



CITY OF DANBURY
OFFICE OF NEIGHBORHOOD ASSISTANCE

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Livable Neighborhoods 2013
“Building a Better Danbury”

March 2013

March 25, 2013

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	Feb 25 – March 25, 2013
Number of Quality of Life Issues	95
Year to Date	208

The top issues addressed by the UNIT were:

- Properties with debris on it (58)
- Illegal Apartments/Overcrowding, Unpermitted Construction (9)
- Unregistered/abandoned cars (7)
- Miscellaneous (7)
- Front Lawn Parking (4)

The past few weeks have been inconsistent with the weather. One week, it’s cold and snowy and the next week brings sunny, 50 degree weather. What has remained constant has been the UNIT’s effort to prepare for Spring and work to maintain and improve the condition of our neighborhoods.

Over the last four weeks, properties with debris have dominated UNIT activity. As the snow melts, and the trees are unable to shield the rubbish, the UNIT has been working with property owners/tenants to clean up nearly 60 properties. The majority of these issues were not a result of complaints, but rather the proactive method of ACTION.

56% of UNIT activity over the last month has been the result of ACTION.

UNIT HIGHLIGHTS:

SHOPPING CARTS:

Twice in the last three weeks the UNIT drove around downtown and collected unclaimed shopping carts that had been left around the city. These abandoned carts detract from our community and look terrible, as they are left on street corners, sidewalks and in the front yards of homes. Additionally, these carts are commonly used by people to collect bottles/cans and can be seen being pushed around our streets. The City of Danbury has an ordinance against this behavior and the UNIT is cracking down on it as best as possible. Over the last few weeks, our department has collected over 40 carts! Additionally, a half dozen of these shopping carts were confiscated from individuals. The carts are locked up and stored at Public Works, where they can be retained by the merchants for a nominal fee.



VOLUNTEER WORK CREW – HOMELESS SHELTER:

On Tuesday, March 5th, the UNIT coordinated a volunteer work party to help clean up litter around various locations of the city. With the help of Mike Finn, Director of the Homeless Shelter, he was able to deliver 4 individuals who volunteered their time to help clean. Additionally, one other person joined the work crew as a means of performing his required community service time. We spent the day cleaning Spring Street, Lake Ave and near the train tracks on Maple Avenue. The result of our cleanup filled over 20 bags of trash, 3 mattresses, a suitcase and old carpeting. Our department's intent is to perform these cleanups on a weekly to bi-weekly basis. Rich Antous worked with the State's Attorney and Chief Baker and has asked for individuals in need of completing community service hours, be assigned to our department and we will manage the completion of their time by having them work in our community. In the meantime, we are extremely grateful to the residents of the shelter that assisted us on that day.

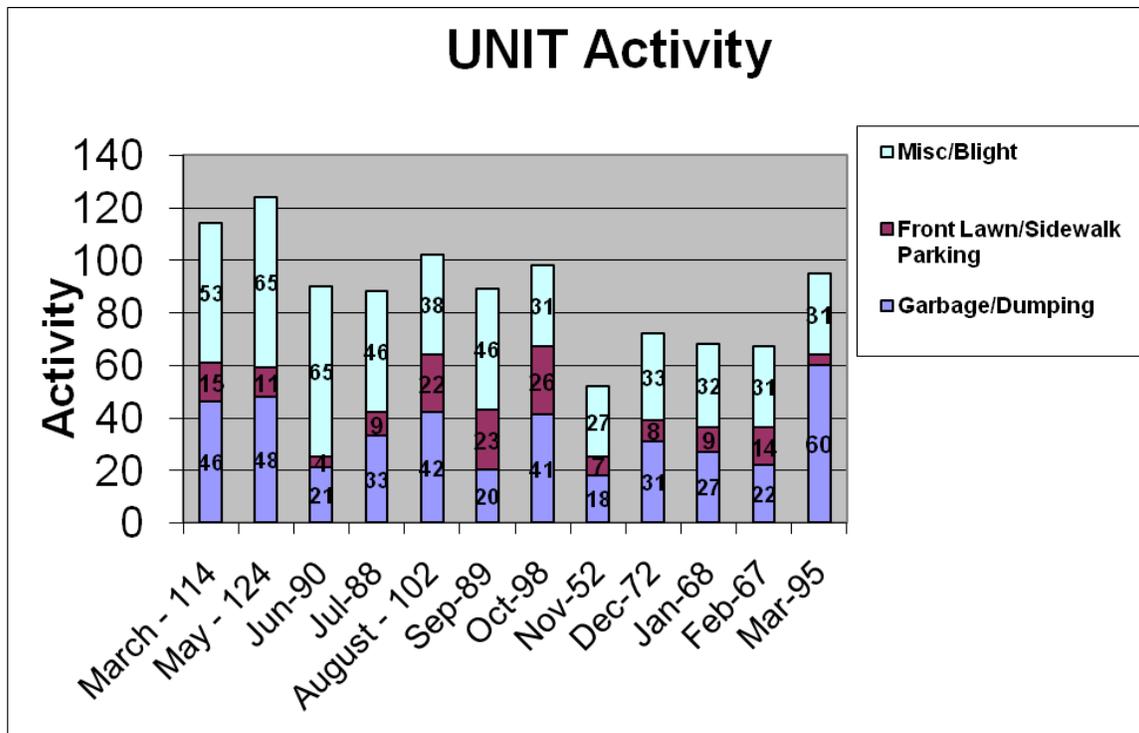


DOWN STREET – OVERCROWDING:

In early March, the UNIT responded to a concern of overcrowding. The referral came to our department by the Danbury Police Department. The result of our inspection revealed alarming issues. The three-level apartment was housing 14 people, many of which were unrelated. The windowless basement was housing 2 individuals, with one of the bedrooms having an entryway of only approximately 4' high. There were extension cords running throughout the apartment from floor to floor, room to room. There were also 3 bedrooms in the attic. Finally, and most importantly, as a result of the overload of use, the electrical panel box was extremely hot to the touch. This house was a disaster waiting to happen and it was a matter of time before there could have been a devastating fire. The UNIT dispatched the Fire Marshal and Building Inspector to the location right away, and immediately the house was declared unsafe for inhabitation and the residents had no choice but to vacate by the end of the day. The UNIT then advised the property owner of these issues, and required them to bring the apartment to compliance, including all of the necessary permits for electrical/carpentry. As of now, the house is empty and the work is currently being completed. The UNIT also provided recommendations to the property owner to avoid these circumstances from happening again in the future.

It's hard to quantify the lives that are potentially saved, or the property damage that is avoided by the work that is completed by our department. We are proud of the results of our efforts.

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: March 2013

The month of March saw the 311 Call Center receive over 850 calls, with requests for phone numbers bringing the highest total at 206 inquiries. Reports of potholes were the second-highest call type for the month, with over 100 reports of potholes being received via phone, email, and mobile apps. The upcoming Clean City Danbury Day (April 20) brought 44 calls, while 26 residents called for information on where they can dispose of household garbage. Twenty calls were placed for information regarding the recycling truck while 16 additional calls were placed regarding Household Hazardous Waste Day. As the warmer spring months progress, there is a tendency for heavy rains and localized flooding; in order to help prevent issues, residents are encouraged to keep the catch basins located in front of their houses clear to allow for the drainage system to work appropriately. Residents are also encouraged to exercise caution while traveling, as the asphalt plants are yet to open and many potholes may still form in the roadways.

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