

Monday - Thursday 8-10 Friday 8 - 8 Saturday 10 - 7 Sunday 1-8

(Albertson's Shopping Center) 2205 Longmire, Suite C College Station, TX 77845 (979) 695-6565

of urban decay are taking a serious toll on Philadelphia's once vibrant neighborhoods: As many as 15 buildings have collapsed since Thursday, and the city believes more than 3,100 others could fall down at any moment.

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All of the buildings that collapsed were rowhouses in and around poverty-stricken North Philadelphia. All but two had been abandoned. As a result, only minor injuries resulted: Two men were hurt when a large wooden awning fell as they were walking by.

Experts are not sure exactly what caused the rash of building collapses but they think it might have something to do with this summer's wet weather. Water can erode joints and weaken foundations, especially in houses with leaky roofs or inadequate downspouts.

"You would be surprised at how certain things such as having a downspout on your house, having your roof inspected — that is what keeps these properties from collapsing," said Andrea White of the city's Department of Licenses and Inspections.

The problem, though, was years in the making. Philadelphia's housing stock has been deteriorating for

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Years three decades, largely the result of a from \$6,500 to \$11,000 perb population exodus that cost the city 550,000 residents. Philadelphia is now down to 1.4 million people.

15 Philadelphia buildings collaps Jud

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"We are trying to get a better handle on what condition the buildings are in."

- Barbara Grant Spokesperson for Philadelphia's mayor John F. Street

City officials said Philadelphia now has about 20,000 vacant lots and more than 30,000 vacant houses. Of those, more than 3,100 are classified as "imminently dangerous," or in immediate need of demolition.

City inspectors plan to use helicopters Tuesday to assess the extent of the problem and look for telltale signs of buildings in danger, such as rainwater pooled on roofs and trees growing wild from the tops of houses.

The city also plans to step up demolition from about 30 buildings a McDuffy's North Philader week to as many as 60. The cost ranges

'We're trying to get a better dle on what condition the build are in, which is why we're goi overfly the buildings. A lot off you can tell if you can see roofs," said Barbara Gran spokeswoman for Mayor Jul Street.

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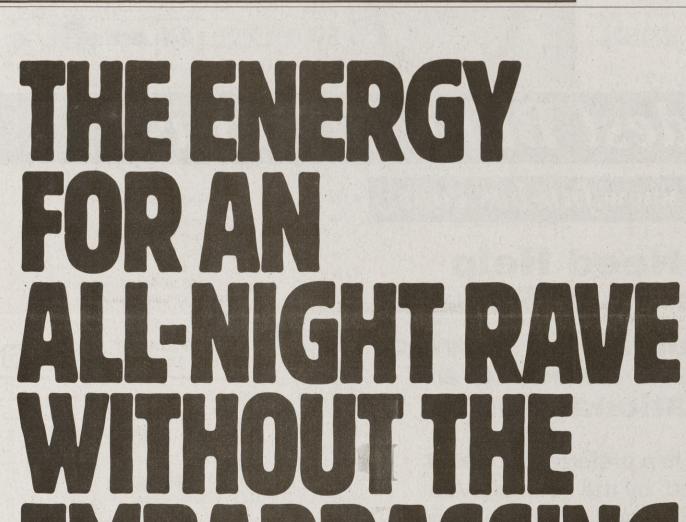
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The mayor, who has been in fice since January, made a \$250lion blight-removal programor the centerpieces of his campaig has yet to get off the ground aides promised the money willing place by fall.

In the meantime, Licenses Inspections has been using whit also includes calls "curbside demolition": an inspector determines a hous ical monitor about to collapse, the city asks Bechtle gave molition companies to submit on the spot. The low bidderha the settlemen work immediately.

From her stoop across thester users could Velma McDuffy watched interiment checks Monday afternoon as an excava machine tore into the remains collapsed rowhouses. The a doned buildings caved in last we adding another sad chapter gradual, decades-long declin neighborhood.





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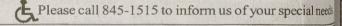
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Reserving space is Easy! Go to the MSC Box Officen Rudder Tower by Wednesday, August 30th at 5 p.m., complete a registration form, and pay \$30 for your recognized student organization or university department. Cash, check, aggie bucks, or credit cards are accepted.

Space is limited! Tables are awarded on first come, fini serve basis, and only one table is allowed per organization. If you have any questions, contact James Glueck, MSC Executive Director of Marketing at 845-1515.

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Produced by the Department of Student Activities, contact Rya Williams at ryan@stuact.tamu. with questions

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