

Name of agency/organization: Reid E. Choate & Associates, LLC

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Thank you for taking the time to answer these questions.

1. In your experience, how prevalent is the issue of squatting and adverse possession?

As appraisers, we see many properties all over the island and we have seen many properties that have had Squatters in them. Puna has the largest number of Squatters we have seen. We have seen no evidence of Squatters improving a property, however we have seen considerable damage. We have also talked with property owners & neighbors about how hard it is to get Squatters out and how they disrupt neighborhoods. We have been told by owners that they have had little help in evicting Squatters and it seems Squatters have more rights than the owners.

2. In what communities and districts do squatting and adverse possession appear most prominent?

Puna.

3. When you receive notice or a complaint about these situations, what is your normal course of action?

Nothing we can do. As appraisers, we report what we see, however we can't take any action.

4. What kinds of complications have arisen in the past that have prevented a successful resolution of the situation?

No support in eviction. The Squatters leave and then come back, or new Squatters move in.

5. For those situations that have been successfully resolved, please describe what happened.

Vacant homes we have seen have been damaged, broken doors & windows, graffiti. Stolen water systems, appliances & fixtures and random damage. We have been told by neighbors that they have taken action on their own to drive Squatters out.

6. What happens when you contact or try to contact the owner of record?

We have been told that some owners don't care, or feel there is nothing they can do and in some cases are afraid of what the Squatters will do.

7. What solutions would you recommend?

Police should be able to verify legal occupancy. Owners should get support with evictions. Trespassers should be prosecuted.

8. Are there any other comments you would like to make?

See above.