



STAFF REPORT

Report To: Board of Supervisors

Meeting Date: July 20, 2017

Staff Contact: Lee Plemel, Community Development Director

Agenda Title: For Possible Action: To consider a report on the City's motel inspection program, and to provide direction to staff regarding possible code amendments or other code enforcement actions to bring existing motels into compliance with health and public safety requirements. (Lee Plemel, lplemel@carson.org)

Staff Summary: The Code Enforcement Division, Fire Department, Building Division, and Health and Human Services Department have conducted joint inspections of four motels since September 2016. The motels inspected were chosen based on the number of complaints received regarding the motels and the number of calls for service to the Sheriff's Department. City staff will provide and update and status report on the inspection program, including the health and safety issues found and corrective measures that have been taken. The Board of Supervisors may provide direction to staff regarding measures that the City may take to require motels to come into compliance with applicable health and public safety requirements.

Agenda Action: Other/Presentation

Time Requested: 45 minutes

Proposed Motion

No motion required. The Board may provide direction to staff regarding future city actions to bring motels into compliance with applicable health and public safety requirements. See the discussion below for more detail on possible alternatives.

Board's Strategic Goal

Safety

Previous Action

None.

Background/Issues & Analysis

The motel task force, consisting of the Fire, Health, Building, and Code Enforcement departments, has conducted inspections of four long-term stay motels since the start of the program in September 2016. The process for each motel has consisted of a 30-day notice to the motel owner, then an initial inspection and several follow-up inspections by the various departments, depending on the issues that needed to be addressed and the level of compliance upon re-inspection. Following is a summary of the violations noted during the inspections:

The initial inspection on the first motel was conducted on September 23, 2016. The inspectors found multiple violations from all departments:

- Smoke detectors missing or not working
- Bedbugs
- Hoarding, filthy rooms
- Non-compliant cooking appliances in every room along with multi plugs.
- Non-compliant space heaters.

- Ice machine health-safety issue
- Numerous building maintenance repairs.
- Unsanitary dog run
- Unsanitary, non-compliant trash storage
- General maintenance, repairs of building internal and external
- Tenant non-compliance
- Non-compliant storage
- Calls for service went from 39 a month to less than 10, however, in the past 30 days CFS were back up to 15 with repeated calls to 3 of the same rooms.

The owner of this property has been cited for certain violations that were not fixed, but the owner has since fixed those items. The owner has been responsive and continues to address all the issues as requested.

HOURS SPENT BY DEPT:

Fire:	9
Health:	9
Building:	9
Code Enf:	51
<u>DA:</u>	<u>20</u>
	98

The inspection on the second motel was initiated on November 15, 2016. The following issues were noted:

- None of the tenant-occupied rooms had working permanent heat sources. This was an immediate life-safety issue due to the freezing temperatures at the time.
- Non-compliant space heaters
- Non-working/missing smoke detectors
- Filthy rooms
- Non-compliant appliances with multiple plugs
- Storage areas being used for living space
- Unsafe structures, leaking roof in occupied rooms
- Inadequate wiring
- Weeds, trash and debris throughout the property
- Feral cats and tenants feeding them creating animal nuisance and health issue
- Calls for service went down from six to one (the one being a suicide threat). Three previous tenants from prior calls have moved to other housing.

HOURS BY DEPARTMENT:

Fire:	4.5
Health:	8
Building:	8
Code:	24.5
<u>DA:</u>	<u>10</u>
	55

The owner of this property did not address all the issues, primarily related to outside weeds, debris, and general maintenance, and was cited for a Chronic Nuisance on June 26, 2017. A court date is scheduled for August.

The inspection of the third motel was initiated on March 21, 2017, resulting in multiple violations from every department.

