

TOWN OF MAURICE

ORDINANCE #25-11

REPEALING ORDINANCE 18-12 AND ENACTING NEW ORDINANCE

Regulating the Maintenance of Lots and Sidewalks: Remedies: Assessment; Noxious Growths, Grasses, Weeds, and Buffer Zones

BE IT ORDAINED by the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the Town of Maurice, Louisiana, acting as the governing authority of said Town that:

The Town of Maurice, Louisiana, (hereafter "Town") hereby repeals Ordinance Number 18-12 and enacts this Ordinance as follows:

Section 1. DEFINITIONS

- a. **Regulated Properties.** Owners, tenants or occupants of any leased or occupied lots or places or areas or lands or property immediately adjacent to and within a buffer zone adjacent to commercial, residential property or public rights-of-way as hereinafter defined shall maintain all grass and noxious weeds on such property below an average height not to exceed **twelve (12) inches**. Furthermore, owners, tenants, or occupants of any property shall maintain all noxious weeds/grasses on the subject property surrounding any ornamental work or signage located on the subject property below an average height not to exceed **twelve (12) inches**.
- b. **Residential Properties.** For the purposes of this Article residential properties are defined as any tracts of land which have been used as the place in which a person or thing resides such as a home, apartment, or condominium.
- c. **Buffer Zone.** Buffer zone is that area of property located immediately adjacent to commercial, residential and/or public rights-of-way in which an area of property is determined by the Town, through its administration, as a buffer zone to commercial, residential and/or public rights-of-way. The determination by the Town, through its administration, that an area of property is a buffer zone to residential and/or public rights-of-way shall be within the sole discretion of the government of the Town through its administration and approved by the Mayor. However, nothing to the contrary notwithstanding buffer zones of at least **twenty (20) feet** in depth into a property and varying in length along a common property line of residential or commercial property or public rights-of-way as herein defined shall be regulated by this Article. For the purposes of this ordinance, all buffer zones shall be free of all noxious weeds/grasses that are identified above including maintaining the noxious weeds/grasses surrounding any ornamental work or signage located on the subject property to a height not to exceed **twelve (12) inches**.
- d. **Wooded Lot.** A wooded lot is any lot having more than one viable tree, six inches (6") or greater in diameter per 1,500 square foot of grass lot area exclusive of the street right-of-way.
- e. **Woodland.** A woodland is a plant community of one-quarter acre or larger in area, well stocked and comprised predominantly of healthy trees six inches (6") and greater in diameter, and/or woody

vegetation, growing more or less closely together, the branches of which form a complete or nearly complete area canopy.

f. **Agricultural Property.** Land used primarily for the purpose of farming, husbandry, tillage, or cultivation of the ground for the purpose of producing vegetables, fruits, or preparing the soil, sowing, and planting seeds and/or raising livestock, aquaculture activities such as crawfish farming. For purposes of this ordinance, it is presumed that all properties located within the Town limits are residential property and furthermore, the burden is on the landowner to prove by a preponderance of the evidence that the subject property is agricultural property.

Section 2. **SIDEWALKS TO BE KEPT FREE OF WEEDS, GRASS OR OTHER DELETERIOUS GROWTHS**

It shall be unlawful for the owner of any lot, place, or area within the Town, or the agent of such owner, to permit on such lot, place or area, or upon any sidewalk abutting same, any weeds, grass or other deleterious, unhealthful or noxious growths that may be growing, lying and/or located thereon.

Section 3. **NOTIFYING OWNER OF VIOLATION; DUTY OF CHIEF OF POLICE OR TOWN CLERK**

The Clerk and/or the Chief of Police of the Town is hereby authorized and empowered to notify, in writing by certified mail, return receipt requested or hand-delivery, the owner of any such lot, place, or area, or the owner of the abutting property, who is in violation of this Ordinance, or the agent of such owner, to cut, destroy, and/or remove any such noxious weeds, grass or other deleterious, unhealthy or noxious growths on any sidewalks, banquets, or any lot, place or area within the limits of the Town. If the noxious weeds, grass or other deleterious, unhealthy or noxious growths are not cut, destroyed, and/or removed within the **ten (10) days**, then the Town may undertake the cutting, destruction or removal of noxious weeds, grass or other deleterious, unhealthy, or noxious growths with the cost to be borne by the owner of such lot, place, or area or the owner of the abutting property. The amount charged by the Town for the cutting, destroying, and/or removing the above referenced grass/grasses/weeds shall be the maximum amount allowable charged by a private lawn cutting entity.

