

# 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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