- Missing or non-functioning smoke detectors
- Bed bugs
- Hoarding
- Drugs
- Filthy rooms
- Rooms unfit for human occupancy

- Non-compliant cooking appliances and multi plugs
- Numerous exterior and interior general maintenance and repairs, leaking roof

HOURS BY DEPT:

Fire:	5
Health	18
Building:	8
Code:	32
<u>DA:</u>	<u>6</u>
	69

Four tenants moved prior to the inspection as a result of notice of the inspection. Sheriff's call for service went from 44 in one month prior to the inspection to 10 in the month after the inspection. This property is still not in full compliance, but the owner has been working diligently with code enforcement and health to correct all remaining violations.

The inspection on the fourth motel was initiated on May 23, 2017. Multiple violations were found from every department.

- Missing or non-functioning smoke detectors
- Filthy rooms and disrepair in all, including broken mirrors, sinks, bathrooms
- Non-complaint appliances
- Multiple plugs and electrical issues with inadequate wiring
- Non-compliant space heaters
- Bathrooms/showers filthy and in disrepair
- Non-working exhaust fans
- External building maintenance issues, including screens, broken windows, paint, general repair.
- Parking lot safety issues
- Heating/AC not sealed.
- Non-compliant storage

Sheriff's calls for service went from 17 in the month prior to the first inspection to seven in the month after, but all high priority calls. The owner has until July 18, 2017, to make the required corrections.

HOURS BY DEPT:

Fire:	5.5
Health:	7
Building:	6
Code:	9
<u>DA:</u>	<u>6</u>
	33.5

ESTIMATED TOTAL HOURS SPENT BY DEPT:

Fire:	24
Health:	42
Building:	31
Code Enf:	116.5
<u>DA:</u>	<u>42</u>
Total:	255.5

All properties are still being re-inspected every week by Code Enforcement with follow up inspections or meetings with the owners.

No individuals or families have been displaced as a result of the motel inspections, and motel crime has decreased at all locations. Where tenants have had to be relocated, the Health and Human Services Department

has been able to help the landlord find suitable accommodations elsewhere, often on the same property and sometimes at another property.

Overall, motel nuisance calls have dropped 50%, and calls to police have dropped 44% from last year, which can be considered a successful outcome. Based on the inspections at the four motels, it is clear that owners have not been investing in the upkeep and maintenance of some properties at the expense of the tenants and living conditions, as well as general aesthetics of the properties.

BOARD ALTERNATIVES:

There is no action required for this item, but the Board of Supervisors may wish to provide direction to the City Manager regarding continued enforcement or possible code amendments to address long-term stay motels. The coordinated motel inspection program has resulted in bringing the interior and exterior of the properties in compliance with health, safety, and maintenance codes. But it also takes significant time for numerous departments. Alternatives that may be considered by the Board of Supervisors include:

1. No Action -- Staff will continue to implement coordinated inspections of motels as workload permits.
2. Implement Show Cause proceedings to suspend or revoke the Business License of any motel that does not comply with Fire, Health, Building, or Code Enforcement requirements.
3. Adopt an ordinance to require Transient Occupancy Tax for all motels regardless of length of stay of tenants.
4. Adopt an ordinance limiting the length of stay in all hotels/motels to 28 days unless applicable zoning approvals and building improvements are done to meet applicable codes.
5. Stop Code Enforcement inspections of motels.

Current City zoning code standards limit the length of stay for which the owner may rent a room to 28 days or less. However, most of the older motels in Carson City predate the adoption of the ordinance limiting the length of stay and, therefore, are "grandfathered" to legally rent for longer stays. The Board of Supervisors could adopt an ordinance to require all motels, even grandfathered motels, to limit the length of stays. But should the Board choose to do that, it would be advised to amortize the requirement over a period of time, such as six months or one year.

Should the Board of Supervisors adopt an ordinance to require all motels to pay the Transient Occupancy Tax, this would remove an incentive to motel property owners to rent rooms on a monthly basis. However, the cost would likely be passed on to the tenants.

Please contact Lee Plemel at 283-7075 or lplemel@carson.org if you have questions regarding this item.

