



## Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement

# Community Partners' Presentation



Angela D. Alsobrooks  
County Executive

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## Winter 2020



## *From the Director. . .*

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### **Hello, Community Partners!**

The holidays are upon us. Like many of you, I am looking forward to 2021!

We continue to serve you during the pandemic using enhanced technology. The building is closed to the public, but we are issuing permits and licenses, conducting virtual inspections, continuing our code compliance investigations of residential and commercial properties and assisting entrepreneurs with DPIE requirements. Staff are available in each division every day to respond to your emails and phone calls.



Please report any suspected code compliance issues to 311. Visit our website, see us on social media, sign up for our two monthly newsletters, email us or give us a call. We enjoy hearing from you.

Have a safe and happy holiday season!


*Melinda Bolling*



# Who Handles That?

	DPIE	DoE	DPW&T	Other	
	<b>Parking complaints</b>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DPIE handles complaints of vehicles parked on residential lots: on unpaved areas, commercial vehicles in driveways, untagged vehicles, etc.</li> </ul>	✓			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Revenue Authority handles abandoned vehicles, wrecked and junk vehicles parked on roads, etc.</li> </ul>				✓
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Police Department handles “No Parking” zone violations.</li> </ul>				✓
	<b>Street maintenance</b>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DPW&amp;T is responsible for County roadways.</li> </ul>			✓	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The State Highway Administration (SHA) is responsible for state “routes” – numbered roads, such as Route 202. Municipalities are responsible for their own streets.</li> </ul>				✓
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Find out if a roadway is owned by the County, State or a municipality with the <a href="#">Pavement Assessment Management System (PAMS)</a>.</li> </ul>				✓

# Who Handles That?

	DPIE	DoE	DPW&T	Other	
	<b>Trash</b>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DPIE addresses trash on residential or commercial lots and private property.</li> </ul>	✓			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DoE collects trash, recycle, bulky trash and yard trim.</li> </ul>		✓		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DPW&amp;T addresses complaints about trash on sidewalks, roads, public rights-of-way, etc.</li> </ul>		✓		
	<b>Drainage issues/flooding</b>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Homeowners should address property maintenance. See DoE's <a href="#">Residential Drainage</a> booklet for details.</li> </ul>				✓
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DPIE responds to drainage complaints in new subdivisions under permit and those related to structures and unpermitted construction.</li> </ul>	✓			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DPW&amp;T responds to problems that occur on County streets, in the public storm drain system, etc.</li> </ul>			✓	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DoE responds to drainage complaints related to grading, environmental issues, etc.</li> </ul>		✓		

# 10 Frequent Code Violations

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1. Operating a business, such as a restaurant or nail salon, out of a residence.
2. Performing automotive work on a driveway or street.
3. Doing unpermitted construction – construction without the appropriate permits and inspections.
4. Accumulating trash and dumping.
5. Parking commercial vehicles in driveways or on residential streets.
6. Parking vehicles on unpaved surfaces.
7. Failing to adequately maintain a property.
8. Allowing a property to fall into disrepair.
9. Keeping junk cars, tires, old appliances, building materials, etc. on your property.
10. Leaving abandoned properties unsafe and unsecured.



# Many Home-Based Businesses Are Prohibited in Prince George's County!

## What qualifies as a home-based business?

Any business that you operate at the place where you live. Operating a legal business requires a license or permit from DPIE.

## What are examples of illegal home-based businesses?

- You may not run a restaurant or sell food at home.
- You may not operate a nail salon.
- To operate a hair salon or a barber shop, a Use and Occupancy Permit is required.
- You may not convert your single-family home into a multifamily dwelling by renting rooms.
- You may not operate an unlicensed day care, adult care or elder care center.

## What happens if you are caught?

Fines of up to \$2,300 and other consequences.



# Buyer Beware!

## Unpermitted Construction Hammers Unsuspecting Home Buyers



Unscrupulous flippers are real estate speculators who purchase properties cheap, make repairs and/or cosmetic changes without the appropriate permits and inspections, then sell them to unsuspecting buyers.

