

Greetings,

My name is Ken Lee and I am introducing myself as the new Code Enforcement Officer for the City of Mount Vernon. If my name sounds familiar to you it may be because I was a Police Officer for the City of Mount Vernon for twenty seven years before retiring in May of this year. My job as the Code Enforcement Officer is to enforce the Mount Vernon Municipal Codes and other issues brought to me by the Mayor's Office and City Council.

One of the items I have been tasked to look into is the issue of signs. Specifically ground signs, banners, placement of those signs and the permits required. Since many of these signs are placed on City right-of-way they are covered under MVMC Chapter 12.22, Right-of-Way Use. The purpose of this code is to provide for the issuance of right-of-way use permits in order to regulate activities within the City's right-of-way in the interest of public safety, health and welfare (MVMC 12.22.020).

MVMC Chapter 17.87 also covers signs and it is the intent of this chapter to regulate the construction, erection, maintenance, electrification, illumination, type, size, number and locations of signs (MVMC 17.87.010). It also requires that portable signs, which includes sandwich board signs, have a permit from the City of Mount Vernon building official and a valid city-issued permit sticker shall be affixed to the sign (MVMC 17.87.170.H).

MVMC 17.87.160.A states that erection or installation of any sign which is not in conformance with the provisions of this title shall be considered a violation of the building ordinance. The Development Services Director shall require such sign to be corrected or removed within a specified period of time. When any sign is determined by the Development Services Director to be in such condition that it constitute a hazard to the public safety, the Development Services Director is authorized to remove the device without notice.

MVMC 15.20.040 prohibits attaching signs or posters to utility poles.

I will be checking that signs placed on City right-of-ways have permits and are not safety hazards. I will also be checking that banners and other signs are in compliance with the codes. Signs that are on sidewalks and placed in a location that interfere with pedestrian or vehicle traffic will be removed. If you are not sure if a sign you own is in compliance please come to City Hall and ask for a copy of the Sign Ordinance. For your convenience I have included excerpt from the ordinances mentioned above. Please note the restrictions on the placement of portable signs.

My hope is that you will share this information with our membership and encourage voluntary compliance with the codes. If you have a sign please check to make sure it is in compliance and that any issues can be resolved before enforcement action is necessary. If you have any questions feel free to call me at 360-336-6214. I would also be available to participate in a membership meeting to further discuss the City's regulations and answer questions.

Thank You,

Ken Lee  
Code Enforcement Officer  
City of Mount Vernon