CHAPTER 11

HOUSING AND PROPERTY MAINTENANCE*

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ARTICLE I. IN GENERAL

Section 11-1. Housing Code Adopted by Reference.

The International Property Maintenance Code, 2012 edition, with all appendices, a copy of which is now on file in the Office of the City Clerk of Laurel, Mississippi, be and the same is hereby adopted and incorporated as fully as if set forth at length herein, and from the date on which this Section shall take effect, the provisions thereof shall be controlling in the use, maintenance and occupancy of all dwellings, dwelling units, and/or structures within the area of jurisdiction of the City of Laurel, Mississippi.

Source: Code 1969, § 21-10; Ordinance No. 896-1980, § 1, 4-15-80; Ordinance No. 937-1981, § 1, 8-18-81; Ordinance No. 955-1982, § 1, 6-15-82; Ordinance No. 979-1983, § 1, 4-5-83; Ordinance No. 1017-1984, § 1, 5-29-84; Ordinance No. 1053-1985, § 1, 8-6-85; Ordinance No. 1192-1992, § 7, 5-20-92; Ordinance No. 1268-1995, §7, 11-17-95; Ordinance No. 1455-2005,§ XV, 1-4-05; Ordinance No. 1651-2017, 2-21-2017

State Law Reference --- Power of City to adopt technical codes, Miss. Code 1972, § 21-19-25

Section 11-1A. Definitions.

The additional definitions have been approved by the Laurel City Council to be amended to the Standard Housing Code, 1997 Edition, with all appendices:

"APPLIANCES – IMPROPER USE OF APPLIANCES: APPLIANCES SHALL NOT BE PLACED OUTDOORS IN ANY LOCATION VISIBLE FROM A PUBLIC STREET, SIDEWALK, OR RIGHT – OF – WAY". Appliance is defined as any household or commercial device designed to perform a specific function related to cooking, cleaning, refrigeration, heating, cooling, laundry, or general domestic operation. This includes, but is not limited to, refrigerators, freezers, stoves, ovens, microwaves, dishwashers, washing machines, dryers, water heaters, air-conditioning units not permanently affixed to a structure, and similar equipment. For the purposes of this Ordinance, "appliances" also includes any inoperable, unused, discarded, or stored appliance, regardless of condition.

"OUTDOOR FURNITURE – USE OF HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE FOR OUTDOOR PURPOSES": Household furniture which is typically used for inside of residential dwellings, such as couches, loveseats, recliners, daybeds, or similar types of furniture, which are visible from the street and/or sidewalk, are prohibited. The placement of these items are prohibited on the front porch, in the carport, garage, residential yards and other areas visible from public view. Outdoor furniture shall include patio furniture, benches, swings, picnic tables and similar types of furniture for outdoor use.

Source: Ordinance No. 1408-2002, 6-18-02; Ordinance No. 1785-2026, 5/19/2026

* **Cross References** --- Animals and fowl, Ch. 5; buildings and building regulations, Ch. 7; fire prevention and protection, Ch. 9; food and food establishments, Ch. 10; historic preservation, Ch. 10.1; sewers, Ch. 20; solid waste, Ch. 22; garage, carport and rummage sales, §12-101 et seq.; removal of weeks and rubbish from oil drill sites, etc., §17-29; weeds and vegetable growths on sidewalks, §25-17; removal of trees and stumps, §§26.1-5, 26.1-16.

State Law Reference --- Housing and Property Maintenance, §§ 21-19-11.

"UNCLEAN PROPERTY": Unclean property due to weeds is:

(1) Any land within one hundred fifty (150) feet of an occupied residence, with weeds over one (1) foot in height, over a majority of the property within the one hundred and fifty (150) feet area; or,

(2) Any land within three hundred (300) feet of an adjoining land- owner or public road with weeds over two (2) feet in height, over a majority of the land within the three hundred (300) feet area.

Source: Ordinance No. 1097-1987; 5-12-87

DIVISION 1. ABANDONED PERSONAL PROPERTY AND STORAGE OF JUNK VEHICLES, EQUIPMENT AND MACHINERY

Section 11-5. Definitions.

