

Ordinance No. 2026-001

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE ORDINANCE

Section 1.

Purpose

The Town Council of the Town of Saxis, Virginia finds that the accumulation of trash, garbage, yard debris, grass, weeds, and other foreign growth present a risk to public health, safety, and welfare. This ordinance is enacted pursuant to the authority granted by the Constitution of Virginia and the Code of Virginia, including but not limited to §§ 15.2-901, 15.2-904, 15.2-906, 58.1-3965, and 58.1-3975 to promote the health, safety, and welfare of Saxis residents and regulate property maintenance.

Section 2.

Definitions

For purposes of this Ordinance:

- a. Trash – All waste materials, refuse, garbage, litter, and the remains of burned or partially dismantled buildings, or mobile homes, unused household appliances, equipment, and junked furniture.
- b. Grass – vegetation consisting of typically short plants with long, narrow leaves, growing wild or cultivated on lawns.

Section 3.

General Duty to Maintain Property

All property owners, occupants, or persons in charge of property shall:

- Maintain exterior property areas in a clean, safe condition free from trash, refuse, litter, unused appliances, and junked furniture.
- Cut or remove grass, weeds, or other foreign growth to prevent breeding or harboring places for insects, reptiles, rodents, or other hazards. Grass or weeds exceeding twelve (12) inches shall constitute prima facie evidence of a violation.

Section 4.

Exemptions

This Ordinance does not apply to:

- Waterman Equipment, waterman machinery, or waterman implements in working order.

Section 5.

Reporting Violations

Any resident may report violations of this Ordinance to the Saxis Town Office. Reports should include a description of the violation, property location, and, if available, photographs.

Section 6.

Inspections and Notice

Upon complaint or observation, a Town Representative shall inspect the property. If a violation exists, the property owner shall receive written notice via certified mail specifying the violation and directing compliance within thirty (30) days following the date the written notice was mailed.

- Grass and weed violations are governed exclusively by the Grass and Weed Violation section.
- All other property maintenance violations (trash, debris, unsafe structures, etc.) shall follow the notice and enforcement process outlined in Sections 6, 8, and 10.

Section 7.

Grass and Weed Violations

- a. First Violation (within 12 months):
 1. The Town shall send written notice by certified mail.
 2. The owner has ten (10) calendar days from the postmarked date to correct the violation.
 3. If not corrected, the Town shall hire a contractor to cut the grass or weeds at the contractor's current and reasonable pricing structure, plus a \$50.00 civil fine per lot. The property owner is responsible for the \$50.00 fine per lot plus the contractor's actual cost.
- b. Second or Subsequent Violations (within 12 months)
 1. The Town shall send written notice by certified mail.
 2. The owner has ten (10) calendar days from the post marked date to correct the violation.
 3. If not corrected, the Town shall hire a contractor to cut the grass or weeds at the contractor's current and reasonable pricing structure, plus a \$150.00 civil fine per lot. The property owner is responsible for the \$150.00 fine per lot plus the contractor's actual cost.

Section 8.

Unsafe Structures and Other Violations (Excluding Grass/Weeds)

In accordance with Virginia Code §15.2-906:

1. The Town may require the removal, repair, or securing of any building, wall or structure that poses a threat to public health or safety. The property owner will be notified of violation by certified mail.
2. Property owners shall have thirty (30) days from the post mark date to correct the violation.
3. If the owner fails to comply, the Town may remove, repair or secure the structure using contractors.
4. All costs, including labor, equipment, administrative fees, and contractor charges, shall be billed to the property owner.
5. Failure to pay shall result in the costs being collected as taxes when taxes are collected.

Section 9.

Abatement Costs and Leins

If the Town contracts work to correct a violation, all associated costs shall be assessed against the property owner. Unpaid charges shall constitute a lien on the property and may be collected as taxes and levies are collected.

Section 10.

Civil Penalties

1. First violation (excluding grass/weeds): \$100.00
2. Subsequent violations (not arising from the same facts within 12 months): \$300.00
3. Grass and weed violations are subject to Section 7.
4. All fines are payable to the Town of Saxis, Virginia.

Section 11.

Appeals

1. Property Maintenance Violations – Any aggrieved party may appeal notice, fine, or enforcement action under this ordinance to the Saxis Town Council within thirty (30) days of notice.
2. Zoning Determinations – Any matter that is determined by an approval or denial by the Town may appeal to the Zoning Committee for a period of 30 days following the denial of any zoning request. The decision becomes final after the expiration of the 30-day period. Appeals are permitted pursuant to VA CODE ANN. §15.2-2311.

Section 12.

Severability

If any provision of this Ordinance is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 13

Effective Date

This ordinance shall take effect immediately upon adoption by the Town Council of Saxis, Virginia.

Adopted this 2nd day of Feb., 2026.

Town Council of Saxis, Virginia

By Denise Drewer Denise Drewer, Mayor

ATTEST: Mariann Miller Mariann Miller, Town Clerk

All Votes Follow:

Robert S. Miller
Denise Chance
Byron Sheard
Daniel Marshall
Beverly S. Hart