

CODE ENFORCEMENT



A Citizen's Guide to
SARASOTA COUNTY CODES

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Sarasota County Operations Center
1001 Sarasota Center Blvd., Sarasota

Robert L. Anderson Administration Center
4000 S. Tamiami Trail, Venice

Dear Sarasota County Citizen,

Sarasota County administers a Code of Ordinances that is designed to maintain and enhance the character, safety and environment of our community. This Citizen's Guide to Sarasota County Codes serves as an informational resource for citizens and provides a summary of terms and procedures related to common code violations. It does not include all county codes, nor does every code apply to every property.

County Code of Ordinances

The Sarasota County Code of Ordinances can be viewed online at scgov.net (keyword municode).

Voluntary Compliance

The county follows standard procedures that emphasize voluntary compliance when there is an alleged violation, with many instances resolved through education without formal code enforcement procedures. The first part of the formal code enforcement process is a Notice of Violation (NOV) which is provided to a property owner informing them of the alleged violation. The NOV outlines steps to resolve the matter, and provides a specified timeframe for compliance. If compliance is not achieved, the county then issues an Affidavit of Violation that moves the matter to a Special Magistrate proceeding. Special Magistrates make determinations on alleged violations which can then translate to fines and liens.

Citations may also be issued for certain violations such as: building code infractions, sound, animal sale prohibitions and requirements, and solid waste issues.

Deed Restrictions

Many of our local neighborhoods have private deed restrictions. Sarasota County does not enforce private deed restrictions.

Contact Us and Report a Violation

- If you have any questions or need to report a possible violation, please call the Sarasota County Contact Center at 941-861-5000.
- You can also report violations on SeeClickFix.com or use the SeeClickFix mobile app.
- Note that anonymous complaints are accepted.
- Please check with your local municipality for contact information if you live within the City of Venice, City of Sarasota, City of North Port or the Town of Longboat Key.

A TO Z COMMON CODE VIOLATIONS



APPLIANCES

Sarasota County Code:
Chapter 106; Section 106-47.
Responsibilities of customers.

- Residents may call Waste Management at 941-493-4100 to schedule a pick-up for an appliance or electronic item.
- Refrigerator and freezer doors must be removed before placing at curb.
- Request for pick-ups must be made 48 hours prior to your regular collection day.
- This service is included at no additional cost (item limits may apply).



ASBESTOS

Sarasota County Code, Chapter 54;
Article V; Section 54-119.

Asbestos has not been banned and is contained in many building materials. Find out whether asbestos-containing materials are present before you remodel your condo, mobile home or commercial property. Projects involving demolition or renovation must follow federal, state and local asbestos regulations to prevent putting citizens at risk. An asbestos survey may be required.

BOATS

A boat may be stored on a residential property and must belong to the property owner or tenant. Trailers must have current license tags. Parking or storing of recreational vehicles or boats on a public right of way or vacant property is prohibited. Boats moored at docks or stored at marinas are subject to other regulations.



Sarasota County Code,
Unified Development Code,
Chapter 124, Section 120(d).

BUILDING PERMITS

Before the start of any construction or repair, a permit may be required to meet the minimum requirements of the Florida Building Code (current edition) for the health, safety and welfare of the public in private and public structures. Please contact the Building Division at 941-861-5000 or visit the website, scgov.net/building, and reference “When Do I Need a Building Permit” under the Building Documents.



Sarasota County Code,
Chapter 22.



BUSINESS USE PERMIT (BU)

The Business Use Permit (BU) is the last step for new commercial construction and allows for the business occupying the building or tenant space to open to the public and conduct business. It is also required for any business moving into an existing commercial space, adding additional space to an existing business or when there is a change of use or ownership.

Sarasota County Code,
Unified Development Code,
Chapter 124, Section 51 (b).



CHICKENS

No more than four chickens may be kept per property within the residential districts zoned Residential Single Family, Residential Estate 2 and 3 and Residential Combination. Roosters are prohibited.

Sarasota County Code,
Unified Development Code,
Chapter 124, Section 76(b).



CONTRACTING/LICENSED CONTRACTORS

Any new structure or improvements to an existing structure must be performed by a State of Florida or locally-registered Sarasota County contractor. Owner-builders can perform work with the applicable permit. To report suspected unlicensed contracting or activity, please call 941-861-5000 or Crime Stoppers at 941-366-TIPS (8477); you may remain anonymous.

Sarasota County Code,
Section 22-126.

DEMOLITIONS, UNFIT/UNSAFE STRUCTURES

Any structure found in violation of Sarasota County Code, Section 22-34 (3) due to fire, abandonment and/or dilapidation and has become unfit/unsafe needs to be rehabilitated or demolished.



Sarasota County Code,
Section 22-34.

FERTILIZER

- Using fertilizer that contains nitrogen or phosphorus is prohibited from June 1 to Sept. 30.
- Use at least 50 percent slow-release nitrogen fertilizer the rest of the year.
- Prevent nutrients from leaching into the stormwater system and water bodies by keeping grass clippings and vegetative debris out of the roads.
- Hire a trained and certified lawn maintenance company.
 - They will be identified by a decal as shown.



Sarasota County Code,
Chapter 54; Article XXXII.



GRASS and WEEDS

Grass and weeds may not exceed 12 inches in height.

Sarasota County Code, Section 54-473.



HOME OCCUPATIONS and HOME-BASED BUSINESSES

Sarasota County Code,
Unified Development Code,
Chapter 124, Section 73(c)(5).

