



CITY OF DANBURY
OFFICE OF NEIGHBORHOOD ASSISTANCE

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Livable Neighborhoods 2011
“Building a Better Danbury”

Novemeber 2011

November 28, 2011

Honorable Mayor Boughton and City Council Members:

Below is a table highlighting UNIT activity from the time of last month’s City Council report. This does not include any UNIT activity regarding follow up and re-inspection work from previously noted issues. The UNIT works to ensure that each and every issue is resolved as quickly as possible.

Time Period	October 24 – Nov. 28, 2011
Number of Quality of Life Issues	92
One Year Ago	109

The top issues addressed by the UNIT were:

- Properties with debris on it (27)
- Miscellaneous (22)
- Unregistered/abandoned cars (14)
- Illegal Apartments/Overcrowding (9)
- Front Lawn Parking (6)
- Illegal Dumping (5)

Year to date, the UNIT has handled over 1000 complaints or issues within the community. Nearly 40% of UNIT activity has been the result of ACTION (Active Commitment Toward Improving Our Neighborhood). Our department takes great pride with our proactive measures we practice of being involved in the community and addressing quality of life issues on the spot. No issue is too small and we make every attempt to work with property owners and tenants to resolve the problem. Additionally, as a convenience to our residents, and also to be more effective, our department additionally works outside of the core hours of City Hall.

November Updates:

This is the time of year when it begins to get colder and the risk of residential fires increase due to alternate means of heating. Space heaters and the overloading of electrical sockets increase the risk of fire dramatically. The UNIT has received more calls than normal this past month with issues regarding overcrowding and unsafe occupancy.

In early November, YankeeGas contacted the UNIT right away after a technician went into a multi-family home on Downs Street and noted two bedrooms in the basement of this multifamily home. The basement had a tiny window, preventing any escape in case of a fire and a makeshift wall placed near the furnace. Upon inspection coordinated by the UNIT with the Fire Marshal and the Health Department, three more bedrooms were occupied in the attic, which is not permitted. Additionally, since electric outlets in the attic were limited, there was an extension cord being run from the first level of the home to power a space heater in the attic. The inspection of the cord revealed it being hot to the touch and the end had burn marks. The UNIT immediately contacted the property owner who was unaware of the additional people that were living in this dwelling. The immediate result of the inspection was that the two makeshift bedrooms in the basement needed to be vacated immediately, and the attic bedrooms soon thereafter. Reinspection has now verified that the home is compliant and the overcrowding has been relieved. With the amount of people sleeping unsafely in this dwelling, where there was limited means of egress, in a house with no heat and overloaded electrical outlets, you can't help but to wonder the potential of lives saved by the UNIT's immediate involvement.

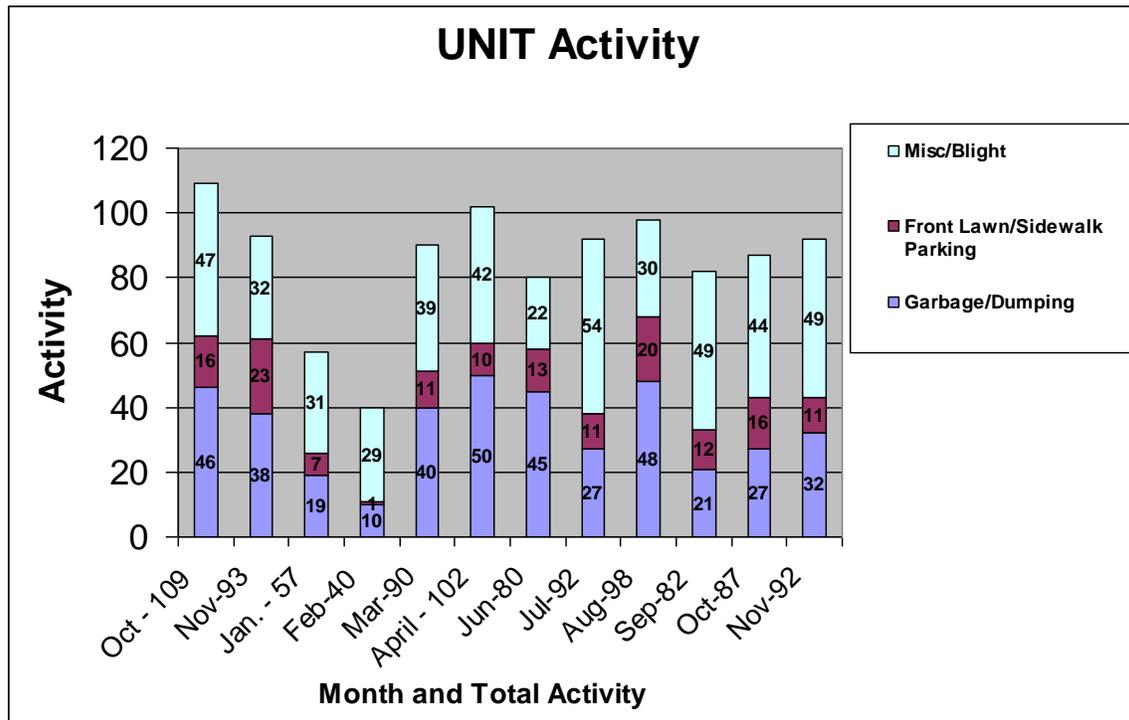
Last week, Officer Ken Utter and I were working after 9pm, driving through neighborhoods and looking for parking violations and other notable activity. As a result of this ACTION, five vehicles were ticketed. Two vehicles received a summons for parking in a no parking zone, and three commercial vehicles were ticketed for parking on the street after permitted hours. Another vehicle was marked accordingly because it was parked on the street without any license plate. After 24 hours, if it is not moved, it will be towed away at the vehicle owner expense.