The following definitions shall apply in the interpretation and enforcement of this Ordinance:

A. ***Abandoned Property***: Vehicles, bicycles, and other personal property left unattended on a public street, road, highway or other public property for a period of at least five (5) days.

B. ***Abatement***: The removal of junked vehicles or junked equipment by towing and impoundment by a local area wrecker service and/or the Public Works Department.

C. ***All-weathered surface***. Parking facilities for residential, commercial and industrial uses shall have an all-weathered surface, be properly drained to prevent ponding and shall be maintained free of trash and rubbish, free of being torn and damaged and shall have permanent runners the full length of said vehicle(s).

D. ***Automobile Junkyard***: Any establishment or place of business which is maintained, used, or operated for storing, keeping, buying, or selling wrecked, scrapped, ruined, or dismantled motor vehicles or motor vehicles or motor vehicle parts.

E. ***City***: Any area lying within the corporate limits of the City of Laurel.

F. ***Derelict Property***: Any items such, but not limited to, wrecked or junked property, which has been left abandoned, unprotected from the elements, or is being utilized in a manner inconsistent with its designed and marketed use, including but not limited to, wrecked, or partially dismantled motor vehicles, trailers, boats, machinery, refrigerators, washing machines, plumbing fixtures and other articles.

G. ***Junked Vehicle***: Any vehicle which does not have lawfully affixed thereto both an unexpired license plate or plates and a current motor vehicle safety inspection certificate and/or the condition of which is wrecked, dismantled, partially dismantled, inoperable, abandoned or discarded and is not capable of being legally driven upon the public streets of the City of Laurel.

H. ***Person***: Any person, owner or lessee, firm, business, partnership, sole proprietorship, association, corporation, company or organization of any kind.

I. ***Private Property***: Any dwelling house, building or other structure designed to be used, either wholly or in part, for private residential purposes, whether inhabited or temporarily or continuously uninhabited or vacant, and shall include any yard, grounds, sidewalk, driveway, porch, steps, vestibule, mailbox, or other structure belonging or appurtenant to such dwelling house, building or other structure.

J. ***Public Property***: Any and all streets, boulevards, avenues, sidewalks, lanes, alleys or other public ways, and parks, squares, plazas, grounds and buildings frequented by the general public, whether publicly or privately owned.

K. ***Street or Highway***: The entire width between the boundary lines of every way publicly maintained when any part thereof is open to the use of the public for purposes of vehicular travel.

L. ***Trailers***: Any devise used to haul or transport which is towed or moved by another vehicle, including but not limited to, metal storage containers, refrigerated truck bodies, or a mobile structure equipped with living accommodations.

M. ***Vehicle***: Any device in, upon or by which a person or property is or may be transported upon a highway, road, or street, excepting devices moved by human power or used exclusively upon stationary rails or tracks.

N. ***Within Public View***: An offending condition readily visible from a public road, right-of-way, park, or other public place.

Source: Ordinance No. 1284-1996, 10-8-96; Ordinance No. 1486-2007,§ I, 2-20-07

Section 11-6. Prohibition.

The location or presence of any junked, inoperable or unlicensed vehicle, junked equipment, or derelict property, on any lot, tract, parcel of land or portion thereof, occupied or unoccupied, improved or unimproved, residential or commercial, within the City of Laurel shall be deemed a public nuisance and it shall be unlawful for any person or persons to cause or maintain such public nuisance by wrecking, dismantling, rendering inoperable, abandoning or

discarding his or their vehicle or vehicles or junked equipment or derelict property on the real property of another or to suffer, permit or allow the same to be placed, located, maintained or exist upon his or their own real property for a period of ten (10) days. Conditions under which an exception to the "prohibition may be made" are as follows:

A. one (1) or more vehicles or parts thereof or derelict property may be kept in a completely enclosed building in a lawful manner where it is not visible from street or other private or public property. This enclosure does not include yards or areas encompassed by a site-obscuring fence which are located in residential zoning districts;

B. vehicles or part thereof, equipment, or derelict property may be stored or parked in a lawful manner on private property where said property has a direct correlation with the licensed business operation at that location. Example: A licensed auto repair shop located on commercial property may possess on their commercial property inoperable vehicles, parts or equipment connected with auto repair but the City may require that the business screen long term vehicles and derelict property from public view;

C. only one (1) unlicensed or inoperable vehicle per residence may be kept under one of the following conditions:

Condition 1: a vehicle may be covered by an approved commercial (fitted) car tarp and placed under a garage or carport. Tarps must be maintained free of mold and in good condition. Tires must remain inflated and under no circumstances shall the vehicle be place on blocks or jacks of any kind.

