Illegal Camping Update - November 2018

A recent ruling by the United States Ninth Court of Appeals has made it far more challenging for public agencies to prosecute people for sleeping or camping on public property (Martin v. City of Boise). This decision by a federal court affects laws in several states, including California. The case is now being considered for rehearing by the Court.

Without additional consideration and modification to the City’s municipal code, ongoing prosecution of City ordinances against illegal camping and sleeping on public property could lead to an increased risk of liability to the City of Redding. Any such lawsuit would be costly to fight and, whether the lawsuit is won or lost, could result in even further reductions of services, including public safety positions.

What We Are Doing

1. Camp clean-ups WILL continue. Nobody has a right to litter on public property.

2. The City Attorney’s Office is currently amending the camping ordinance and plans to present the amended ordinance to City Council in December.

3. The following California Penal Codes and Redding Municipal Codes were NOT affected by the federal court ruling and will still be used to enforce Quality of Life issues in our community, including:

- Disturbing the peace
- Drug activity
- Open alcohol containers
- Alcohol in parks
- Public Intoxication
- Loitering
- Dogs in parks
- In parks after closing
- Building camp fires
- Littering

What You Can Do

This federal court decision is frustrating for all of us. Please do not be discouraged from reporting your concerns to us. You can call us at 225-4200 to report Quality of Life issues or submit online reports at reddingpolice.org.