



# Code Connection

## Message from our Assistant Director

Our community has seen the worst hail storms in the history of our city, certainly the most expensive in damages. Keeping that in mind for this issue, we changed some of the planned articles to include pertinent information on how to protect yourselves from contractor fraud and what permits, if needed, you need to complete the repairs to your home.

The substantial damage left behind by these storms has made San Antonio a haven for fraud. Before you hire a contractor to start your project, do some homework -- ask how long they've been in business, ask for references, do a search online and ask if they offer an extended warranty. These and other tips listed in this issue will help minimize the chance of becoming their next victim.

It's important to remind our residents that your contractor needs a permit to re-cover or replace your roof, windows, siding and doors. Contractors must be registered with the City of San Antonio in order to be issued the required permits to start the work. You can check if your contractor is registered and get more information about permits by visiting our website at [sanantonio.gov/dsd](http://sanantonio.gov/dsd). Getting the proper permits for your project will avoid costly citations, work being stopped until the permits are acquired, and ensures your contractor follows the city's current ordinances and codes.

Taking care of your home and property is something we should be doing all year

long. However, there are a few key items you should focus on during these hot months, like your pool, A/C unit, and yard. By following the tips in our article, you and your family will have an enjoyable and safe summer.

Feel free to contact us at (210) 207-1111 if you have any questions about the permitting process or contractor registration information. If you have any compliance issues, there are a few ways you can let us know:

- Call 311
- Download the free "311" app onto your smart phone
- Visit our website at [www.sanantonio.gov/ces](http://www.sanantonio.gov/ces) and click on the "Report a Violation" icon on right

You can always visit with us every second Tuesday of the month, 1 - 2 p.m., on **Code Chat Live** through our Development Services Department (DSD) Facebook page.

Please continue to send your comments, ideas and suggestions to us at:

[CodeConnection@sanantonio.gov](mailto:CodeConnection@sanantonio.gov)

Best Regards,



Michael Shannon, PE, CBO  
Assistant Director-Field Services  
Code Enforcement & Building  
Inspections

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## Contact Us:

Cliff Morton Development & Business Services Center  
1901 S. Alamo  
San Antonio, Texas 78204

Hours: Monday – Friday  
7:45 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

To report Code Compliance issues call 311 or download City's "311" Phone App.

**"Partnering with our Community to build and maintain a safer San Antonio."**

## Beware of Contractor Fraud - Staff

According to experts in the insurance industry, the damage caused by this year's hailstorms in San Antonio is one of the costliest weather events in state history. Unfortunately, this also makes the environment suitable for frauds, scams and criminal behavior.

Fraudulent, unqualified contractors or “storm chasers,” come from all over the country looking for vulnerable consumers. With resources, materials and contractors limited due to these recent storms, homeowners might try and seek a quick and easier road. Here are some things you can do to protect yourself:

- Be leery of contractors coming to your door or those in unmarked vehicles.
- Get multiple bids and ensure they are members of an association, such as Roofing Contractors Association of Texas.
- Research, research, research. Check the Better Business Bureau, your insurer or agent, and internet.
- Check if the contractor is registered with the City of San Antonio
- It's a red flag if the contractor asks for payment up front or offers to cut a deal if you pull the needed per-

mits. Never pay the total cost of the project upfront.

To find out if a contractor is registered, call us at (210) 207-1111 or visit our website at [sanantonio.gov/dsd](http://sanantonio.gov/dsd) and click on “Contractor Registration & Licensing.” Permits are not issued to unregistered contractors.



## • It's...SUMMER Time! - Martin Ruiz

- It's time for family vacations, get-togethers, BBQs, picnics and swimming. Who wouldn't want to revel in a nice, relaxing, cold dip after a long day or simply for fun? Me too! and I want to share some critical items, did you know and must haves in maintaining and using your pool.

