

# The Neighborhood Guide

to the Official Code of the  
City of Great Falls

*What are the laws and who do I call  
about neighborhood problems?*



## Promoting Better Neighborhoods

Neighborhoods are the places where we live, shop, play and work. Like our homes and businesses, neighborhoods require care and upkeep.

The City frequently hears complaints about junk cars, trash on lawns, overgrown weeds, and a variety of related problems. These issues can affect property values and the image of the neighborhood. The complaints often end with,

*"There ought to be a law..."*

Indeed, there is a law in place for most chronic neighborhood problems. This guide provides a quick reference for city residents, providing an overview of some of the Official Code of the City of Great Falls (OCCGF). We hope this will help you to better the neighborhoods where you live.

This brochure was developed to provide information on commonly reported problems and who to call to obtain a particular service or receive additional information.

**To obtain a Citizen Complaint & Request Form:**

[greatfallsmt.net/community/citizen-complaint-request-form](http://greatfallsmt.net/community/citizen-complaint-request-form)

*or in person in Room 112 of the Civic Center*



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## Buildings

**VACANT:** Unoccupied buildings must be properly secured to prevent unauthorized access.

The City may proceed with an abatement procedure to resolve a nuisance, including putting a lien on the property that has been deemed unsafe because of damage, deterioration, sanitation, fire hazard and/or public nuisance.

*City Code 8.49, 8.51 & Title 15*

### Who do I Call?

Planning and Community Development: 455-8430



## Garbage, Rubbish & Nuisances

Alleys must be kept free of garbage, weeds, wastes or spilled refuse. Rubbish, junk materials and unused machinery are not permitted to accumulate on private property. This can be deemed a public nuisance.

*City Code 8.49-8.51, 8.8*

### Who do I Call?

*For Public Property:* Public Works: 455-8158

*For Private Property:* Code Enforcement: 455-8574







## Property Maintenance

The City's Property Maintenance Ordinance is intended to enforce safe, sanitary and aesthetic conditions on all properties within the city limits.

Some maintenance issues covered in the ordinance include abandoned buildings, boarded-up or destroyed buildings, buildings with peeling paint, improperly maintained landscaping, graffiti and any other conditions that are offensive to the senses.

*City Code 8.49-8.51 and Title 16*

**Who do I Call?**

Code Enforcement: 455-8574

## Graffiti

Building exteriors, walls, fences, driveways, or walkways which are broken, defective, deteriorated, in disrepair, or defaced due to any writing, inscription, scratch, or other marking commonly referred to as "graffiti". It shall be the duty of the owner or agent thereof to remove graffiti from such premises within seventy-two (72) hours after graffiti appears visible from public rights-of-way or adjacent properties.

*City Code 8.51.030*

**Who do I Call?**

Code Enforcement: 455-8574



## Firewood

Firewood stored outside is required to be stacked, compact and orderly. If the woodpile is less than 6 feet in height, the storage is allowed as close as 3 feet to a property line. Otherwise, the firewood stack must be located 10 feet from a property line.

*International Fire Code 315.4*

**Who do I Call?**

City Fire Department: 727-8070

## Sidewalks

Sidewalks must be kept in good, safe and substantial condition.

Property owners shall see that all sidewalk breaks and unsoundness are repaired.

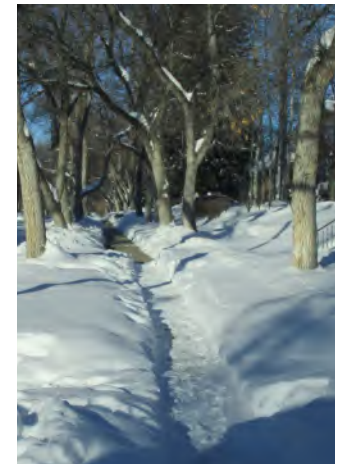
It is the duty of the homeowner to remove ice & snow from sidewalks within 24 hours. A Commercial business must remove snow and ice before 11:00am.

*City Code 12.10, 12.11*

**Who do I Call?**

*For Sidewalk Repair:* Public Works: 771-1258

*For Snow & Ice Removal on Public Sidewalks:*  
Code Enforcement: 455-8574



## Landscaping & Weeds

Trees & shrubs on private property that extend over any part of a public street or sidewalk must be trimmed so that the branches will not interfere with pedestrians or public travel. All weeds, grass and vegetation must be less than 8 inches tall. If taller, the City can remove it and charge the removal cost to the property owner. Untrimmed, dying, dead, or diseased trees, shrubs or plants are also code violations.

*City Code 8.11, 12.3 and 12.14*

### **Who do I Call?**

For Tall Grass & Weeds: Public Works: 455-8158

For Trees and Shrubs: Park & Recreation: 771-1265



## Vehicles

No abandoned, wrecked, inoperable or unlicensed vehicles, machinery, trailers or parts are allowed on public property or private property. A vehicle may not be parked on any boulevard area (unless a boulevard encroachment permit is obtained). A boulevard within the city is an area within the boundary of any street, avenue or highway that isn't occupied by pavement.