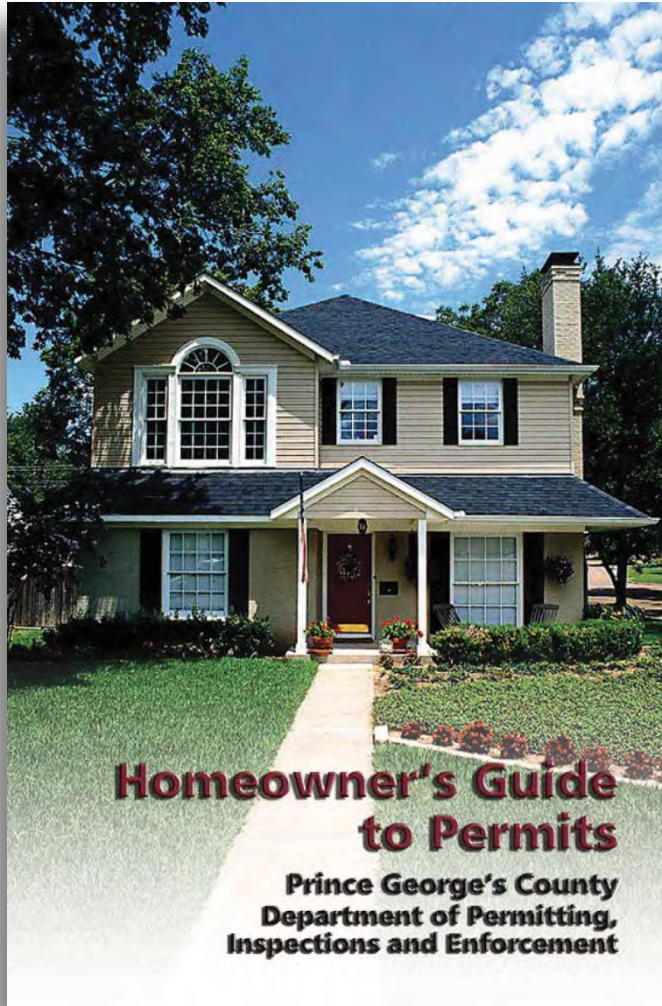
Take these steps to protect yourself before you buy a home:

- Hire a certified independent inspector to inspect the home and provide a list of any shoddy construction.
- Visit the DPIE website to check for any permits that have been pulled for work on the property.
- Walk away from any house with unpermitted construction or make the seller fix the problems and secure the appropriate permits and inspections before you sign on the dotted line.
- Notify DPIE so the seller can be held accountable.

The County Council recently passed legislation that helps authorities take action against flippers. However, the law is effective prior to the sale of a property with unpermitted construction.

**Protect yourself and take action before you buy!**

# Check for Permits Before You Buy!



The following resources are available on the DPIE website:

- 1) Check permits by address:  
<https://dpiestatus.princegeorgescountymd.gov/site/public/Citizens/ActivitySearch.aspx>. When entering the street name, use the first term. For example, search Chancellors Drive using "Chancellors."
- 2) Find out when a permit is required:  
<https://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov/1501/Residential-Building>
- 3) Read the *Homeowner's Guide to Permits*:  
<https://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov/documentcenter/view/4897>
- 4) Request copies of permits through the Maryland Public Information Act:  
<https://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov/2763/Methods-for-Submitting-MPIA-Request>

For more information, call the Permits Office at 301-636-2050 or visit [Permits online](#).



# Virtual Inspections

## Virtual Inspections Are Available on Limited Residential Properties via Video Call

### The Six-Step Procedure for Virtual Inspections

- 1) Schedule an inspection.
- 2) Discuss the scope and requirements with the County inspector prior to the inspection.
- 3) Prepare for the virtual inspection.
- 4) The inspections are conducted using an approved video application.
- 5) Pass or fail results are provided by the inspector at the conclusion of the inspection.
- 6) Written results of the inspection are available online the day following the inspection.

### Projects That Qualify for Virtual Inspections

Minor residential construction projects (will be reviewed by the inspector)

- Electrical service upgrades
- Electrical reconnects
- Mechanical service upgrades
- Follow-up inspections

For additional information about virtual inspections, visit the [DPIE website](#).



