



## ABANDONED HOMES INITIATIVE 2011-2012 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

RebuildIndy is Mayor Greg Ballard's initiative to restore deteriorating thoroughfares, residential streets, sidewalks and bridges, as well as address neighborhood drainage and flooding issues and demolish unsafe abandoned homes that pose a public safety threat to neighborhoods.

### HOW ARE ABANDONED PROPERTIES IDENTIFIED AND SELECTED FOR DEMOLITION?

Properties are reported to the Health and Hospital Corporation (HHC) by citizens, neighborhood associations, community development corporations and others. HHC staff inspect the property and determine if the structure is unsafe. HHC takes the property through a court process and an administrative law judge orders that the structure be demolished or repaired.

### HOW DO I REPORT AN ABANDONED PROPERTY FOR DEMOLITION?

Call HHC at (317) 221-2000 to have the property inspected.

### WHAT ARE THE CITY'S PLANS FOR VACANT LOTS ONCE UNSAFE STRUCTURES HAVE BEEN DEMOLISHED?

Most of the properties approved for demolition by HHC are not owned by the City of Indianapolis. For lots owned by the City, there are plans for community green spaces and urban gardens. For more information on privately owned lots, you must contact the Treasurer's Office (317) 327-4444.

### WHAT HAPPENS IF A PROPERTY OWNER FAILS TO PAY FOR THE COST OF THE DEMOLITION?

For privately owned lots, the City will bill the cost of demolition to property owners for the abandoned structures, approximately \$6,500. If the property owner does not pay the City for the cost of demolition, a lien in the amount of the demolition is placed on the property.

### CAN A PROPERTY OWNER DEMOLISH A STRUCTURE THEMSELVES?

Yes, the owner has the right to demolish the structure any time prior to demolition by the City's contractor.

### DOES THE CITY TAKE OWNERSHIP OF A VACANT LOT ONCE THE STRUCTURE HAS BEEN DEMOLISHED?

No, the properties remain in the original ownership.

### CAN AN ABANDONED STRUCTURE ON THE LIST FOR DEMOLITION BE REMOVED AND REHABILITATED?

The City is committed to working with neighborhoods and other organizations on their rehabilitation efforts of unsafe properties. Most of the unsafe structures on the approved list for demolition are privately owned and would need extensive funds for rehabilitation. All repairs must be made to the property in a timely manner to alleviate public safety concerns.

### WHY IS THE CITY DEMOLISHING THESE PROPERTIES INSTEAD OF BOARDING OR REHABILITATING THEM?

HHC issues thousands of boarding orders for properties each year. Properties in the demolition program are deemed unsafe and are generally the most expensive to repair. The City cannot repair or rehabilitate a property that it does not own.

### CAN REBUILDINDY FUNDS BE USED FOR THE REHABILITATION OF STRUCTURES INSTEAD OF DEMOLITION OR DECONSTRUCTION?

No. The ordinance limits the use of RebuildIndy funds. Funds may be used for the demolition or deconstruction of unsafe structures only.

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Indianapolis *Gregory A. Ballard, Mayor*

# REBUILDINDY

Department of Public Works

## HOW CAN NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS OR INDIVIDUALS GET A COPY OF THE LIST OF PROPERTIES WITHIN THEIR NEIGHBORHOOD?

A full list of approved structures can be found at: [www.indy.gov/rebuildindy](http://www.indy.gov/rebuildindy). For a customized list of structures in your neighborhood, email [abandonedhousing@indy.gov](mailto:abandonedhousing@indy.gov).

## WILL DEMOLITION NOTICES BE SENT BEFORE A STRUCTURE IS REMOVED?

HHC works to complete a title search for property owners and owners are notified of a hearing date and the demolition order. The Department of Metropolitan Development (DMD) works with neighborhood groups to provide notice of properties within neighborhood boundaries that have been approved for demolition.

## IF THERE IS A PROPERTY THAT A RESIDENT OR NEIGHBORHOOD GROUP THINKS SHOULD BE REMOVED FROM THE LIST, WHO SHOULD THEY CONTACT?

Reginald Walton, Assistant Administrator of Abandoned Buildings, (317) 327-5617

## IS THE CITY REVIEWING PROPERTIES TO EVALUATE HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE?

Yes. Staff from the Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission within DMD is reviewing the list of properties.

## ARE THERE ANY PROPERTIES ON THE DEMOLITION LIST THAT ARE CURRENT IN PROPERTY TAXES?

The vast majority of these properties are delinquent in property taxes and have negligent property owners.

## WHO SHOULD RESIDENTS AND NEIGHBORHOOD GROUPS CONTACT IF INTERESTED IN PURCHASING A CITY-OWNED VACANT LOT?

Indy Land Bank, Reginald Walton, Assistant Administrator of Abandoned Buildings, (317) 327-5617

## ARE PROPERTIES INSPECTED AFTER DEMOLITION?

Yes, a post-demolition inspection verifies that the structure has been completely removed, that any fill material is adequately compacted and that the property is properly graded.

## IS IT POSSIBLE THAT DEMOLISHING TOO MANY ABANDONED PROPERTIES WILL HURT NEIGHBORHOODS, RATHER THAN HELP?

The intent of this program is to strategically remove unsafe abandoned structures that pose a threat to public safety. Once these abandoned structures have been removed, the City believes that safety will improve, quality of life will be enhanced and the climate for those who want to acquire and redevelop vacant lots will be improved.

For additional questions about the abandoned homes initiative, call (317) 327-2656 or email [AbandonedHousing@indy.gov](mailto:AbandonedHousing@indy.gov).