Condition 2: a vehicle may be covered by an approved commercial (fitted) car tarp and parked on an all-weathered surface in the rear yard only. Tarps must be maintained free of mold and in good condition in colors of gray, brown or white only. All tires must remain inflated and under no circumstances shall vehicles be placed on blocks or jacks of any kind.

A. a vehicle or part thereof which is temporarily used as a retail storage unit and is primarily used for retail transport purposes; however, such unit shall not remain on the property for a period longer than thirty (30) consecutive days**.**

B. Mechanic work shall not be operated in a designated residential zone as a permitted use. These classified residential districts are R-1, Low Density Residential District; R-2, Medium Residential District; R-3, High Density Residential District-Restricted; and R-4, High Density Residential. Property owners may continue to complete simple automotive tasks on their own vehicles, such as change a tire, change a spark plug, etc., but may not do "major" automotive repairs in these zoning districts.

Source: 1365-2000, §I, (2), 3-21-00; Ordinance No.1486-2007,§ I, 2-20-07

Section 11-7. Presumption.

If any prohibited item shall remain on private property for ten (10) days or more, it shall be presumed that its presence there resulted from the act of consent of the landowner and tenant

in possession.

Source: Ordinance No. 1284-1996, 10-8-96

Section 11-8. Abatement or Removal Order and Service.

The owner or tenant, in possession of private property upon which a violation exists, shall remove or abate it within fifteen (15) days from posting the notice of the infraction. Such notice shall be affixed to the vehicle, derelict equipment or residence of abode or given to the individual residing or occupying the residence and/or business.

Such notice shall contain the following information:

A. Nature of complaint and findings;
B. Description and location of the vehicle, machinery, or equipment or parts and/or derelict property;
C. Time limits and dates of notice and removal restrictions; and
D. Statement of penalties for noncompliance.

No person, after notification to remove any vehicle, machinery or equipment or parts thereof, or derelict property from any private property, which has been given pursuant to this Article**,** shall remove the same to any other private property upon which such storage is not permitted or onto any public highway, street, avenue, alley or other public property for purpose of storage or abandonment.

No person shall seek to prevent the removal of offending articles whose removal dates have expired by blocking access to the offending article, be it a vehicle, derelict equipment or part. Any vehicle, equipment or other item used to block access, purposely or inadvertently, will be subject to immediate removal without notice to the owner.

Source: Ordinance No. 1284-1996, 10-8-96; Ordinance No. 1365-2000, §I, (3), 3-21-00; Ordinance No. 1486-2007, § I, 2-20-2007

Section 11-9. Disposal of Junked Vehicles and/or Equipment.

A. If such public nuisance is not abated by said owner or occupant after notice is given in accordance with this Ordinance, official action shall be taken by the City of laurel to abate such nuisance. Junked vehicles or parts thereof, shall be towed and impounded until lawfully claimed or disposed of in accordance with Sections 63-23-1 through 63-23-11, Mississippi Code Annotated 1972.

   Disposition of lost, stolen, abandoned or misplaced personal property under this Article which remains in the City's possession and includes used machinery and equipment will be disposed of in accordance with Section 21-39-21, Mississippi Code Annotated, 1972. Owner or occupant of the junked vehicles or parts thereof, or other used machinery or equipment, also becomes subject to the penalties outlined in Section 11-13 of this Ordinance**.**

B. Vehicles so towed and impounded shall be held for ninety (90) days and thereafter shall be disposed of with all rights of ownership being forfeited. Any time prior to the expiration of said ninety (90) days, the record title holder shall be allowed to redeem said vehicle and/or equipment upon the payment of all costs including towing, storage and other such administrative costs as may be

determined.

