



**Cook County Department of Building and Zoning  
Vacant Building Ordinance**

**Frequently Asked Questions**

Q. What properties have to be registered?

Any vacant property as defined by the Cook County Vacant Building Ordinance, in unincorporated Cook County must be registered.

Q. How do I know if my property is in unincorporated Cook County?

Visit the CookViewer online mapping application at

<http://cookviewer.cookcountyil.gov/mapviewer/index.html>

and enter your Property Index Number (PIN). Unincorporated areas are reflected by gray shading (as opposed municipal areas, which are various colors). If you don't know your PIN you can look it up at

<http://www.cookcountyassessor.com>.

Note that, while this application is intended to be as accurate as possible,

it should not be used as a substitute for legal or other professional advice. If you continue to be unsure whether

registration is required, please contact the Department of Building and Zoning at

[vacantbuilding.ordinance@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:vacantbuilding.ordinance@cookcountyil.gov).

Q. How much does it cost to register a vacant property?

The one-time registration fee is \$250.00.

Q. Who must register a vacant/abandoned property?

Owner and mortgagees of the vacant property have the duty to register each vacant property.

Q. What are the penalties for not registering a vacant property?

Any person who violates any provision of the ordinance will be fined not less than \$500.00 and not more than \$1,000.00 for each offense. Every day that a violation continues shall constitute a separate and distinct offense.

Q. How long does an owner have to register a vacant property?

The owner of any property or building that has become vacant has within 30 (thirty) days to be in compliant with the Cook County Ordinance. The mortgagee is required to register 30 days after the building becomes vacant or 60 days after default (assuming the house is vacant).

Q. What if my property becomes legally occupied?

A property may be removed from the registration list by providing proof of sale or written notice, and proof of occupancy, to the Building Commissioner. The registration fee is neither pro-rated nor refundable.

Q. What is a local property manager?

For all registered properties, the registering entity must provide a name, mailing address (excluding P.O. Boxes), and 24-hour telephone contact information for an individual or management company located within Cook County, Illinois, who is responsible for the maintenance requirements of the property and has been designated by the owner or mortgagee as the authorized agent for receiving notices of code violations and for receiving process, in any court proceeding or administrative enforcement proceeding