



January 14, 2022

Dear Board of Appeals Members:

The week of October 25, 2021, the Community Development Department was contacted by the tenant residing at 310 6th St. SW. The tenant was concerned about the interior condition of the property and invited the Community Development Department to document the conditions. His concerns were the mice infestation, bed bug infestation, and the condition of the structure of the property including the electrical wiring, plumbing and the HVAC.

The Building Official met with the tenant on October 27, 2021, to verify the complaint and perform an interior inspection. During the inspection, the building official found significant signs of mice infestation. There were no visual signs of bed bugs so the bed bug infestation could not be confirmed. There were signs of a deteriorating structure, faulty electrical wiring, plumbing in disrepair, plumbing not installed properly, and insufficient heating. An exterior inspection was also performed. The most important items are listed below:

1. Floor joists and support columns that are embedded in dirt.
2. Signs that dirt had washed into the basement that surrounded and covered the bottom sides of the furnace.
3. Foundation issues such as cracks, vertical, and horizontal movement.
4. The ground elevation on the exterior of the home seemed to be higher than the main floor elevation of the dwelling.
5. Plumbing lines that are in disrepair and not properly installed.
6. Water meter and water shut off valve that are in disrepair (These items have been addressed post-inspection).
7. Electrical wiring concerns due to the mice infestation.

Due to the findings during the interior and exterior inspections of the structure, the dwelling was placarded as unfit and unsafe to occupy. A document was sent to Security Storage with the relevant code sections from the International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC); Item 2, pages 7-10 in your packet. The document stated that it was in the Building Official's opinion that the structure be demolished.

After receiving the document, Mr. Winter asked if he could spray foam the foundation. Mr. Winter was told by the Building Official the foundation could be spray foamed but the Community Development Department would have to be notified prior to work being performed. The reason this was required is so the condition of the foundation could be documented. The pictures of the foundation prior to spray foam are included in the agenda packet. Normally, the City of Oelwein does not require an inspection

City of Oelwein Community Development Department

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for spray foaming of a foundation, but in this case, the spray foaming was included in the permit application in addition to other items that do require permits and inspections. Since Security Storage has chosen to repair the structure, an additional letter was sent by the Community Development Department to Security Storage, with the requirements needing to be addressed before any further repairs can be made. Item 2, page 11 in your document. Failure to follow these directives undermines the point of the program and the goals of the City of Oelwein.

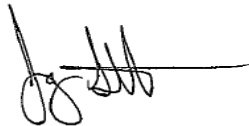
It is not just the foundation issues that are causing the unsafe conditions. It is the entire integrity of the structure. From the mice infestation that may be causing chewed wires that could lead to a serious fire hazard, to the deteriorating interior bearing beams and support columns, to the faulty plumbing, to the dirt around the bottom of the HVAC unit, each of these items alone make this property unsafe. Please keep in mind that the City of Oelwein has adopted the IPMC and implemented the Rental Inspection Program to monitor and control the rental housing standard. This dwelling is just one example of many that are below standard, which will decrease neighboring housing values and create future abatement and code enforcement issues.

As stated in Chapter 12, Article VIII, Rental Housing Program, Section 12-302: The purpose of this chapter is to provide for the inspection of residential rental properties within the corporate limits of the City of Oelwein, Iowa, in order to ensure that such properties conform to minimum standards deemed necessary for the protection of the health and safety of the occupants thereof and the occupants of surrounding properties, and to inhibit the spread of urban blight.

It is my wish that the city council and the board of appeals could see the properties that I see daily. This house is one example of a structure that has exceeded its intended use. It is up to the owner if he wants to fix the structure, but the property must be brought up to standards of the IPMC, IRC, NEC, IPC, and IMC that are all required by the state of Iowa and adopted by the city of Oelwein.

The goal of the Community Development Department is to confirm the structural integrity of the home. If these standards are ignored by the appeals committee, this goes against Iowa state law as well as the ordinances that were adopted by the City of Oelwein. As a Certified Building inspector, it is my professional opinion that Security Storage shall complete the four requirements before any further improvements are made to the structure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jay Shekleton', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Jay Shekleton
Building Official/Zoning Administrator