



MYRTLE BEACH POLICE DEPARTMENT

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS AND OPERATING PROCEDURES

Subject: *Illegal Camping – Notification and Enforcement* **Number:** *311*

Effective Date: *September 22, 2011*

Revised Date:

Rescinds:

Dated:

Approved By:

PURPOSE

The Myrtle Beach Police Department in compliance with local and state law will insure the fair, courteous, and equal treatment of all people when handling illegal campers.

DEFINITIONS

For definitions, as they pertain to this Procedure, refer to City of Myrtle Beach Ordinance Chapter 14, Article 1, Section 14-8.

PROCEDURE

1. Myrtle Beach Police Officers: Upon confirmation of illegal camping will refer the investigation to the Street Crimes Community Team. The Community Team will be advised of the location, make-up of the camp, and the date of discovery. In the event of a citizen complaint, the complainant contact information will be provided to the team. NOTE: Initial responding officer will take immediate action in the event of:
 - a. When there are grounds for Officers to believe that illegal activities other than camping or trespassing are occurring.
 - b. In the event of an exceptional emergency such as possible site contamination by hazardous materials, natural disaster, or when there is immediate emergency danger to human life or safety.
2. The Street Crimes Community Team will upon notification of a suspected illegal camp:
 - a. Respond and confirm that illegal camping is occurring.

- b. Post a notice 24 hours in advance of removal of property. NOTE: Police Officers will not issue a citation for violation of this section within 2 hours prior to or after the notice has been posted.
 - c. Video and/or Photograph the camp and the posted notice.
 - d. Coordinate with Code Enforcement to insure that the property owner, as identified in the Horry County Public Land Records, is notified by certified mail at the time the 24 hour notice is posted.
 - e. Provide information on the 24 hour notice for assistance by listing Street Reach contact information, to include location, so additional assistance can be sought, if desired, to address the need for social service assistance.
3. After the notice has been posted 24 hours; the Street Crimes Community Team will:
- a. Inventory all possessions at the camp via a property and evidence sheet. NOTE: Items that have no apparent value or utility, or are in unsanitary or putrescent condition, may be immediately discarded. Weapons, drug paraphernalia, and items that are established as either stolen or evidence of a crime shall be retained following evidentiary procedure.
 - b. If information is found during the inventory indicating ownership of the property, the Street Crimes Community Team will make a reasonable effort to contact the owner.
 - c. Insure that the property is transported to the Myrtle Beach Police Department Property and Evidence Section for Safekeeping.
 - d. Document all actions via a Uniform Crime Report.
4. Upon receiving property from an Illegal Camp, the Myrtle Beach Police Department Property and Evidence Section will:
- a. Store the property for 30 days during which it will be reasonably available to any individual claiming ownership.
 - b. After 30 days, the property will be disposed of. NOTE: Items related to identification, prescription medications, and family photos/papers may be retained longer at the discretion of the Chief of Police.
 - c. Unattended stored possessions found by a law enforcement officer on prohibited public places other than campsites are deemed abandoned, and may be removed immediately, inventoried and transported to Property and Evidence and stored for 15 calendar days. NOTE: Items that have no apparent value or utility, or are in an unsanitary or putrescent condition may be immediately discarded. If the inventory develops information pertaining to ownership, reasonable efforts will be made by the Officer to contact the owner. Any person seeing to reestablish ownership of removed personal possessions shall be referred to the Property and Evidence Section and upon identification of their possessions, they

shall be returned. On the 16th day, the unclaimed items may be disposed of by Property and Evidence. Identity, health, related items, and family photos may be retained longer at the discretion of the Chief of Police. Weapons, drug paraphernalia, and items that are established to be either stolen or evidence of a crime shall be retained following evidentiary procedure.