# Business Development Section (BDS)

## Helps Entrepreneurs with Permitting, Licensing Procedures

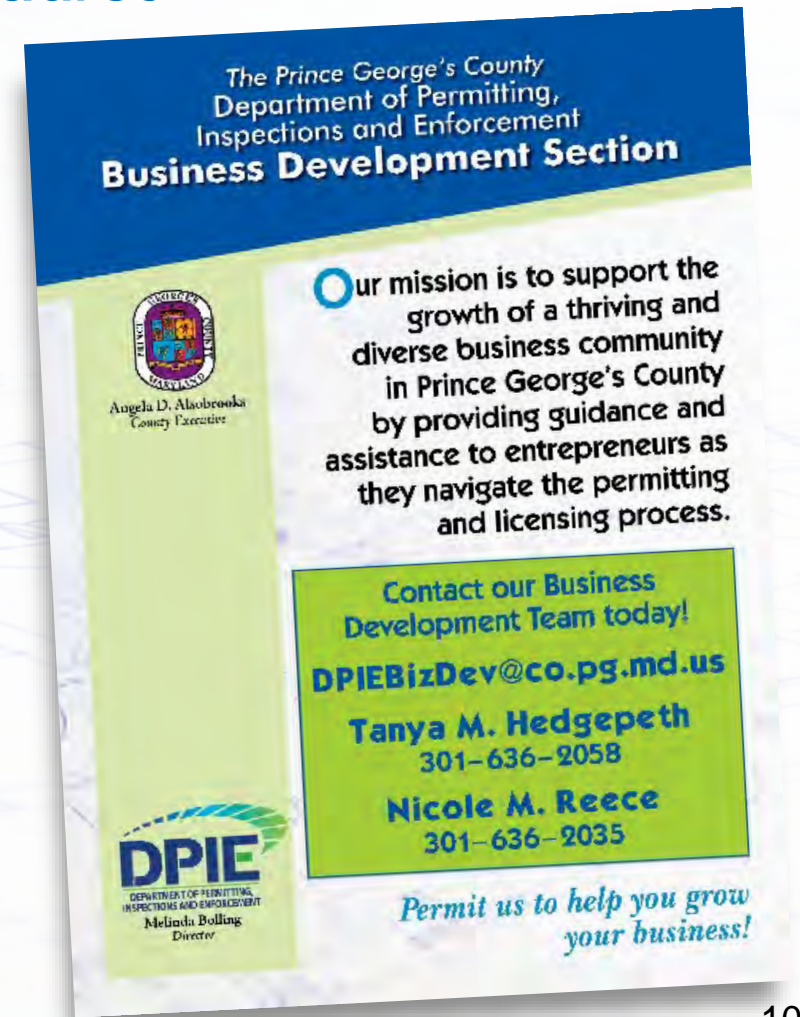
### The Business Development Section will assist you by:

- Coordinating with agency personnel to facilitate completion of paperwork and document review
- Educating business owners about DPIE requirements and processes
- Liaising with entrepreneurs and other government agencies

Contact the BDS team at [DPIEBizDev@co.pg.md.us](mailto:DPIEBizDev@co.pg.md.us) or call:

- TANYA HEDGEPEETH (northern County) at 301-636-2058
- NICOLE REECE (southern County) at 301-636-2035

*Permit the BDS to help you build your business!*



# Momentum Online System to Improve DPIE Processes

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## Launched in October!

DPIE began its modernization initiative with the implementation of Momentum, the County's new online system for permitting, licensing, inspections and code enforcement.

The initial phase of Momentum focuses on business licensing and single-family, multifamily and short-term rental licensing. It allows customers to submit applications, upload documents, make payments online and print their licenses at their homes or offices.

Subsequent phases will modernize technological functions of other DPIE divisions, the Health Department and DoE.