*City Code 10.12, 10.13 and 12.3*

### **Who do I Call?**

*Vehicles on Private Property:*

Code Enforcement: 455-8574

*Vehicles Parked on Boulevards:*

Public Works: 455-8158

*Vehicles Parked on Streets:*

Police (Non-emergency): 455-8599



## Noise

Excessively or unusually loud noises are prohibited within the City limits. Other loud noises such as noise from construction or repair work are unlawful between the hours of 8:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. Find more info at the code reference below.

*City Code 8.53*

### **Who do I Call?**

Police Non-Emergency: 727-7688 ext. 5

## Home Occupations

Home occupations or home businesses may be permitted if a person operates them in conjunction with living in a home. There may be no outside storage of equipment or materials, and no inconvenience to neighbors by excess traffic, parking or noise. The sale of items that are not produced on the premises is prohibited. Having a home business requires a certificate issued by the City of Great Falls.

*City Code 17.20.7.070; 5.2.020*

### **Who do I Call?**

Planning & Community Development: 455-8430







## Cats & Dogs

Unless you apply for and receive a multiple animal permit or a kennel permit, you are limited to two dogs and two cats over six months of age on one premises. Animals must be kept enclosed or on a leash.

Accumulation of excrement is prohibited. The animal owner is responsible for removal of feces from others' properties and their own property.

All Animal Control issues are handled by the Animal Control Officers under the GFPD. To speak with an Animal Control Officer please call 727-7688 ext. 5. You may also visit the Animal Control web site for more information:

<https://greatfallsmt.net/police/animal-control-officers-0>

City Code 6.1

### Who do I Call?

Animal Control: 727-7688 ext. 1

## Storage of RVs, Utility Trailers or Vessel

It will be unlawful for any person to park a recreational vehicle, trailer or vessel upon the public right-of-way in any residential zoning district except for the limited purpose of loading and unloading, which shall be limited to a period of no more than seventy-two (72) hours in a seven (7) day period. To report a potential violation please call the GFPD 24-hour non-emergency line at 406-455-8599, or complete an Online Citizen Complaint form a <https://greatfallsmt.net/community/online-citizen-complaint-request-form>.



City Code 10.9.310

### Who do I Call?

Police Non Emergency Dispatch  
406-455-8599

## Community Services

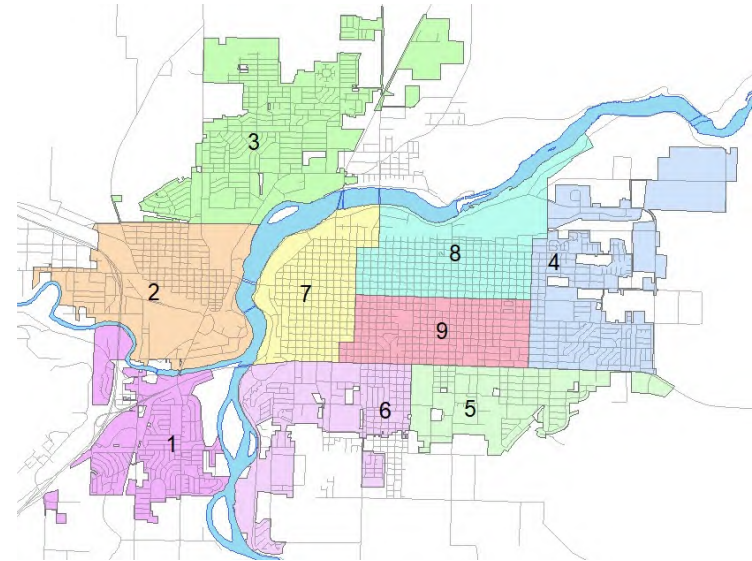
### Neighborhood Councils

Neighborhood Councils provide a means for the citizens of Great Falls to actively participate in local government through a formal organization working at the neighborhood level. The Neighborhood Councils provide advice and counsel to the City Commission. Community entities also utilize the Neighborhood Councils as sources of outreach and education. A calendar of neighborhood council meetings can be found at [www.greatfallsmt.net/calendar](http://www.greatfallsmt.net/calendar).

### Who do I Call?

Neighborhood Council Coordinator: 455-8496

[www.greatfallsmt.net/neighborhoodcouncils](http://www.greatfallsmt.net/neighborhoodcouncils)



### Code Red

CodeRED is an emergency notification service that allows emergency officials to notify residents and businesses by telephone, cell phone, text message, email and social media regarding time sensitive emergency notifications..

To sign-up or learn more visit

[www.greatfallsmt.net/em/code-red](http://www.greatfallsmt.net/em/code-red)



### Security Camera Registry and Mapping (S.C.R.A.M.)

The GFPD is asking residents and businesses across the City of Great Falls to register their privately owned outdoor surveillance camera systems through this program. When a crime occurs, Police will be able to identify the locations of nearby cameras and enlist the assistance of the community to officers and to make Great Falls a safer place.

