

## ***Bumps in the Night!!!!***

### ***Paranormal “U”***

#### **Trespassing – Should NOT be taken lightly**

*by Angela Sangster and Melissa Tanner , TnT Paranormal Investigators LLC*

One of the basic rules for TnT Paranormal Investigators LLC is that we will NOT trespass for any reason. For every case we work, whether it is a client or a popular haunted location, we have permission, from the owner and/or tenant, to be there and to conduct the investigation. In fact we get that permission in writing. We will not break that rule ever, for any reason.

Some might ask “Why?” or “What’s the harm?” or “No one lives there anyway, so what’s the big deal?”. To us (and other reputable investigators in this field) it is a HUGE deal. Here are some reasons why:

1. All property and buildings / houses are owned by someone, even the vacant ones. If you do not have permission to go into a house or building or even to be on the property you are trespassing. A trespassing sign does not need to be visible for trespassing to occur. Trespassing is a crime and is punishable by law (we’ll get into that later on). Nothing will ruin a paranormal investigators career faster than a trespassing charge on your record.
2. Cemeteries are usually only open during certain hours of the day (typically during daylight hours). Entering a cemetery after hours is trespassing.
3. There is a term in the paranormal field called “Creeping” that means that the person does not have permission to be in a location, but ignores that fact and investigates anyway. Creeping is the same thing as trespassing. I’m sure for some there is a thrill with creeping, but for us professionals it is a disgrace to the field.
4. There are many dangers and safety factors that are present when entering a location that you are not familiar with. See below for details on those factors. We do not want to put ourselves or the team in danger, whether it is immediate or life threatening.
5. It’s just wrong. Period.

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#### **Criminal Charges**

Checking out old, abandoned homes that have legends of hauntings can be very tempting, and it seems like harmless fun to just take a "quick look around". However, if permission hasn't been given to be there, that quick look around just may involve trouble with the law! Penalties for trespassing vary by state and all have laws in place for being on private property without permission. In

most places, trespassing is a Class A misdemeanor with possibility of fines (up to \$2500 in Illinois), as much as two years'

#### **Trespassing – Not Cool!!!**

probation, and up to a year in jail. Vandalizing the property (which includes leaving tire marks from a car) will increase the severity of any charges brought, and more than \$500.00 damage could result in a felony conviction. Potential paranormal investigators can ruin their chances of ever getting on a good team or being taken seriously if they disregard the law.

Many people mean no harm when exploring property that is abandoned, and in a lot of cases, the parties may not even be aware that they are legally trespassing. Whether a sign is visible or not, it is better not to take the chance. In Illinois, if there is a "no trespassing" sign anywhere on the property, a person could be arrested even if they didn't see the sign. In other words, ignorance of the violation is not a defense. To be safe, it is always best to get permission in writing from the owner of the property.

#### **Dangers and Safety Factors**

Climbing around an abandoned property presents many dangers other than the legal consequences. Hazards like the ones listed below need special consideration, as they are life threatening. Walking through an old building can bring exposure to toxins and rotting floors can give way, in some cases causing severe injury and death. These are some potential risk factors in exploring buildings that have been abandoned for any length of time.

- **Animals** – Wild animals will often take refuge in an old abandoned farmhouse or barn, and this presents many dangers. These animals feel threatened around humans and may attack, causing a risk for rabies or serious infection. There is also the factor of the urine and feces they leave behind, which is another potential health risk.

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- **Asbestos** – Many construction materials, especially older ones, contain naturally occurring heat resistant mineral fibers called asbestos. When disturbed, particles from these fibers become airborne; this in turn causes anyone in the immediate area to breathe them in. Exposure to asbestos can cause scar tissue in the lining of the lungs as well as lung cancer.
- **Broken Glass and Construction** –Most abandoned property is just that..abandoned. Time and the elements start to wear down foundations and construction and windows get broken out from people trying to get in. Serious injury can happen when flooring gives way or when walls and ceilings collapse. Exploring a crumbling old building alone is even more dangerous, as it can be a long time before help arrives.
- **Health** - The health risks of exploring abandoned property vary depending on the type of location. Old factories could possibly have toxic chemicals such as radon and an abandoned mine or quarry may have gasses such as carbon monoxide and hydrogen sulfide. Exposure to high EMF's which could be around the area or underground can cause headaches, nausea, skin rashes, and in severe cases, cancer. The fact that these hazards can't be seen with the naked eye makes them all the more dangerous and in some cases deadly.