



16200 Eagle Creek Avenue S.E.
Prior Lake, MN 55372

Release Date: Friday, Oct. 1

For sake of safety, keep those signs out of right of way areas



By Frank Boyles
City Manager

On Each year, the city receives complaints from residents about the placement of signs in right-of-way areas along our busy streets and highways. We have all seen them. They include: garage or yard sale, real estate, “Lose Weight Quick,” “Make a Million,” political, special sale and community event signs.

As you can see, depending upon the time of year, the signs may advertise businesses, garage or yards sales, and even candidates, as we will no doubt begin to notice in the coming weeks as the Nov. 8 general election approaches. All candidates in their election packets received written information on sign placement.

City code is clear about signs in the right of way – i.e., that portion on each side of the road reserved for snow storage, utilities, mailboxes, trails and sidewalks. For safety reasons, the code prohibits virtually all signs from the right of way and especially at corners where two streets meet where the signs can obstruct sightlines. There is one exception. The code does allow signs announcing citywide civic events within the right of way so long as they are not a hazard. That is why you will see Autumn Gathering, citywide sporting events and other such signs in the right of way.

As a city, we are charged with the responsibility of enforcing the city code. Obviously there are more critical items facing the city than signs and where they are placed. But at the same time, we recognize that the appearance of our community is important to residents. We take pride in it, and believe it is part of what makes our city such a wonderful place to call home.

That’s why we have periodically conducted sweeps of our right-of-way areas, removing signs in the right of way and leaving untouched those that were not. Never before have we announced our intentions beforehand. But we are doing it this time in the hope that businesses and candidates will take an inventory of their signs and the placement of them outside the right of way. Be sure to obtain the property owner’s permission before placing a sign on their property.

Public works crews will conduct this right-of-way sweep on Thursday, Oct. 13. That’s 12 days from the publication date of this article – ample time to make adjustments to sign placements.

Signs that are collected from the right of way on Thursday, Oct. 13 will be kept at the Prior Lake Maintenance Center, 17073 Adelman St. SE. If they are not picked up within two weeks, we will dispose of them.

To identify the width of the right of way, look for power poles, street lights, electrical transformers, street signs, trails and the like which are farthest from the road surface. Each of those is located in the right of way, so your sign will need to be placed outside of such areas. If you have additional questions about where the right of way ends, please contact the Public Works Department at (952) 440-9675.