Source: Ordinance No. 1284-1996, 10-8-96; Ordinance No. 1365-2000, §I, (4), 3-21-00

Section 11-10. Authority to Enforce.

It shall be the duty of the Inspection Department with the assistance of the Chief of Police and his designees, to enforce this Ordinance. The authorities may enter upon private property for the purposes thereof, obtain information as to the identity of vehicles and to remove or cause the removal of a vehicle or parts and equipment thereof declared to be a nuisance pursuant to this Ordinance.

Source: Ordinance No. 1284-1996, 10-8-96

Section 11-11. Application.

Nothing in this Article shall affect Ordinances that permit immediate removal of a vehicle left on public property which constitutes an obstruction to traffic.

Source: Ordinance No. 1284-1996, 10-8-96

Section 11-12. Application of Penalties.

Upon expiration of fifteen (15) days of receiving notice from the City by the owner or tenant in possession of private property which is in violation of this Article, in which no removal or abatement of the property has occurred, the owner or tenant becomes subject to the penalties outlined in Section 11-13.

Source: Ordinance No. 1365-2000, §I, (5), 3-21-00; Ordinance No. 1486-2007,§ I, 2-20-07

Section 11-13. Penalty.

Upon violation of any provision of this Article regarding the maintaining of a public nuisance as described herein or in permitting or allowing such public nuisance to exist, any person held in violation shall be fine of not more than $1,000.00 or by imprisonment in the City or County jail for a period not to exceed one (1) year, or by some community service as may be ordered by the Court, or by a combination of either a fine, imprisonment and/or community service, at the sole discretion of the Court, unless otherwise prohibited by State Law. The Court may escalate the punishment of those found guilty or repeat or subsequent violations of the same law.

Source: Ordinance No. 1365-2000, §I, (6), 3-21-00; Ordinance No. 1486-2007, §I, 2-20-07

Section 11-14. Conflict of Provisions.

If any provision of this Ordinance conflicts or is deemed to conflict with a provision of any other Ordinance, then the more strict Ordinance or provision therefore shall prevail in regulating any condition or actions covered by this Ordinance.

Source: Ordinance No. 1284-1996, 10-8-96; Ordinance No. 1365-2000, §I, (7), 3-21-00

Section 11-15. Temporary Parking for the Resident Disabled.

- Citizens or their caregivers shall contact the Inspection Department and request a non-fee permit to park on their grass when it is necessary to gain entrance to their residence for what presents as a temporary disability. Said permit shall be good for 30 days renewable once.

- Citizens or their caregivers with disabilities that are expected to last more than 60 days shall request a temporary parking permit to park on their grass for no more than 60 days while they make arrangements to install a ramp, sidewalk or expand their driveway with asphalt, concrete or gravel to accommodate getting as close as possible to their residential entrance.

- Citizens with disabilities who continue to park on their grass for more than 5 business days without obtaining a non-fee permit and/or making provisions to prevent killing the grass, water ponding and topsoil erosion shall be subject to Environmental Court Municipal Citations.

Source: Ordinance No. 1685-2019, 3-19-19

Sections 11-16 --- 11-20 Reserved.

ARTICLE II. RESERVED

Sections 11-21 --- 11-50. Reserved.

ARTICLE III. RODENT CONTROL*

DIVISION 1. GENERALLY

Section 11-51. Definitions.

For the purpose of this article the following definitions shall apply:

Business building: Any structure, whether public or private, that is adapted for occupancy for transaction of business, for rendering of professional service, for amusement, for the display, sale or storage of goods, wares or merchandise or for the performance of work or labor, including hotels, rooming houses, office buildings, public buildings, stores, theaters, markets, restaurants, grain elevators, abattoirs, warehouses, workshops, factories and all outhouses, sheds, barns and other structures on premises used for business purposes.

Occupant: The individual, partnership or corporation that has the use of or occupies any business building or a part or fraction thereof, whether as the actual owner or as a tenant. In the case of vacant business buildings or any vacant portion of a business building the owner, agent or other person having custody of the building shall have the responsibilities of an occupant of a building.