While ideally, these infractions may seem minor, it all contributes to the quality of life in the neighborhood and our office continues to receive complaints regarding these type of occurrences.

Finally, through the remainder of the year, the UNIT will be taking out residents of the FCI every Tuesday to work around the community performing various tasks. Their effort and hard work has paid great dividends for the City of Danbury, as many locations around town has been cleaned of litter and other larger items that are illegally dumped. The UNIT will continue to partner with FCI and look to expand how their residents can assist the City.

The goal of the UNIT is to improve the quality of life in Danbury and maintain the city as a desirable place to live. The UNIT is committed to addressing and resolving these issues as quickly as possible and continues to be the department where residents can come to register their complaint and get the quality service that they expect. We will continue to proudly serve and follow up on complaints as best as we can. Our office seeks quick resolution to the quality of life complaints we receive.

Below is a bar graph illustrating the monthly totals of UNIT service requests for various concerns. Front lawn parking and garbage/debris result in the majority of the daily issues faced by the UNIT. Miscellaneous may include homes in disrepair, illegal dumping, blight, etc.



311 Call Center Report: November 2011

After a brief return to normalcy in October, Mother Nature brought forth the Halloween snow storm and the ensuing damage and emergencies to the City of Danbury. As a result, the 311 Call Center received more than 2,000 calls, voicemails, and emails during the month of November. More than 1,500 of these requests were related to the snow storm and the clean-up, including more than 100 calls received on Sunday October 30 when the 311 Call Center was opened to help provide information for residents. Call volume remained constant for weeks as hundreds of residents first called to report downed branches, trees, and dangerous branches that needed to be removed as well as information relating to the extended power outages. As the storm passed calls were focused on city plow operations and then the subsequent cleanup that is being performed in conjunction with FEMA. During this time we also experienced significant technical difficulties with our program software – forcing us to double our workload during the week of November 14. In the wake of the storm, another 200 residents inquired about the suspended Fall Leaf Pickup Program while another 127 called for information regarding phone numbers. As the cleanup from the storm continues, the 311 Call Center is

preparing for the winter months and staying in frequent communication with the appropriate departments to allow for the best and most consistent responses to be given to the residents of Danbury.

The UNIT continues to encourage the participation of Danbury's residents to report any concerns in their neighborhood by utilizing the City Line 311 system. Residents of Danbury can simply dial 311 from their home phones, or 203-744-4311 from out of town or cell phones. Additionally, residents can log on to the City's webpage, www.ci.danbury.ct.us, and click on the City Line 311 link and register their complaint at their convenience, and now, residents can utilize the Danbury Direct app from their iPhone to submit a concern or question. Residents can choose to provide their contact information, so the UNIT can follow up and provide an update on the situation. By visiting the Neighborhood Assistance Department on the City's website, residents will also be able to view the UNIT's monthly activity.

If we can be of any assistance to you or residents in your ward please contact us at 796-8026 or 311.

Sincerely,
Shawn Stillman
Coordinator, Office of Neighborhood Assistance