



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**City of Duluth Communications Office**

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218-730-5230 | [www.duluthmn.gov](http://www.duluthmn.gov) | Don Ness, Mayor

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**DATE: 08/03/2010**

**SUBJECT: Neighborhood Blight Reduction Program Starts August 15**

**BY: Pakou Ly**

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## **Neighborhood Blight Reduction Program starts August 15**

The Duluth Fire Department will partner with its Solid Waste Compliance team in a concerted “Neighborhood Blight Reduction Program” effort to reduce neighborhood blight and improve quality of life for city residents and visitors. The Neighborhood Blight Reduction Program is an intensive, city-wide effort to address blight issues in Duluth neighborhoods.

“Blight is a serious issue that goes well beyond the property line of the offender. From property values to neighborhood crime, unkempt property is a community issue that requires a community response. This new initiative will help hold property owners accountable for the blight they bring to a neighborhood. I want to thank Chief Strongitharm and the Fire Department for their initiative to complete this city-wide effort over the next two months,” said Mayor Don Ness.

Beginning August 15, individual City of Duluth Fire companies will begin covering their respective districts, inspecting residential and private properties for:

- Abandoned, unlicensed vehicles
- Excessive accumulation of junk
- Houses needing excessive maintenance
- Excessive accumulation of solid waste
- Visible house numbers (address)
- Vacant and unsecured buildings
- Overgrown yards
- Overgrown vegetation which blocks sidewalks and street intersections

## Dilapidated garages/sheds

The Solid Waste Compliance team will collect this information and where appropriate, notices will be sent to property owners to bring their properties into compliance. The team will continue to work with the owners of the properties to ensure compliance with applicable city codes.

“City staff will provide information to residents so they can properly dispose of household and hazardous waste. Safe and livable neighborhoods, that’s our goal with this program,” said Duluth Fire Chief John Strongitharm.

City officials encourage all property owners to ensure their property is in compliance with city code. Property owners will have until August 15, 2010 to make improvements prior to the start of the Property Blight Patrol. Keep yards and neighborhoods looking clean, safe, and livable by:

- Licensing all vehicles on your property
- Removing all abandoned vehicles from your property
- Appropriately disposing of all abandoned property
- Make sure your house number is clearly posted on your home
- Repairing or removing dilapidated buildings
- Having a garbage can large enough to handle your household waste
- Cleaning up any solid waste in your yard
- Maintaining your yard and cutting back shrubs or vegetation

The initial inspections across the entire city will take approximately two months to complete. If anyone has questions regarding this program, you can contact Solid Waste Compliance at 730-5151.

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