



WESTPORT POLICE DEPARTMENT

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Chief of Police

News Release

WESTPORT POLICE CAUTION AGAINST THE REMOVAL OF TEMPORARY SIGNAGE

(Westport, CT) – With the approaching November elections, also come the traditional posting of political signage expressing support for various candidates. Westport Police, in years past, have received complaints related to the disappearance, removal and/or theft of these types of signs.

Residents and visitors are advised against taking it upon themselves to remove signs that do not belong to them, from either public or private property. The enforcement of the town's rules is the responsibility of the town of Westport, not that of private citizens. The removal of signs from public or private property by someone not authorized to do so by the town, or by the owner of the sign, may constitute theft. Entering onto private property to remove signs may also constitute trespassing. Both of these acts can ultimately result in arrest.

The following policy has been established by Westport Town Officials in order to provide coordination for the placement of temporary signs by Westport non-profit organizations wishing to advertise one-time-only charitable events. Signs placed on public property advertising a private business or company will be removed.

General Guidelines for ALL Temporary Signs

- Town property includes traffic islands and road rights of way.
- The Town may not approve, nor is it responsible for, any signs erected on State of Connecticut property. It is not advisable to place signs on State of Connecticut property (including rights of way and islands along Routes 1, 136, 57, 33, and the Sherwood Island Connector, nor on the exit or entrance ramps of I-95 or the Merritt Parkway) as the State may remove them.
- No sign may be placed on any school property without the prior permission of the Superintendent's Office.
- No sign may be placed within the interior of Compo Beach or Longshore Club Park.
- No sign may be placed on Town Hall property.
- No sign may be placed on trees or utility poles.
- No sign may interfere with traffic visibility.

- Signs on private property require property owner approval. Signs on private property shall not extend beyond the property line or into the Town right-of-way and is suggested they be removed within 2 days after the publicized event or election.

Temporary Signs for Advertising Charitable Events

The placement and locations of temporary signs on Town property for the purpose of advertising a charitable event requires review and approval by the Westport Police Chief, Director of Planning and Zoning, and Director of Parks & Recreation, or their designated representatives. Qualifying organizations (i.e. local non-profits) may send a copy of the attached request, including proposed locations, for the placement of temporary signs to: Selectman's Office, Westport Town Hall, 110 Myrtle Avenue, Westport, CT 06880 or selectman@westportct.gov.

The following conditions will apply to charitable events:

- A maximum of 15 signs are allowed for each such event. This includes directional signs.
- The signs may be erected not more than 2 weeks before the event and must be removed within 2 days after the publicized event.
- The size of the sign cannot exceed 2 feet by 3 feet.
- **Non-compliance may result in the removal of signs.**

Temporary Signs for Political Purposes

Political signs are considered an expression of free speech and are allowed on public property. The General Guidelines noted above apply to temporary signs for political purposes.

Please note that this Press Release pertains to Town of Westport roads, and not State Roads, like Route 1, Route 33, Route 57 and Route 136.

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Lieutenant Eric Woods

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