

Title 17 § 2851. Dangerous buildings

Whenever the municipal officers in the case of a municipality, or the county commissioners in the case of the unorganized or de-organized areas in their county, find that a building or structure or any portion thereof or any wharf, pier, pilings or any portion thereof that is or was located on or extending from land within the boundaries of the municipality or the unorganized or de-organized area, as measured from low water mark, is structurally unsafe; unstable; unsanitary; constitutes a fire hazard; is unsuitable or improper for the use or occupancy to which it is put; constitutes a hazard to health or safety because of inadequate maintenance, dilapidation, obsolescence or abandonment; or is otherwise dangerous to life or property, they may after notice and hearing on this matter adjudge the same to be a nuisance or dangerous and may make and record an order prescribing what disposal must be made of that building or structure.

- 1. Notice.** The notice must be served on the owner and all parties in interest, as defined in Title 14, section 6321, in the same way service of process is made in accordance with the Maine Rules of Civil Procedure.
- 2. Notice; how published.** When the name or address of any owner or co-owner is unknown or is not ascertainable with reasonable diligence, then the notice must be published once a week for 3 successive weeks prior to the date of hearing in a newspaper generally circulated in the county, or if none, in the state paper.
- 3. Order.** The order made by the municipal officers or county commissioners must be recorded by the municipal or county clerk, who shall cause an attested copy to be served upon the owner and all parties in interest in the same way service of process is made in accordance with the Maine Rules of Civil Procedure. If the name or address cannot be ascertained, the clerk shall publish a copy of the order in the same manner as provided for notice in subsection 2.
- 4. Proceedings in Superior Court.** In addition to proceedings before the municipal officers or the county commissioners, the municipality or the county may seek an order of demolition by filing a complaint in the Superior Court situated in the county where the structure is located. The complaint must identify the location of the property and set forth the reasons why the municipality or the county seeks its removal. Service of the complaint must be made upon the owner and parties-in-interest in accordance with the Maine Rules of Civil Procedure. After hearing before the court sitting without a jury, the court shall issue an appropriate order and, if it requires removal of the structure, it shall award costs as authorized by this subchapter to the municipality or the county. Appeal from a decision of the Superior Court is to the law court in accordance with the Maine Rules of Civil Procedure.