

Tips for Investigating:

DO:

- Talk to the person face to face.
- Use a gentle approach and let the person tell their story.
- Remain calm and factual, but caring and supportive.
- Respect the attachment to possessions that the person has.
- Evaluate for human/animal neglect or abuse.
- Refer the person for medical and mental health evaluation.
- Involve the person in seeking solutions.
- Use person-first language—refer to the person as “a person who hoards,” not a “hoarder”

DO NOT:

- Force interventions.
- Be critical or judgmental.
- Press for information that makes the person uncomfortable.
- Make teasing or sarcastic comments.



What is the Hoarding Task Force?

Mission Statement:

Our mission is to ensure that people living in Delaware, Marion, and Morrow counties who are battling chronic disorganization and hoarding can readily access information and services that help them and the community thrive.

The Hoarding Task Force was formed in 2014 and is a collaboration between the following agencies and organizations:

- Central Ohio Mental Health Center
- City of Delaware
- City of Delaware Fire Department
- City of Delaware Police Department
- Delaware General Health District
- Delaware-Morrow Mental Health Recovery Services Board
- Dennison & Associates, Inc.
- Helpline of Delaware & Morrow Counties, Inc.
- Interim Health Care
- K² Organizing, LLC
- Marion County Fire Department
- SourcePoint

For more information, contact any of the above organizations or ask at the organization where you received this brochure.

Hoarding and chronic disorganization resources:

- Institute for Challenging Disorganization (ICD), www.challengingdisorganization.org
- The International OCD Foundation, www.iocdf.org
- National Association of Professional Organizers (NAPO), www.napo.net and www.napo-ohio.org

Information and Referrals for Hoarding Behaviors



*This brochure was created by:
the Hoarding Task Force of
Delaware, Marion, and
Morrow Counties*



What is hoarding?

Hoarding behaviors occur when a person has great difficulty discarding items regardless of their value. A person who has hoarding behaviors may get upset at the thought of getting rid of items, and may accumulate many items as a result. For some people, hoarding may cause isolation from community and family, work or legal problems, or cause them to live in unsafe or unsanitary conditions. People with hoarding behaviors are often unaware that their lifestyle is a problem, and rarely seek help.

Most people have seen the extreme versions of hoarding on television, but most situations are far less severe. For some individuals, hoarding behaviors may substantially interfere with their daily activities; for others, hoarding may not have much impact on their daily lives.

Why is this a community concern?

People may hoard newspapers, magazines, empty containers, old clothing, rotting foods, and animals. In some cases, there may be safety and sanitation concerns that may affect the greater community.

The large amounts of items collected in hoarding cases may:

- cause a severe fire hazard
- block fire escapes from the house
- encourage insects or rodents in the neighborhood
- cause unhealthy living conditions in the neighborhood
- signal neglect of animals or people
- cause building code violations or structural damage
- cause sanitation or odor nuisances

Although hoarding is a community concern, it is also a personal and mental health issue. Be respectful of the individual and do not force change. If you or a loved one has symptoms of hoarding disorder, seek help from a qualified mental health provider.



Deciding Who to Contact:

If you are a concerned neighbor, friend, or family member, ask yourself the following questions:

1. Is there an imminent safety threat to the occupants?
2. Is there an imminent health, abuse, or neglect threat to the occupants?
3. Are there conditions that pose a health and safety nuisance to the neighbors?

If health or safety is in question, contact one or more of the following agencies within your county or township depending on the situation:

- Adult Protective Services
- Child Protective Services
- City Code Enforcement
- Fire Department
- Health Department
- Humane Society
- Mental Health and Recovery Board
- Police Department
- SourcePoint

When you contact the agency, provide a clear, brief description of the problem giving names, addresses and phone numbers of the persons affected.

Neglect or abuse issues associated with elders, children, or animals may require emergency interventions.