



**Date:** May 13, 2008  
**To:** Honorable Mayor and City Council  
**From:** Councilmember Val Lerch, Chair, Public Safety Committee  
**Subject:** **ISSUANCE OF PERMITS TO PAINT HOUSE NUMBERS ON CURBS**

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The Public Safety Committee, at its meeting held May 6, 2008, considered communications relative to the above subject.

It is the recommendation of the Public Safety Committee that the City Council concur in the recommendation to request the City Attorney to review ordinance regarding issuing permits to individuals or organizations to paint house numbers on curbs for possible amendments:

- 1) To insure that public safety is protected; and
- 2) To determine whether the responsibility to issue permits should be handled by Financial Management's Business License Division or the Police Department.

Respectfully submitted,

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

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Councilmember Val Lerch, Chair

Prepared by:  
Gloria Harper



**Date:** May 6, 2008  
**To:** Patrick H. West, City Manager  
**From:** Anthony W. Batts, Chief of Police *AWB*  
**For:** **Members of the Public Safety Committee**  
**Subject:** Recommendations Regarding Procedures For Issuing Permits To Paint House Numbers On Curbs

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DISCUSSION

At the City Council Meeting of November 20, 2007, Fifth District Councilwoman Schipske discussed a number of complaints from residents involving people painting curbs and soliciting money without proper permits. She offered several recommendations for revising the current curb painting permit procedures to increase public safety, especially for elderly residents of the City. After discussion between the City Council and additional input from residents, the issue was referred to the Public Safety Committee for further study. The following is offered for the committee's consideration.

The procedure for issuing curb-painting permits was substantially revised in 2003, to give greater effect to the requirements of Chapter 14.36 LBMC. Typical resident complaints involve aggressive solicitations for money and fraudulent charitable appeals, as well as vandalism of public and private property, assault and possible casing for burglaries.

As revised, the current procedure fully addresses each and every concern presently raised by the City Council and specifically incorporates each of the four recommendations set forth by Councilwoman Schipske in her memorandum dated November 20, 2007(attached). The enhanced procedures have not been burdensome to either the Police Department or the affected Council Offices.

Curb painting permits are issued by the Chief of Police only upon payment of proper fees, background investigations of all painters/solicitors and approval of proposed notices. The current fee for the permit is \$125 for a three-month permit. This fee, originally established by Council Resolution # C-23583 in 1983, is actually reflective of the current cost of processing the permit applications.

While the Fee Resolution provides a waiver for tax-exempt nonprofit organizations, most neighborhood associations are not tax exempt nonprofit organizations and, therefore, do not qualify for the fee exemption. Commercial (for-profit) painters are also required to pay the permit fee, plus the quarterly business tax.

It is the policy of the Vice Investigations Section to provide notifications to the Communications Division, affected Patrol Divisions and Council Offices whenever curb painting permits have been issued so that the permits could be verified after hours and on weekends. The revised procedure contains the same notification requirements and additionally requires the permittee to pick up the approved permit from the Administrative Sergeant at the affected patrol division.

In addition to permit identification cards (with photos) for each painter and solicitor, the newly designed permit/written authorization form was intended to provide greater information to residents regarding the permitted person/organization and the specific parameters of the approval. It should be noted that the Police Department has not issued any permits to paint numbers on curbs since 2002, which could account for why this information has not reached the residents and Councilmembers have never been notified of a permit being issued in their district(s).

Without exception, curb painters that have operated in the City of Long Beach within the past five years have done so without the proper permits. This has occurred, not due to failings of the current permitting system, but rather due to a lack of public awareness of the permit requirements and a consequent lack of enforcement.

As with most public safety issues, resolving the bandit curb painter problem will require the active participation of an informed community. Once residents know that permits, along with written permission to paint the curbs are required, and that permits must be conspicuously displayed, they will know to call the Police whenever they encounter "bandits." Calls-for-service will prompt increased enforcement activity, which will, in turn, provide an effective deterrent to further bandit activity.

With this in mind, the Community Relations Division will begin producing public safety fliers for distribution at safety tables at various community events. We will also publish an information piece in the monthly "Crime Watch" newsletter.

#### TIMING CONSIDERATIONS

None.

#### FISCAL IMPACT

The costs involved in producing safety fliers to distribute at Neighborhood Watch meetings and safety tables are nominal and already a budgeted program expense within the Community Relations Division of the Police Department. Similarly, publication of information, either on the utility bill or in the monthly newsletter "The Wave," which is already included in the utility billing, would not result in any additional cost to the City.

#### IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE COMMITTEE:

Concur with the alternate proposal to increase enforcement of existing regulatory requirements by way of a public education campaign, which can be accomplished by publishing articles in community newsletters and distributing safety fliers at Neighborhood Watch meetings and other community events. Additional efforts could include disseminating information in the monthly utility statements.

APPROVED:

  
for \_\_\_\_\_  
PATRICK H. WEST  
CITY MANAGER



**City of Long Beach**  
*Working Together to Serve*

**Office of Gerrie Schipske**  
**Councilwoman, Fifth District**  
**Memorandum**

**~~R-24~~**

Date: November 20 2007

To: HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

From: Councilwoman Gerrie Schipske *GS*

Subject: AGENDA ITEM: Report to Council Districts Regarding Permits Issues for Painting of House Numbers on City Curbs

### **BACKGROUND**

City Municipal Code Chapter 14.36 establishes a process by which permits are issued to persons and organizations for the painting of house numbers on curbs. The permit is to be issued by the Chief of Police and those who paint house numbers must conform with the uniform standards set out in the code.

Unfortunately, residents report that individuals come to their door and inform them that they have painted their house number on the curb and would like a donation for the service even though the residents' permission had not been sought prior to the painting. Alternatively, others report that they pay a fee only to find that the curb has not been painted or painted correctly.

Currently, there isn't a fee charged for obtaining the permit to paint house numbers on city curbs, so permits are easily obtained. The Code does allow the City Council to set a permit fee if it chooses to do so.

### **RECOMENDATION**

It is recommended that a number of procedures be put in place to assure residents that individuals or organizations offering to paint house numbers are authorized to perform the work and that it is performed correctly.

These procedures include:

1. The Police Department shall notify Council offices whenever a permit is issued for house number painting so that the Council office can confirm with residents that the permit is appropriate.
2. The permit issued should be distinctive and readily identifiable and displayed by the individual or organization requesting to paint the house numbers and shown to residents.
3. Residents should have to give written permission to have their house numbers painted and individuals and organizations performing the service must provide the written permission to the City if asked to do so.

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4. Residents should be given written information on the permit number, the organization performing the service and a phone number in the Police Department where residents can call if they are not satisfied with the house number painting.