

FAQ – Sunfish Lake Peddlers and Solicitors Ordinance

Police Chief Manila Shaver answers the ten most common questions regarding Sunfish Lake's new Peddlers and Solicitors Ordinance.

1. Why does Sunfish Lake need a Peddlers and Solicitors Ordinance?

Because of existing and possible future issues with peddlers and solicitors, the Sunfish Lake City Council has chosen to regulate this activity. In order for any community to regulate an activity, such as peddlers and solicitors, there must be a legal basis for any regulations; cities usually accomplish this by an ordinance.

2. What is the difference between a "peddler" and a "solicitor"?

A "peddler" is a person who goes from place to place in an effort to sell a good or a product that is immediately available to the purchaser at the time of the sale. A "solicitor" is a person that goes from place to place in an effort to obtain orders for goods or products that will become available or delivered to the purchaser at a later date.

3. I do not like to be bothered at my home, why don't we just eliminate all peddlers and solicitors from conducting business in Sunfish Lake?

The Sunfish Lake City Council has chosen to regulate this activity rather than eliminate it as there may be some organizations that the community may choose to contribute to. Several Sunfish Lake residents have children attending schools that are involved in fundraising activities and/or belong to youth organizations whose operational funds come from the sale of products (i.e. Girl Scout cookies and Boy Scout holiday wreaths).

4. When does the Peddlers and Solicitors Ordinance take effect?

The Sunfish Lake City Council has reviewed and discussed the ordinance at their November 7th Council meeting; as such the ordinance will be in effect before the end of the year.

5. Are there any exceptions to the Peddlers and Solicitors ordinance?

There are several exceptions listed in the ordinance to include auctions, court-ordered sales, customer routes for the sale of perishable food and dairy products, and garage sales to name a few. In addition there are a number of Constitutional Rights of individuals, such as the freedom of speech, press, religion, etc., that cannot be restricted.

6. What must peddlers and solicitors do to comply with the Ordinance?

Each individual peddler conducting business in Sunfish Lake must obtain a license from the City. Solicitors must register with the City, either individually or as a group; such groups could include non-profit, charitable, school, or religious organizations. To obtain a peddler's license or a solicitor's Certificate of Registration please contact the West St. Paul Police Department during regular business hours.

7. What should I do when a peddler or solicitor is at my house?

For peddlers, ask to see their city-issued photo identification card which depicts a city-issued license number. For solicitors, ask to see a copy of their Certificate of Registration. Without these documents it is uncertain if the person has complied with the City's ordinance. Inform the person that the City has an ordinance that regulates this activity and use the non-emergency number, 651-450-1111, to report the activity to the police.

8. Are there restrictions for peddlers and solicitors in selling their products?

Yes, the ordinance outlines several specific prohibited activities. Some of these include using a horn or whistle to draw attention, obstructing the free flow of traffic, conducting business before 8am or after 9pm, and making false or misleading statements.

9. How may I keep peddlers and solicitors from coming to my home?

Contained within the ordinance is a section that allows homeowners to exclude uninvited peddlers and solicitors from their homes by placing a specific placard on their property, usually at the driveway entrance.

10. Where may I find more information about the Peddlers and Solicitors Ordinance?

Go to the City of Sunfish Lake Website and click on Ordinances, then click on City Code, select 610.