# Sidewalk Snow & Ice Removal Inspection Program

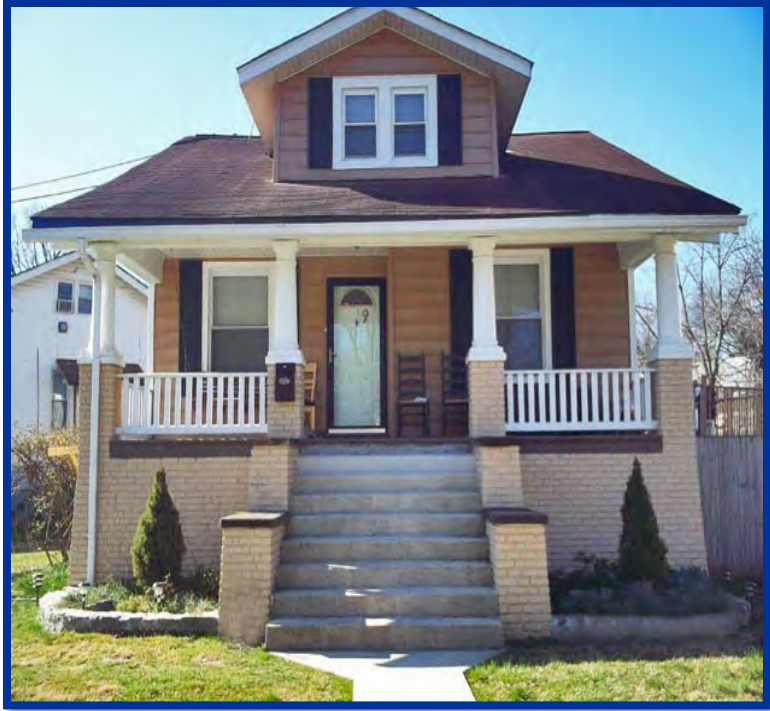
- Owners, managers and tenants of residential and commercial properties abutting sidewalks near County-owned roadways are responsible for removing snow and ice within 48 hours after it has accumulated to two inches or more.
- Those not removing snow/ice from sidewalks within 24 hours will receive a **reminder notice**.
- Those not clearing the sidewalks within 24 hours of the reminder may be issued a **citation for a fine of \$100**.
- After the first notice, a **fine of \$100 per day** will be assessed until the snow/ice is cleared. The County can remove the snow and assess the owner if the snow is not cleared.
- Be a good neighbor! Clear your sidewalks. Assist neighbors who are unable to remove snow/ice from their properties.

For more information, call 301-883-6168.



# Short-Term Rentals: License Required

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- County homeowners whose properties comply with County Code and who meet certain other criteria may seek a Short-Term Rental License to host renters through established rental companies (platforms), such as Airbnb.
- The mandatory licenses cost \$150 per year and expire one year from the date of issuance.

For more information, visit DPIE's webpage on [Short-Term Rentals](#).

# Administrative Hearing Unit (AHU)

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- The AHU is comprised of hearing officers who handle complaints about unlawful vehicles, open storage, trash and debris, tall grass and weeds, etc. They issue summonses, notices and default orders.
- Complaints are reported to 311 and routed to DPIE, where they are investigated and violation notices and/or citations issued. Respondents may request a hearing within 30 days of the issuance of a citation. The hearings are held within 30 days. Hearing officers render a decision within five days.
- Recent legislation extended the AHU's authority to include adjudicating citations issued for unpermitted construction and short-term rental violations. Final dispositions and orders for abatement will be issued directly by the AHU hearing officers. The process will now bypass District Court and expedite orders for abatement.

# Nuisance Abatement Board (NAB)

- The NAB was established to hear complaints that allege acts that disturb the public peace or endanger the health, life or safety of residents, workers or visitors in the County.
- The seven-member board includes representatives from DPIE, the fire department, the police department and four citizens appointed by the County Executive.
- If the board finds a nuisance exists, it will order the activity to cease and may assess a fine. The initial fine is \$500; subsequent fines are \$1,000.
- So far this year, 63 cases have been heard by the NAB; additional cases are scheduled to be heard before the end of the year.
- The NAB is helping to restore order to some troubled neighborhoods.