Attachments:

1. Photos of conditions found in motels during inspections.

Applicable Statute, Code, Policy, Rule or Regulation

CCMC Title 18, Zoning; Title 4, Licenses and Business Regulation; Chapter 8.08, Nuisances; Title 9, Health and Welfare; Title 14, Fire; Title 15, Buildings and Construction

Financial Information

Is there a fiscal impact? Yes No

If yes, account name/number: N/A

Is it currently budgeted? Yes No

Explanation of Fiscal Impact: Significant staff time continues to be spent on inspections and enforcement of violations.

Alternatives

See alternatives discussed above in the staff report.

Board Action Taken:

Motion: _____

1) _____

2) _____

Aye/Nay

(Vote Recorded By)

JS

2016/11/15
11:00



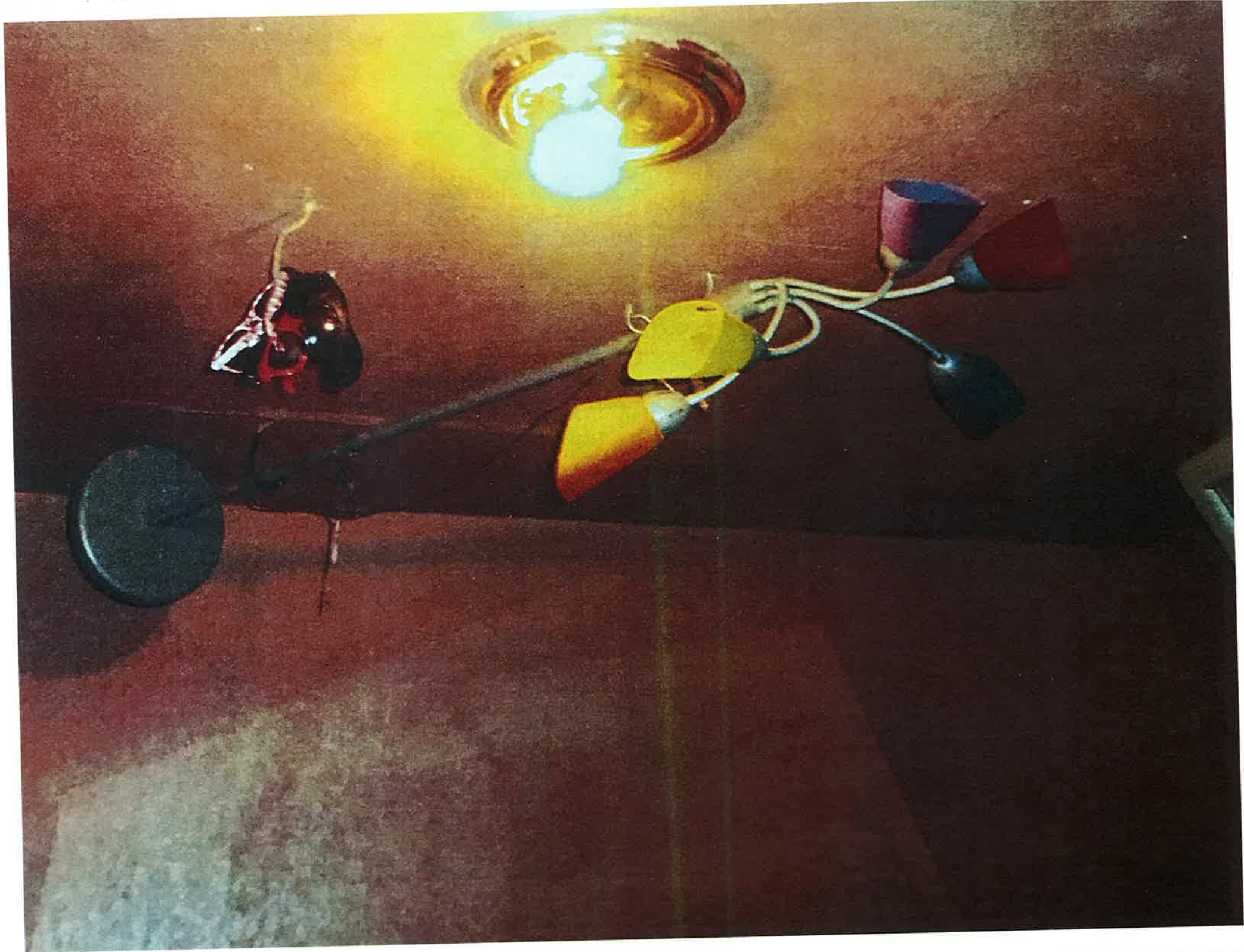
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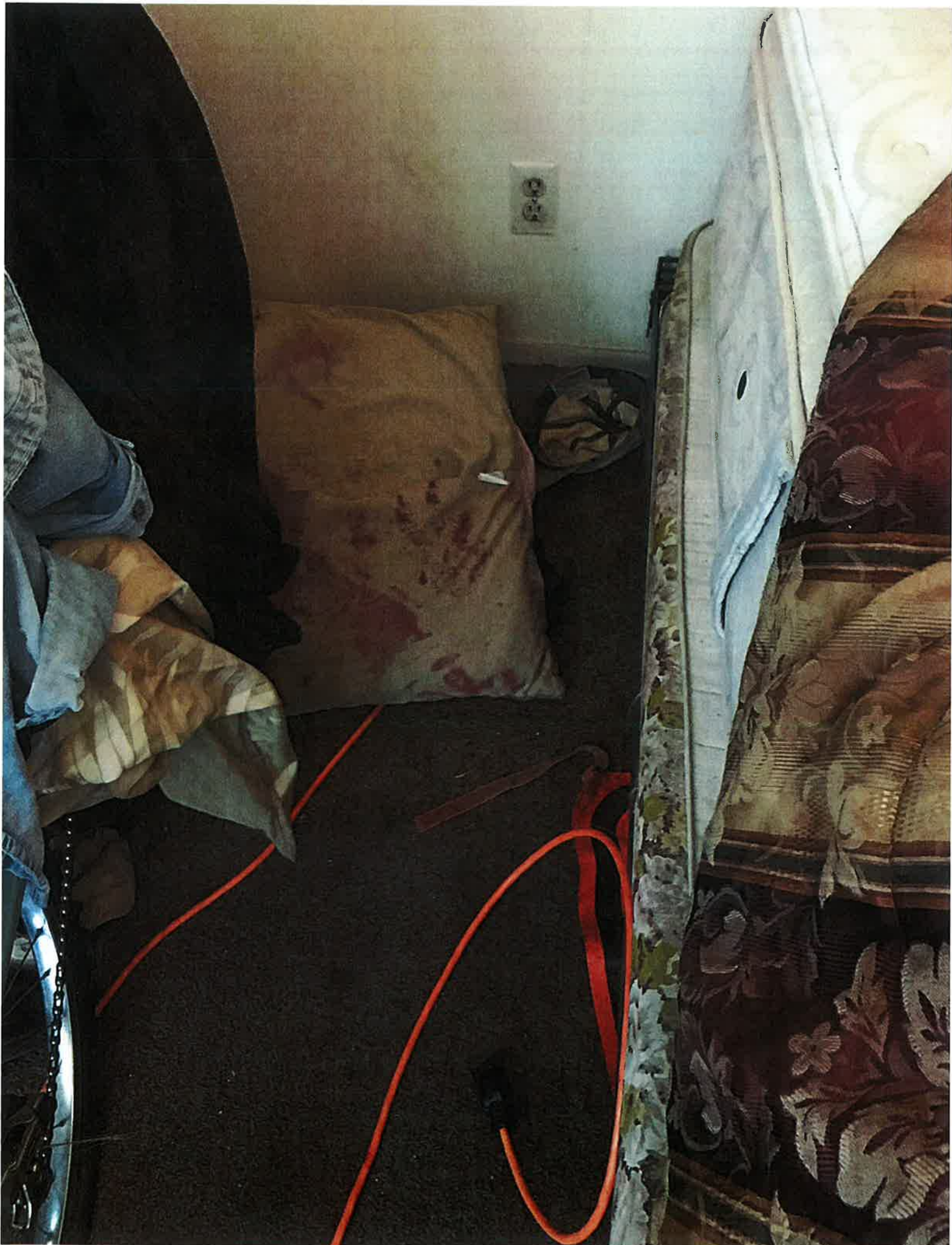
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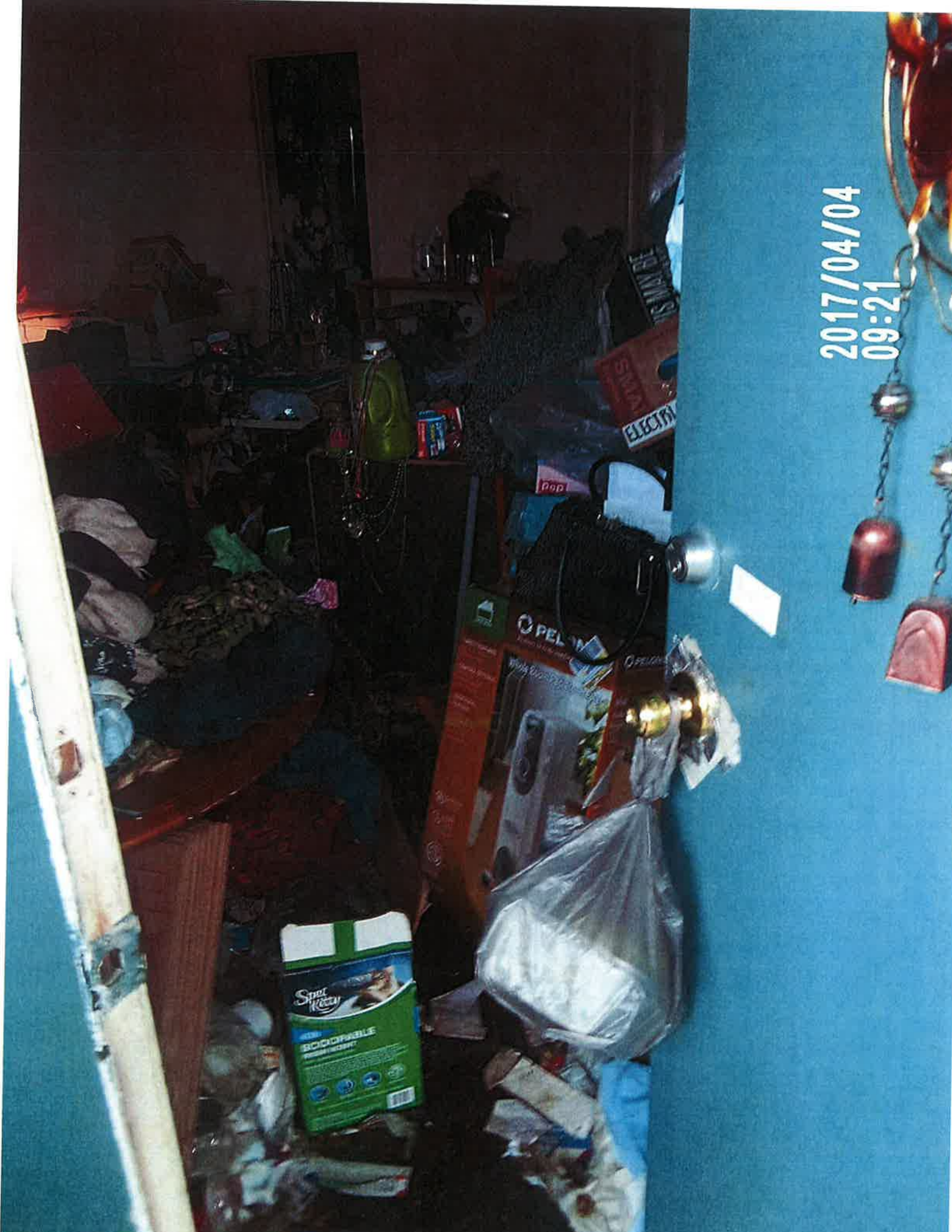




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03/21/2017

