

INSTRUCTIONAL ORDER

August 2017

Immediately

V.5:11

Distribution: All Employees

Subject: **SECURING BUILDINGS**

Index as: Abandoned Structure or Property
Buildings, Securing of

Securing Buildings
Unsecured Buildings

Accreditation Standards:

Cross Reference:

Replaces: I.O. V.5:11, Securing Buildings (November 22, 2000)

This Order establishes a procedure for securing buildings or structures found to be unsecured during the course of a police investigation. It consists of the following sections:

- I. Policy
- II. Officer's Responsibility to Secure
- III. Unsecured Building or Structure
- IV. Reporting Requirements
- V. Contract Services

I. POLICY

It is the policy of the St. Petersburg Police Department that when an Officer investigates or is present at an unsecured building or structure, they shall take action to secure the site to protect its contents from theft or loss/ damage due to inclement weather.

II. OFFICER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO SECURE

A. When an Officer finds a structure or building to be unsecured or damaged in such a manner so as to permit entry, the Officer shall, whenever possible, personally act to secure the site by routine means such as locking open doors or windows.

B. If unable to secure the site, the Officer shall take further actions, as delineated in this Order, prior to leaving the scene.

III. UNSECURED BUILDING OR STRUCTURE

A. Unsecured Structure Damaged by an Officer

1. When a structure is not secure due to damage caused by the actions of an Officer, the Officer should first attempt to secure the structure before leaving.

2. If unable to secure the site, the Officer shall attempt to have the owner or agent secure the structure.

3. If no owner or agent can be contacted:
 - a. During normal business hours:
 - 1) The Officer will request a member of the Department Maintenance Unit to respond to secure the structure.
 - 2) Information regarding the damage will be provided to the Maintenance personnel to insure they bring the necessary resources with them.
 - b. During non-business hours, the on-call contractor will be contacted through the **Emergency Communications Center**.
4. A business card with the phone number for the Risk Management Department (727-892-5265) will be left with the owner.
5. All inquiries for payment are to be directed to **the City of St. Petersburg, Risk Management Department**.

B. Unsecured Structure Not Damaged by an Officer

1. When an Officer encounters a residence or business that cannot be secured, the owner or agent shall be contacted to secure the structure.
2. If no owner or agent is available, a Supervisor will be contacted to determine the best course of action.
 - a. The Supervisor shall:
 - 1) Consider assigning an Officer to watch the site until an owner or agent arrives; or,
 - 2) Have the site boarded up by the on-call contractor, if there will be a lengthy delay before an owner or agent is expected to arrive.

C. Abandoned Structure or Property

1. When an Officer encounters a building, structure or other real property that is abandoned and unsecured, the Officer shall notify the Codes Compliance and Assistance Division.
 - a. During normal business hours, they may be contacted at 727-893-7373.
 - b. During non-business hours, a message shall be left at 727-892-5097 and the Codes Compliance and Assistance Division securing officer will follow-up on the information.
2. In the event of an emergency or if public safety is an issue, a supervisor shall be notified to determine the best course of action.

IV. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- A. A Supervisor will respond and photograph the damage caused by an Officer or the unsecure condition which lead to notification of a service provider under contract to the City. The photo(s) shall be attached to the report.
- B. When a building or structure is secured either by an Officer or by a service provider under contract to the City, the incident shall be recorded on a police report describing the original condition of the structure and the way it was left.
 1. The information shall be included in the report of the original incident or if the original is a **"No Report"** (NR) incident, the damage shall be reported on a separate written report.
 2. The Records and **Evidentiary Services** Division (**RES**) shall send a copy of the report to **the City of St. Petersburg, Risk Management Department** along with the submitted photo(s).

V. CONTRACT SERVICES

A. The City has entered into a contract with a local licensed building contractor, who will be available on an on-call basis to respond and secure buildings and structures.

B. The Emergency Communications Center shall notify the on-call contract service provider as may be necessary.

Anthony Holloway
Chief of Police