Section 4. **COSTS ASSESSED AGAINST OWNER; TIME OF PAYMENT; PROCEDURE WHEN OWNER FAILS TO PAY**

If after the cutting, destruction or removal of such weeds, grass or growths by the Town after due notice as provided above, the cost or expense thereof has not been paid within **ten (10) days**, the tax collector of the Town shall furnish the owner as shown on the last assessment roll of the municipality, by certified mail, return receipt requested, a **written statement** showing the costs and/or expenses incurred for the work, and the place or property on which the work was done. If the said **written statement** is not paid within **one month** thereafter, then the amount thereof shall be included in and form a part of the taxes due by the owner of said property, a recorded a **sworn statement** shall constitute a lien and privilege on the property, which lien and privilege is prior in rank to mortgages, vendor privileges, and all other privileges except tax privileges and shall remain in full force and effect of the amount due in principal and interest, plus costs of court, if any, for collection until the final payment has been made; said costs and expenses shall be collected in the manner fixed by law for the collection of taxes, and when collected and paid, shall be credited to the general fund of said Town.

Section 5. **FAILURE OF OWNER TO COMPLY; REMOVAL BY CITY**

The Town may undertake the cutting, destruction or removal of noxious weeds, grass or other deleterious, unhealthy, or noxious growths on any property within the Town on a monthly basis without notice as required in **Section 3** if the owner has been notified pursuant to **Section 3** at any time during the immediately preceding **six (6) months** and has failed to cut, destroy or remove of noxious weeds, grass or other deleterious, unhealthy, or noxious growths on the subject property during the preceding **six (6) months**. However, prior to the undertaking of such work by the Town, the Town Clerk and/or Chief of Police shall file and record an affidavit signed by the Mayor of the Town, at its administrative office. Said affidavit shall include the following:

- (a) A description of the property sufficient to reasonably identify it;
- (b) A photograph of the property sufficient to reasonably identify its unsafe or unsanitary condition, and to justify the necessity for cutting, destroying or removing weeds, grass, or other noxious growths; and
- (c) A statement that the property owner liable has within the past six (6) months failed to do such work after notification and opportunity to do so pursuant to Section 3.

Section 6. **EXCEPTIONS**

Exceptions: This Ordinance shall not apply to:

A. Agricultural Property. The provisions of this Ordinance shall not apply to areas in excess of **two (2) acres** in size when said acreage is used solely and exclusively for agriculture purposes. However, the buffer zones described above shall be applicable to agricultural property.

B. Woodland and Wooded Lots. Woodland and Wooded Lots are exempted from the provisions of this Article, except however, they shall maintain a buffer zone of **twenty (20) feet** or more as described above.

Section 7. **PENALTIES**

Any owner of any lot, place, or area within the Town who is in violation of this ordinance shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be fined no more than **One Hundred Fifty No/100 (\$150.00) Dollars**, plus applicable costs of court, for a first offense; no more than **Two Hundred Fifty and No/100 (\$250.00) Dollars**, plus applicable costs of court, for a second offense; and no more than **Five Hundred and No/100 (\$500.00) Dollars**, plus applicable costs of court, for a third or subsequent offense.

BE IT ORDAINED that upon this Ordinance being enacted, this Ordinance No. 18-12 shall be repealed.

WHEREUPON, the above Ordinance was read section by section, and was submitted to a vote, the vote thereon being as follows:

YEAS: **Alderman Scott Trahan, Alderwoman Megan Landry-Lalande, Alderman Troy Catalon, Alderman Jonathan Schlicher**

NAYS: None

ABSENT OR PRESENT AND NOT VOTING: **None**

The above Ordinance was declared adopted on this 19th day of November 2025, at Maurice, Vermilion Parish, Louisiana, to become effective upon publication.

THE TOWN OF MAURICE

BY: NEIL ARSEMENT, Mayor

BY: MELANIE DENAIS, Clerk