# Information Translations

El Departamento de Permisos, Inspecciones y Cumplimiento  
(The Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement [DPIE])

**¡Operar un restaurante y vender comida en casa es ilegal!**



- **¡Fuego!** Cocinar grandes cantidades de alimentos en un departamento, condominio, casa de pueblo o casa unifamiliar puede ocasionar incendios porque se pueden encender estufas no diseñadas para la producción en masa de comidas.
- **¡Envenenamiento por monóxido de carbono!** Muchas residencias no están equipadas con sistemas de ventilación adecuados para la producción en masa de comidas. Respirar monóxido de carbono puede provocar lesiones graves.
- **¡Peligro extraño!** Traer extraños a su casa para comprar alimentos expone a su familia a personas posiblemente sin escrúpulos que pueden regresar más tarde sin invitación.
- **¡Ratas y cucarachas!** Las ratas se sienten atraídas por todo tipo de alimentos y las cucarachas acuden en masa a los mostradores, armarios y pisos donde se han arrojado los alimentos. ¡Las áreas de almacenamiento y preparación de alimentos que se utilizan para producir grandes cantidades de alimentos pueden atraer alimañas y sus gérmenes!
- **¡Violación de distanciamiento social COVID-19!** Tener más de unas pocas personas dentro de una residencia viola los estándares de distanciamiento social ordenados por nuestros legisladores para mantenernos a salvo durante la emergencia actual de COVID-19. COVID-19 es una enfermedad viral grave que se transmite a través de la exposición de una persona sana a una persona infectada. Usar una máscara, lavarse las manos con frecuencia y mantener una distancia de al menos seis (6) pies de los demás son las mejores herramientas para ayudar a prevenir la propagación del virus.

Operar un restaurante ilegal o una operación de venta de alimentos puede generar una multa de hasta \$2,300 y otras consecuencias.

¡No te pongas a ti ni a tu familia en riesgo! ¡No cree molestias públicas para su vecindario!

**Si está operando un restaurante ilegal o vendiendo comida en casa, ¡DETÉNGASE inmediatamente!**

Para obtener más información sobre los mercados de agricultores, los camiones de comida y otras opciones permitidas para vender alimentos, visite el sitio web de DPIE en <http://dpi.e.mypgc.us>.



- In an effort to share both departmental and County information with our communities, DPIE is publishing pages in other languages. On [DPIE's website](#) select the [Resources tab](#) at the bottom of the left column.
- The last item on the bottom of the left column is [Information Translated to Other Languages](#).
- Be sure and check back on a regular basis as we continue to convert and add additional DPIE documents, as well as County notices and COVID-19 updates.
- For instructions on how to translate information, visit DPIE's website at <http://dpi.e.mypgc.us/>.



# Important Phone Numbers

*Call 311  
First!*

- Abandoned Vehicles 301-952-1873
- Animal Management 301-780-7200
- Building/Construction Standards 301-883-3820
- Bulky Trash 301-883-4748
- Enforcement Division 301-883-6168
- Licensing 301-883-3840
- Permits Center 301-636-2050
- Refuse, Recycling and Yard Waste 301-952-7625
- Rental Licensing 301-883-3840

# Tell Us How We're Doing!

The **DPIE Customer Satisfaction Survey** has been updated for FY 2021.

The survey asks customers to anonymously rate our services in 11 areas and offer comments on our performance. Click here to complete the survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DPIECSS21-22>.

The information will be used to improve our customer service.

*Thank you!*



The graphic is a promotional card for the DPIE Customer Satisfaction Survey. It features a light blue top section and a light green bottom section. On the left, there is a circular seal of Prince George's County, Maryland. In the center, the text reads "DPIE Customer Satisfaction Survey". On the right, there is the DPIE logo, which includes the text "DPIE" in large blue letters and "DEPARTMENT OF PERMITTING, INSPECTIONS AND ENFORCEMENT" in smaller blue letters below it. The bottom section contains the following text: "Tell us how we are doing. Simply go online, enter the following link and follow the easy instructions to complete this 2-minute, anonymous survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DPIECSS21-22> We value your input and thank you for your participation."



**Remember your mask  
and social distancing  
requirements.**

*Have a safe and  
happy holiday season!*

Contact DPIE Public Information Officer Avis Thomas-Lester  
at [athomaslester@co.pg.md.us](mailto:athomaslester@co.pg.md.us) or 301-636-2053 for more information.