**To sign-up or learn more visit**

[www.greatfallsmt.net/police/security-camera-registry-and-mapping-scam](http://www.greatfallsmt.net/police/security-camera-registry-and-mapping-scam)



### Great Falls Community Food

The Great Falls Community Food Bank serves more than 65 different organizations both in and around Cascade County including our public schools, Meals on Wheels, and many more. Their mission is to engage, educate and lead our community in the fight against hunger. Among their most important projects are Backpacks4Kids Program which feeds underprivileged elementary school children on weekends and holidays. With more than 10,000 people in our County suffering from food insecurity, they are a vital organization that eases the burden for our most underprivileged residents—giving them a chance to look for work, pay for vital medicines instead of food, and study on a full stomach.

**Who do I Call?**

Great Falls Community Food Bank: 452-9029

[www.greatfallsfoodbank.org](http://www.greatfallsfoodbank.org)



### NeighborWorks

Since 1980, NeighborWorks Great Falls (NWGF) has been committed to building strong neighborhoods, creating successful homeowners and developing quality, affordable housing throughout Great Falls. NWGF is a member of the National NeighborWorks Network and one of over 200 community-based organizations dedicated to creating healthy communities. Led by neighborhood residents, NeighborWorks organizations work tirelessly to revitalize communities, reclaim abandoned and distressed properties, and promote affordable housing.



**Who do I Call?**

NeighborWorks Great Falls: 761-5861

[www.nwgf.org](http://www.nwgf.org)

### Fair Housing

Montana Fair Housing assists residents with the following:

Education about fair housing to include *Fair Housing Act of 1968* and as Amended in 1988, *Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504*, and *Americans with Disability Act*.

- Education about the *Montana Residential Landlord & Tenant Act of 1977*.
- Mediation services for tenants and landowners, to reconcile disputes dealing with landlord/tenant relationships.

If you suspect you are being discriminated against in your search for housing, contact Montana Fair Housing.

**Who do I Call?**

Montana Fair Housing: 1-800-929-2611



# I Can Be A Good Neighbor If...

**I get to know my neighbors,** I'm friendly, and introduce myself and my family, including our pets.

**I keep the noise down,** especially at night, and try not to interrupt the peace of the neighborhood. I let my neighbors know when I am going to have a party, so that if it gets loud they are not afraid to come and let me know.

**I keep my house and property maintained and clean.**

**I keep my yard safe** by fencing and covering swimming pools, trampolines and anything that could be a hazard to adults and children.

**I ensure my address number is readable from the street.**

**I pick up after my animals** in my yard and if they go in a neighbors' yard, I will pick that up.

**I watch my neighbors' back.** I report suspicious activity to the appropriate agency. I keep my eyes and ears open; I want my neighbors watching my back.



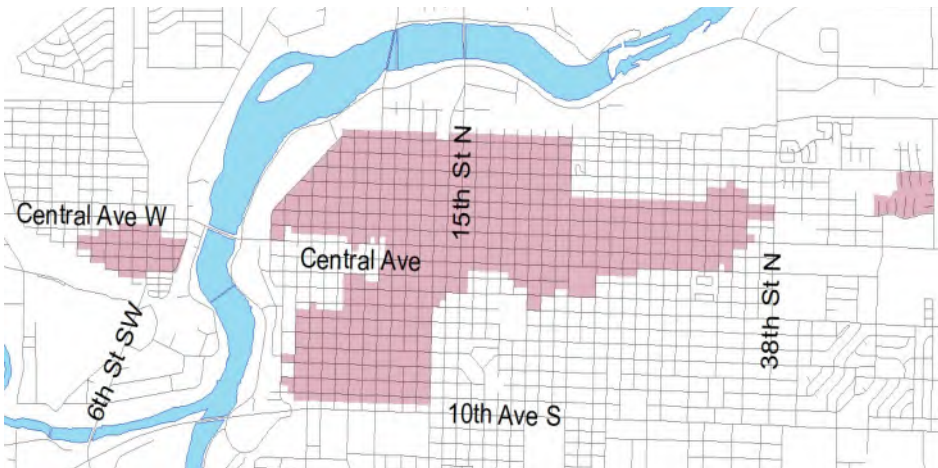
## Boulevard District

Park & Recreation provides services for homes located within the Boulevard District. Services includes tree trimming, stump removal, storm clean-up, tree planting and fall leaf pick-up. For more information, call the number or visit the webpage below:

### Who do I Call?

Park & Recreation: 771-1265

[greatfallsmt.net/recreation/urban-forestrynatural-resources](http://greatfallsmt.net/recreation/urban-forestrynatural-resources)



Map of the Boulevard Districts (shaded in red)



**I talk with my neighbors if there is a conflict.** I should not spread rumors or gossip.

**I look at my place from my neighbors' perspective.** How does my place look through their eyes?

**I drive slowly** when there are children and pets around.

**I don't hog the parking on the street.** I won't block the sidewalks or driveways

**I keep my sidewalks clear,** removing fallen tree limbs, grass and snow as soon as possible.

**I recognize that people are different.** Diversity is a strength for my community.

**I am appreciative of my neighbors.** If I like what I see—that new flower garden, holiday decorations—I will let them know.

**I truly listen to what my neighbors are saying.** We must communicate.



This brochure was produced with the cooperation of the City of Great Falls, NeighborWorks Great Falls and the Great Falls Police Department.

See page 3 for phone numbers.

