Frequently Requested Public Records Held by Cambridge (MA) City Departments or the State

*These records are NOT kept by the Cambridge Public Health Department*

Most public records concerning code compliance and other specific environmental hazards are kept by other city departments or the state. Here is a description of frequently requested public records and how to get them.

**Note:** For records held by the City of Cambridge, you can search for them individually using the links below or you can make a [public records request](#) to the City of Cambridge.

**General Property Information:**
- **Current information.** You can find current information about Cambridge residential and commercial properties on the [city’s Assessing Office Property Database](#).
- **Historic Use of Properties.** The [Cambridge Historical Commission](#) has extensive records on older properties in Cambridge. For more information, call 617-349-4683.

**Asbestos Removal.** You can look up asbestos removal projects by city or address on the [state’s asbestos projects database](#). The database lists projects going back to 2004.

**Building Code Violations.** The city’s [Inspectional Services Department](#) (ISD) is responsible for local enforcement of the Massachusetts State Building Code. To find records on building code violations, visit the city’s [Open Data Portal](#) to search publicly available records. If you do not find the records you want, contact Inspectional Services at 617-349-6100.

**Hazardous Material or Oil Releases.** For information on state enforceable releases of oil or hazardous materials, you can search the state’s [Waste Site and Reportable Releases database](#). The database contains records going back to the mid-1990s. Hint: Street names are entered with various abbreviations (e.g. Mass Ave, Massachusetts Avenue, St, Street), so try different variations of street names when searching for a specific address.

**Lead Paint Status of Homes Built Before 1978:** You can look up the lead inspection history of a property on the state’s [childhood lead prevention program database](#).

**Sanitary Code Violations.** The city’s [Inspectional Services Department](#) is responsible for local enforcement of the Massachusetts Sanitary Code. Common types of complaints that can be enforced under the sanitary code are:

- Food service establishment code violations (restaurants, food trucks)
- Hot water problems
- Landlords' maintenance responsibilities
- No heat
- Plumbing problems
- Rodent problems
- Trash

Please visit the city's Open Data Portal to search publicly available records: If you do not find the records you need, contact Inspectional Services at 617-349-6100.

**Septic System Status.** Septic systems are not allowed in Cambridge and nearly all properties are hooked up to the municipal sewer system. To confirm that a property is on the municipal sewer system, call the city's Department of Public Works at 617-349-4800.

**Underground Storage Tanks.** You can find out about underground storage tanks on properties by searching the state's Underground Storage Database. You can find out if a storage was removed, repaired, or is currently in use at property. The Cambridge Fire Department also holds underground storage tanks records. To access these records, call 617-349-4921.

**Wells.** You can look up a property for a history of irrigation, geothermal, or test wells on the state’s Well Drilling database. Search by city and then sort results by street address.

**Submit a Public Records Request to the City of Cambridge**

The City of Cambridge has different types of public records, including those described in this document. You can access many city records online through the city’s Open Data Portal. You can also make a public records request to the city's Law Department.

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