

Questions & Answers – Residential Areas Vehicle Storage Law: Town of DeWitt

1. Why was the law adopted?

Ans: In passing Local Law No. 7 of 2008, the Town of DeWitt has imposed restrictions on the storage of certain vehicles at residences and also provides a method for neighbors to obtain an exemption from the provisions of the law if a majority of owners petition the Town. In passing this local law the Town Board found as follows:

“The need to regulate the storage of oversized and recreational vehicles in residential areas of the town has long been a concern of the Town. This legislation imposes restrictions on the storage of such vehicles to maintain the quality of the neighborhoods in the Town. And, the Board finds that the majority of the public in the town supports the proposition that residential neighborhoods should not be encumbered by the outdoor visual burden of oversized vehicles being stored at residences. At the same time, this legislation recognizes that some neighborhoods, as a whole, may find it appropriate to their neighborhoods and the lifestyle of their neighbors to allow for rules different from the town as a whole. Accordingly, this legislation provides for overlay districts that would relieve neighborhoods from such restrictions if the overlay is properly enacted. This legislation is in furtherance of meeting the goals of the Comprehensive Plan of the Town in addressing areas of concerns to residential neighborhoods and developing a comprehensive, updated and orderly Zoning Code for the Town.”

2. Why did the law enacted in 2008 become effective in 2010?

Ans: The Town wanted to provide sufficient time for residents to gather petitions for an overlay exemption before the law took effect.

3. How will the law be enforced?

Ans: The law will be enforced fairly and consistently based on reported inquiries or complaints. Each reported inquiry will be investigated, the alleged violator will be contacted, and appropriate action taken. In some cases, this may involve having neighbors discuss their concerns with one another while other cases may require a citation or court action. The first objective of the Town Department of Development & Operations (D&O) is to obtain compliance with the law rather than punishment.

4. Can vehicles or equipment covered by the law be parked on the street?

Ans: Such vehicles and equipment may be parked on the street if these meet the requirements of the Town Vehicle and Traffic Law which is enforced by the Police Department as well as the Residential Areas Vehicle Storage law.

5. What options do I have for storage?

Ans: Several options are available to owners of vehicles covered by the law including storing the equipment inside, storing it elsewhere or, depending on the equipment, you may be able to store it at your home. You may also file a petition with the Town to exempt your neighborhood through the overlay exemption process described in the law.

6. What is meant by "10 days during any calendar year" for storage of recreational vehicles?

Ans: Ten (10) total days of storage each year is allowed for one or more recreational vehicles on a residential parcel.

7. Does the law apply to a house located in a business or industrial district?

Ans: The law applies only to houses in residential zoning districts.

8. What happens next?

Ans: Following this meeting, the Town Planning Board will make a recommendation to the Town Board regarding the formation of an overlay, excluded district. The Town Board will then direct the preparation of an informal ballot to determine if a majority of the owner residents are in favor of the district. If more than 51% of owning residents respond in favor of the district, the Town Board may hold a public hearing after which it may approve, modify or disapprove the district formation.

9. Additional information?

Ans: The Town website at: www.townofdewitt.com/vehiclestorage contains more information. You may also contact the Development & Operations office at 446-3910 x173 or come into the office between the hours of 8:00 AM and 4:30 PM weekdays.