Owner: The actual owner of the business building, whether individual, partnership or corporation, or the agent of the building or other person having custody of the building or to whom rent is paid. In the case of business buildings leased with a clause in the lease specifying that the lessee is responsible for maintenance and repair, the lessee will be considered in such

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**Cross Reference* --- Animals and fowl, Ch. 5.
State Law Reference --- Vermin control, Miss. Code 1972, §17-17-19.

cases as the owner for the purposes of this article.

Rat-harborage: Any condition which provides shelter or protection for rats, thus favoring their multiplication and continued existence in, under or outside of a structure of any kind.

Rat-stoppage *or* ***rat-proofing***: A relatively inexpensive form of rat-proofing with material impervious to rat gnawing to prevent the ingress of rats into business buildings from the exterior or from one business building to another.

Source: Code 1969, § 19-61(1---6)

Section 11-52. Storage of Animal Feed.

All food and feed kept within the City for feeding chickens, cows, pigs, horses and other animals shall be kept and stored in rat-free and rat-proof containers, compartments or rooms unless kept in a rat-proof building.

Source: Code 1969, § 19-69

Section 11-53. Disposal of Waste.

(a) Within the City Limits all garbage or refuse consisting of waste, animal or vegetable matter upon which rats may feed, and all small dead animals, shall be placed and stored until collected by the Department of Sanitation in covered containers of a type prescribed by the health officer according to existing conditions; and it is hereby declared unlawful for any person to dump or place on any premises, land or waterway any dead animals, or any waste vegetable or animal matter of any kind.

(b) It shall be unlawful for any person to place, leave, dump or permit to accumulate any garbage, rubbish or trash in any building or premises in the City so that same shall or may afford food or harborage for rats.

(c) It shall be unlawful for any person to permit to accumulate on any premises, improved or vacant, and on all open lots and alleys in the City any lumber, boxes, barrels, bricks, stones or similar materials that may be permitted to remain thereon unless same shall be placed in open racks that are elevated not less than eighteen (18) inches above the ground, and evenly piled or stacked so that these materials will not afford harborage for rats.

Source: Code 1969, § 19-70

Cross Reference --- Solid waste, Ch. 24

Sections 11-54 --- 11-60. Reserved.

DIVISION 2. BUSINESS BUILDINGS GENERALLY

Section 11-61. Inspections.

The health officer is empowered to make inspections of the interior and exterior of business buildings at any time without notice.

Source: Code 1969, § 19-66

Cross Reference --- Licenses and business regulations, Ch. 12

Section 11-62. Rat-proofing---Required.

It is hereby required that all business buildings in the City shall be rat-proofed, freed of rats and maintained in a rat-proof and rat-free condition under the direction and supervision of the health officer.

Source: Code 1969, § 19-62

Section 11-63. Same---Notice to Owner.

Upon receipt of written notice and/or order from the health officer the owner of any business building specified therein shall take immediate measures for rat-proofing and/or rat-freeing the building. Unless said work and improvements have been completed by the owner in the time specified in the written notice, in no event to be less than fifteen (15) days or within the time to which a written extension may have been granted by the health officer, then the owner shall be deemed guilty of an offense under the provisions of this article.

Source: Code 1969, § 19-63

Section 11-64. Same---Work Done by City.

Whenever the health officer notifies the occupant or occupants of a business building that there is evidence of rat infestation of the building, each occupant shall immediately institute appropriate measures for freeing the premises occupied of all rats. Unless suitable measures for freeing the building of rats are instituted within ten (10) days after receipt of notice and unless continuously maintained in a satisfactory manner until the building is free of rats the health officer is hereby authorized and directed to free the building of rats and to levy a monthly charge against the occupant or occupants to cover the costs for labor, materials and equipment necessary for eradication measures carried out each month.

Source: Code 1969, § 19-64

Section 11-65. Same---Removal.

It shall be unlawful for any occupant, owner, contractor, public utility company, plumber or any other person to remove rat-proofing from any business building for any purpose and fail to restore the same in a satisfactory condition or to make any new openings that are not closed or sealed against the entrances of rats.