According to the 2015 San Antonio Property Maintenance Code (SAPMC), a swimming pool is “any structure intended for swimming or recreational bathing that is at least 24” deep.” This includes in-ground, above-ground and on-ground swimming pools, hot tubs and spas. It also means those inflatable and portable pools sold at sporting



and specialty stores may be subject to the SAPMC.

### What are some of the requirements?

Swimming pools need to be kept in a clean and sanitary condition, and in good repair (Sec. 303.1). If your pool is deeper than 24,” it will need a 48” enclosure around it with a self latching gate (Sec. 303.2). Any stairs or ladders used to access the pool must be within the gated area. Have a privacy fence? Great, it can serve as the enclosure so long as the privacy fence has a self latching gate.

**What else do you need to know?** Well, maintaining the pool is critical to the safety of your family, friends and neigh-

bors. A pool whose water is stagnant is an ideal breeding ground for mosquitoes and their larvae. The SAPMC prohibits the accumulation of stagnant water (SAPMC, Sec. 302.2). Properly treated, moving water is not suitable for mosquitoes. Service your pool regularly.

Public pools and semi-public pools such as hotels, fitness clubs and neighborhood pools are monitored by the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District.

Have fun, and be safe! For more information on the SAPMC and swimming pools, refer to our website at [sanantonio.gov/ces](http://sanantonio.gov/ces).

**Martin Ruiz** is a Development Services Manager and has been with the city 17 years. His background is in Criminal Justice. He is a veteran of the United States Air Force.

# and maintain a safer San Antonio”

## Roofs, Repairs & Permits - Staff

Recent storms in San Antonio have caused considerable roof damage to many of our homes, leading to re-roof projects. Before you begin these repair projects, here’s some things to keep in mind:

- Your roof contractor is required to obtain a City permit to re-cover or fully replace your roof.
- A drip edge is now required on all roofs per City Code. This will provide additional waterproofing protection for your home and roof.



- You’ll need a permit to repair your siding and windows.

### Why is it necessary to get a permit?

- To safeguard the safety of your family and ensure your project follows the City’s building codes.
- To ensure that your home roof contractor is registered and licensed with the City of San Antonio, properly gets City building permits and has passed the required criminal background check.
- It’s the law. Work without the proper permit can result in citations to the contractor and/or home-

owner ranging from \$300 to \$1,000.

- Code Enforcement can issue a “stop” work order until a permit is obtained. This will cause an unnecessary delay to your repair project. A double fee penalty will also apply for starting the work before acquiring your permit.
- When selling your home, you generally need to show the work was done with the proper permit.

The cost of a home re-roof permit is \$26.50. For more information on permits and to check if the contractor you are hiring is properly registered with the City, visit our website at [sanantonio.gov/dsd](http://sanantonio.gov/dsd).

## Seasonal Tips - Jennifer Garza

Summer’s here and keeping your property maintained will ensure you and your family have an enjoyable one. Here are a few tips:

**A/C maintenance:** Have it regularly serviced by a professional. Cut all vegetation around them and keep the area clean, free from trash and debris.

**Yard maintenance:** Mow your lawn and keep it free of weeds and brush piles. Storing items outside that aren’t meant for outdoor use is a code violation.

**Mosquito breeding:** Eliminating standing water is key. Even the slightest amount can become a breeding ground. Some places to check:

- Buckets, barrels, uncovered boats, pet water bowls

- Clogged rain gutters, leaky garden hoses
- Fountains, bird baths, ponds, potted plant saucers
- Wagons, baby pools, neglected swimming pools
- Tires, open Trash bins

**Door and window screens:** They’re required for doors, windows and any openings used for ventilation of habitable spaces, food preparation and service areas. If there is A/C, they’re not needed.

Following these tips and being proactive in maintaining your property will reduce costly repairs or future code violations.

**Jennifer Garza** Jennifer Garza is the Code Enforcement Supervisor for the

Southwest Field Unit. She’s been with the City since 1995 and has over 18 years of experience working in Code Enforcement.



