
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



FOR INFORMATION CALL

April 12, 2012

Ald. Willie C. Wade
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Common Council approves big fines for vandalism to vacant buildings

The Common Council has approved an ordinance establishing a penalty of \$1,000 to \$5,000 per violation for vandalizing a vacant building and causing more than \$500 damage to the property.

Alderman Willie C. Wade, the primary sponsor of the ordinance (file # 111512 – approved Wednesday, April 11 by the Council), said there is “a direct and significant relationship” between the vandalizing of vacant buildings in the city and increased calls for police services, higher incidence of fires (both accidental and intentional), and decline and disinvestment in neighborhoods.

“The penalties are very much needed to address what has become a serious problem in many neighborhoods in Milwaukee,” said Alderman Wade, who is vice chair of the Council’s Zoning, Neighborhoods and Development Committee.

“It’s clear that vandalized vacant buildings become havens for further vandalism, as well as arson and drug crimes, representing not only a drain of valuable governmental resources, but also creating a significant reduction of the quality of life for the surrounding neighborhood,” he said.

Alderman Joe Davis, Sr., Alderman Robert W. Puente, Alderwoman Milele A. Coggs, and Alderman Terry L. Witkowski were co-sponsors of file # 111512.

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Vacant buildings/ADD ONE

According to the legislation, vandalized vacant buildings are rarely repaired and become blighted, and many eventually require demolition. These abandoned buildings “place an undue and inappropriate burden on the taxpayers of the city and pose an increased risk to public safety. This (ordinance) is intended to reduce and prevent neighborhood blight, to ameliorate conditions that threaten the health, safety and welfare of the public, to promote neighborhood stability and residential owner occupancy by preserving the condition and appearance of residential properties, and to maintain residential property values and assessments,” the file states.

-30-