



In order to prevent a number of potential issues, the owner of an unoccupied building or vacant property is required to protect the building or property against the risk of fire, accident or other danger, by preventing the entrance by unauthorized persons. This could include disconnection of utilities, boarding openings and/or fencing around the property.

Potential Issues:

- ❖ Public complaints
- ❖ Fire and safety hazards
- ❖ Criminal activity such as drug use
- ❖ Vandalism, graffiti and dumping
- ❖ Increased risk to emergency personnel

The longer the building remains unoccupied the greater the potential for unauthorized intrusion or mischief. An owner may be subject to fines for unsightly and unsecure buildings.



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All openings secured to prevent unauthorized entry.

Governing Laws

- ❖ Fire Services Act of BC
- ❖ BC Fire Code
- ❖ Section 16.2 of the Fire Prevention Bylaw 3712, 2005.
Deemed to be vacant if it has remained unoccupied for a continuous period of 30 days.
- ❖ City of Coquitlam Unightly Premises Bylaw #3213, 1998.
Requires owners or occupiers of real property, or their agents to remove unsightly accumulations of filth, discarded materials, rubbish or graffiti.

Responsibilities of the Registered Property Owner

- ❖ Vacant buildings/structures are required to be secured against unauthorized entry.
- ❖ Accessible doors and windows on the lower level shall be boarded inside and out with plywood and screws.
- ❖ Accessible doors and windows on the upper levels shall be boarded on the inside with plywood and screws.
- ❖ Gas and electric utilities shall be disconnected.

- ❖ Property may require fencing around the site.
- ❖ Site shall be monitored on a regular basis to ensure the building/structure is secure.
- ❖ Maintain a yard clear of unsightly accumulations of filth, discarded materials, rubbish or graffiti.

Failing to Meet the Requirements

Reasonable efforts will be made to contact the building/structure owner to advise of the need to secure the structure. If the owner fails to comply within 24 hours the City may secure the building without further notice and the costs will be invoiced to the registered property owner, payable within 30 days of receipt of the invoice.

Bylaw Enforcement tickets may also be issued.

Contact

For more information, or further questions, please contact Coquitlam Fire/Rescue.

p: 604-927-6400

e: firerescue@coquitlam.ca