- The use of the dwelling unit shall be clearly incidental and subordinate to its use for residential purposes by its occupants, and shall under no circumstances change the residential character thereof.
- There shall be no change in the outside appearance of the building or premises, or other visible evidence of the conduct of such business.
- No storage or warehousing of business material, supplies or equipment is allowed in any accessory structure, garage or outside of the dwelling unit.
- No home occupation or home-based business shall be permitted in an open porch area, garage or any accessory structure not suited or intended for occupancy as living quarters.
- No equipment or process shall be used which creates noise, vibration, glare, fumes, odors or electrical interference.
- No display of products shall be visible from the street.
- A home occupation or home-based business shall be subject to all applicable county occupational license and other business taxes.

HOUSEHOLD GARBAGE and YARD WASTE

Items for regular curbside collection must be in trash cans, plastic bags or tied bundles, weighing less than 40 pounds. For questions regarding special collection or disposal of hazardous waste, appliances and electronics, call 941-861-5000.

- Waste containers may be set at the curb no earlier than 5 p.m. the day prior to pick-up, and removed from the curb no later than 10 a.m. the day after pick-up.
- Waste containers must be stored in the side or rear yard (no front yard storage).
- Yard waste must be separated from solid waste.



Sarasota County Code:
Chapter 106; Section 106-47.
Responsibilities of customers.

JUNK, TRASH and DEBRIS

Junk, trash and debris cannot be left in the yard and must be disposed of properly. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Wood.
- Tires.
- Automobile parts.
- Hazardous waste.
- Abandoned property.
- Unusable or discarded household items.
- Inoperative or discarded machinery or equipment.
- Construction or demolition materials.



Sarasota County Code, Section 54-473.



MOTOR HOMES and RECREATIONAL VEHICLES (RVs)

Sarasota County Code,
Unified Development Code,
Chapter 124, Section 120(d).

Two recreational vehicles may be stored outside of a completely enclosed building under the following conditions:

- They are operable and have a current license tag.
- They are not used for living, sleeping, housekeeping or business.
- They are not connected to any utilities.



OPEN BURNING

Sarasota County Code,
Chapter 54; Article V.

Only two types of open burns are allowed without a permit:

- Recreational fires safely contained in a fire pit or bowl, chimenea, fireplace, or similar structure with approved fuel (see list below).
- Cooking fires for the sole purpose of cooking food for human consumption using approved fuel.

Approved fuels:

- Clean wood.
- Charcoal.
- Commercially-available fire starter logs or briquettes.
- Liquified petroleum gas.
- Natural gas.
- Butane.

The burning of yard waste, household or commercial trash is prohibited. A permit issued by the Florida Forest Service is required for broadcast burning, agricultural burning and burning of land-clearing debris for development.

OVERWEIGHT VEHICLES

The parking, servicing, repair and storage of trucks, buses, vans and tractor trailers more than 6,000 pounds (empty vehicle weight) is prohibited in residential and certain open-use districts.



Sarasota County Code,
Unified Development Code,
Chapter 124, Sec. 120(c).

PETS

- Dogs and cats must remain within the owner's property, either fenced in or on a leash.
- Pets are prohibited from making objectionable noises for any length of time.



Sarasota County Code: Chapter 14;
Animals, Article II. Animal Control.



RIGHTS OF WAY

Sarasota County Code,
Unified Development Code,
Chapter 124, Section 48.

Any work in a county right of way requires a permit. The following activities within the county right of way or any public street are prohibited:

- Placing or erecting signs.
- Trimming, removal or planting of trees and other vegetation without special authorization.
- Commercial use of the right of way, including parking vehicles for long-term storage and co-opting public parking spaces.
- Unsecured, unsightly, improperly maintained, or abandoned news racks.



SOUND

Generated sounds that constitute a public nuisance and exceed set sound measurements are regulated by Sarasota County. Disturbance of the peace issues are addressed by the Sarasota County Sheriff's Office.

Sarasota County Code, Chapter 54;
Article V and Article VI.

UNLICENSED, INOPERATIVE VEHICLE

Vehicles or trailers that are not operable or do not have current license tags must be stored in a completely enclosed building.



Sarasota County Code, Section 54-473.

WETLANDS, PRESERVATION AREAS and ENVIRONMENT

Many of Sarasota County's natural resources are protected by local ordinances. This includes native habitats such as wetlands. Activities involving filling, excavation, disturbance of native vegetation or storage of materials are prohibited within these areas. Subdivisions and neighborhoods may also have preservation/conservation areas that prohibit these activities.



Sarasota County Code: Chapter 54; Article XII, Article XVIII, Article XX, Article XXIII, Article XXXI, Article XXXV.

The following are prohibited without special authorization:

- Construction of docks, seawalls or rock revetments and other coastal construction.
- Tree removal and mangrove trimming or removal.
 - o Certain exemptions apply, call 941-861-5000 for more information.
- Earthmoving (such as stockpiling or excavating ponds, etc.).
- Impact to protected species such as:
 - o Manatees.
 - o Sea turtles.
 - o Florida scrub-jays.
 - o Gopher tortoises.

Your
NOTES

NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES

Neighborhood Services works with citizens, neighborhoods and community groups to encourage community strengthening through civic education, grants, neighborhood planning and outreach. For information about neighborhood projects that improve character, health, environment, safety, and leadership, call **941-861-5000**, email **neighbor@scgov.net** or visit us on the web at **scgov.net** (keyword neighborhood).

Sarasota County uses the Neighborhood Directory for many important notifications such as new development proposals, updates about emergency operations and special events. Please visit our website and join our mailing list to update your official neighborhood representative's contact information.

**FOR ANY LIFE THREATENING EMERGENCY
OR ACCIDENT CALL 911**

NON-EMERGENCY SHERIFF OFFICE

North County
South County

941-861-5800
941-861-1701