeal you must file the appeal in writing within five (5) days of the receipt of the certified notice of deficiency. The appeal should outline why you don't agree with the findings of the inspection based on the actual standards used for the inspections.

WHY DOES THE CITY OF STORM LAKE INSPECT SIDEWALKS WHEN OTHER SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES DON'T?

The City of Storm Lake inspects sidewalks because properly maintained sidewalks are an important and valuable asset to the community. Routine inspections protect this asset and help to reduce liability for property owners from trips and falls.

HOW DO I KNOW WHAT NEEDS TO BE REPAIRED ON THE SIDEWALK ON MY PROPERTY?

The deficiencies noted on the inspection sheets which are provided to you will be marked on the sidewalk with paint. If you have any questions, you may contact the City of Storm Lake at 712-732-8002, and the inspector will provide you with help regarding your sidewalk.

COMPLAINTS

Citizens who find areas of sidewalk that are not compliant with the City standards, may do the following:

- Use the form available at City Hall or at www.cityofstormlake.org/sidewalks
- Write an email explaining the type of complaint that is being filed. The email can be sent to the Building Official at buildingofficial@stormlake.org

Within five (5) working days of the receipt of a complaint, the City shall have an inspector inspect the sidewalk, and determine if the complaint is warranted or not. Complaints that are warranted shall be routed through the inspection process.

Complaints received between November 1, and March 3 may be deferred for ruling until after April 15 due to freeze-thaw complications. Unwarranted complaints will be closed and filed.

Sidewalk REGULATIONS



City of Storm Lake Building Official

•712-732-8002

•buildingofficial@stormlake.org

www.stormlake.org/sidewalks



Scan this QR code to learn more about the sidewalk regulations



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The intent of this program is to **promote a safe and enjoyable walking surface on all pedestrian and bicycle routes available** within the Storm Lake community.

DEFINITIONS

SIDEWALK:

The portion of sidewalk that is used for public pedestrian access, **not sidewalks that are on private property** (with the exception of a private sidewalk that is declared as a public access sidewalk via an agreement or easement).

MUNICIPAL INFRACTION:

Any failure to perform any act or duty required by City Code. Municipal infractions can be charged for each day the issue isn't resolved. First offense is a charge of **\$75.00**, second offense is a charge of **\$125.00**, and all other repeated offenses are **\$200.00**.

INSPECTION CYCLE

In April of each year, the City will notify the public of upcoming inspections by all of the following methods:

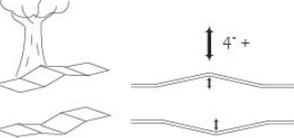
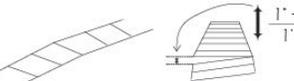
- Local media  facebook.com/cityofstormlake
- Social media  @Storm_Lake
- City Tidbits Newsletter (included in monthly utility bill)
- The City's website www.stormlake.org

Inspections begin when weather permits, but never later than May 1. All inspections are completed before June 1.



Scan this QR code for a larger view of the Sidewalk Inspection map

TYPE OF REPAIR

A.		A vertical separation of 3/4" or more
B.		A deviation from the design or construction grade equal to 4" in a ten-foot section
C.		The sidewalk is cracked into 4 or more pieces per 4 x 4' section, and sections have a vertical difference of 3/4" or more
D.		A part of the sidewalk is missing for the whole depth
E.		A side-to-side slope is greater than 1" per foot
F.		Holes or depressions 3/4" or more in depth
G.		A horizontal separation of 3/4" or more

INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS

Inspections of private properties within the city **shall be done at least once every four (4) years**. These inspections are for the identification of any violations or deficiencies in the sidewalk.

Inspectors record these deficiencies by writing on the inspection report, (a copy of which is sent to the property owner) as well as highlighting the violations on the sidewalk with paint.

A notice is mailed by certified mail to the property owner after the inspection containing the following information:

- Notice of the right to appeal the findings of the inspection
- Notice to obtain a "Sidewalk Repair Permit" from the Building Official's office **prior** to the work being done
- Notice to repair the deficiencies within 60 days of the date of the notice
- Notice that failure to repair the deficiencies will result in the work being done by the City of Storm Lake and assessed against the property including an administrative fee and interest