Source: Code 1969, § 19-68

Section 11-66. Maintenance; Repairs.

The occupants of all rat-proofed business buildings are required to maintain the premises in a rat-proof condition and to repair all breaks or leaks that may occur in the rat-proofing.

Source: Code 1969, § 19-65

Section 11-67. Elimination of Extensive Harborages.

Whenever conditions inside or under business buildings provide such extensive harborage for rats that the health officer deems it necessary to eliminate such harborage, he may require the owner to install suitable cement floor in basements or to replace wooden first or ground floors or require the owner to correct such other interior rat harborage as may be necessary in order to facilitate the eradication of rats in a reasonable time and thereby to reduce the cost thereof.

Source: Code 1969, § 19-67

Sections 11-68 --- 11-80. Reserved.

ARTICLE IV. MOSQUITO CONTROL*

Section 11-81. Enforcement; Right of Entry.

For the purpose of enforcing the provisions of this article, the health officer, or his duly accredited agent acting under his authority, may at all times enter in and upon any premises within his jurisdiction. Any person charged with any of the duties imposed by this article, failing within the time designated by this article or within the time stated in the notice of the health officer, as the case may be, to perform such duties, or to carry out the necessary measures to the satisfaction of the health officer, shall be deemed guilty of a violation of this article, and for each day after the expiration of this time that said person fails to comply with this article he shall be deemed guilty of a separate violation.

Source: Code 1969, § 19-50

State Law Reference --- Health officer may go on premises, Miss. Code 1972, § 41-25-11

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*__Cross Reference__ --- Water, Ch. 25.

__State Law Reference__ --- Mosquito control, Miss. Code 1972, §41-27-1 et seq.

Section 11-82. Failure to Prevent.

The natural presence of mosquito larvae in standing or running water shall be evidence that mosquitoes are breeding there, and failure to prevent such breeding within three (3) days after notice by the health officer or his authorized agent or representative shall be deemed a violation of this article.

Source: Code 1969, § 1948

Section 11-83. Water Suitable for Breeding.

(a) It shall be unlawful for any person to have, keep, maintain, cause or permit within the City Limits any collection of standing or flowing water in which mosquitoes breed or are likely to breed, unless such collection of water is treated so as to effectually prevent such breeding.

(b) Any collection of water considered by this Section shall be held to be contained in ditches, pools, ponds, excavations, holes, depressions, open cesspools, privy vaults, fountains, cisterns, tanks, shallow wells, barrels, troughs (except those in frequent use), urns, cans, boxes, bottles, tubs, buckets, defective house roof gutters, tanks of flush closets or other similar water containers.

Source: Code 1969, § 1946

Section 11-84. Methods of Treatment.

The methods of treatment of any collection of water directed toward the prevention of breeding mosquitoes shall be approved by the health officer, and may be one (1) of the following:

(1) Screening with wire netting of at least sixteen (16) mesh to the inch each way, or with any other material which will effectively prevent the ingress or egress of mosquitoes.

(2) Complete emptying every seven (7) days of unscreened containers together with their thorough drying and cleaning.

(3) Using a larvicide approved and applied under the direction of the health officer.

(4) Covering completely the surface of the water with kerosene, petroleum or paraffin oil once every seven (7) days.

(5) Cleaning and keeping sufficiently free of vegetable growth and other obstructions, and stocking with mosquito-destroying fish.

(6) Filling or draining to the satisfaction of the health officer or his agent or

accredited representative.

(7) Proper disposal, by removal or destruction, of tin cans, boxes, broken or empty bottles and similar articles likely to hold water.

Source: Code 1969, § 19-47

Section 11-85. Correction of Violations by Health Officer.

Should the person responsible for conditions giving rise to the breeding of mosquitoes fail or refuse to take necessary steps to prevent the same within three (3) days after due notice has been given him, the health officer or his agent is hereby authorized to do so, and all necessary costs incurred by him for this purpose shall be charged against the property owner or other person offending.

Source: Code 1969, § 1949