## We’re giving away **FREE** trees!

- Trees planted in front of chronically tagged wall and fences are an effective deterrent against graffiti.
- The trees given away are drought tolerant.
- Fill out an application today, available at [sanantonio.gov/ces/graffiti](http://sanantonio.gov/ces/graffiti)
- For more information, call (210) 207-BUFF (2833) or email: [Lisa.McKenzie@sanantonio.gov](mailto:Lisa.McKenzie@sanantonio.gov)



**CITY OF SAN ANTONIO  
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES  
DEPARTMENT**

Cliff Morton Development & Business  
Services Center  
1901 S. Alamo

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## Did You Know...



A donation container is any box, trailer, building or other receptacle intended to be used as a collection point for donated clothing, recyclables, or household items. Donation containers can't be placed within city limits without the proper permit and container decal. Illegal containers can be impounded by the city and will be released once the owner acquires the required permits, and pays an impound fee of \$200.00 plus the daily storage fee of \$20.00 per day. (City Code, Ch. 16)

To see San Antonio's Property Maintenance Code (SAPMC), visit: [sanantonio.gov/dsd/codes](http://sanantonio.gov/dsd/codes)

For all of San Antonio's Codes, go to: [www.municode.com/library/TX/San\\_Antonio](http://www.municode.com/library/TX/San_Antonio)

### What You're Saying

- "Ms. Guajardo...I have never spoken to a more caring, efficient, knowledgeable, organized Code Officer. Recently, I asked if Officer Cynthia Soto could address a situation at my property because I feared for the safety and well-being of my 83-year-old mother. A family member was using the driveway for...repairing cars for money - and without a business license or permit. The junk cars and metal parts strewn all over the driveway presented a major **safety hazard**, aside from the total disrespect for City policies and codes, as they have no business license.

"Officer Soto quickly assured me this warranted attention. Without a doubt, Officer Soto gave the occupant the appropriate notices and 10 days to correct the situation.

"I don't know when or under whose direction she received her training but...they did a great job and I wish that Officer Soto could train others to be like her: kind, caring, prompt... organized, a good communicator and expressing her desire to help citizens because she loves doing that, aside from it being her job.

"...I congratulate you too, Ms. Guajardo, for acknowledging what a fine employee you have and keeping her to continue helping the citizens of San Antonio...Thank you for providing employees with a big heart. It makes me feel safe and proud to live in San Antonio." - Resident

## Performance Measures - May/Jun. 2016

	MAY	JUN.	TOTAL	FY 2016 (FY = Oct. 2015 - Sept. 2016)
Cases initiated by Code Officers (Proactive)	5,629	5,795	11,424	49,737
Cases initiated through complaints/calls (Reactive)	1,727	1,807	3,534	11,736
Pro-activity Rate (Goal of 50%)	77%	76%	77%	80%
Response Time—Tier I (Goal of 2 business days)	1.5	1.3	1.4	1.4
Response Time—Tier II (Goal of 6 business days)	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.8
Compliance Rate (Goal of 90%)	97%	96%	97%	96%
Graffiti locations abated	4,775	6,679	11,454	45,234
Square footage of Graffiti Abated (Goal of 3.6 million)	347,426	479,518	826,944	3,252,126

## Graffiti Corner

Our Graffiti Abatement Team cleans graffiti off buildings, traffic signs, retaining walls, drainage channels and city-owned parks. To report it call us at 311, download the "311" app or go to [sanantonio.gov/ces](http://sanantonio.gov/ces). We partner with other agencies to remove graffiti in other locations. Some helpful phone numbers:

- Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) - highway signs, pillars and underpasses, (210) 623-4431
- CPS Energy - utility poles, pad mounts, transformers, (210) 353-2525
- VIA Metropolitan Transit - bus stops, buses, (210) 362-2020



Unsure? Call (210) 207-BUFF and we'll assess it and contact the proper department or agency. If you see graffiti in progress, call SAPD's non-emergency line at (210) 207-SAPD.