



City of Compton

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 2, 2014

Compton, California

City of Compton Removes Weapons from Code Enforcement Officers

Compton City Manager, G. Harold Duffey, announced today the discontinuation of the use of firearms by the City's Code Enforcement Officers, reversing a decades-old administrative practice of arming the officers. These officers are charged with enforcing the Municipal Code relating primarily to the inappropriate use of or maintenance of property, inspecting and regulating of mobile vendors and other businesses, and investigating animal complaints.

One of few California cities with armed Code Enforcement Officers

"After careful review of industry best practices and weighing the risks and liabilities associated with armed Code Enforcement Officers, I am directing that the use and carry of any and all firearms for Code Enforcement employees shall be discontinued effective Tuesday, September 2, 2014. This decision reflects, in part, our concern for safety, as well as for the potential liability for the City of Compton, but also represents the recognition of best practices as modeled by most cities in California. Compton is one of only a handful of cities in California allowing armed Code Enforcement Officers," Duffey said.

A Full Accounting of Equipment

As part of his mandate that all weapons be returned, Duffey also directed a review of the issuance logs and equipment returns to assure recovery and identification of all weapons, ammunition, and accessory apparatus. Duffey will provide complete report to the Mayor and Council once the inventory of weapons is complete.

A Practice of More Than Thirty Years

As is the case in many cities, the Code Enforcement function in Compton has, at various times in its history been housed in the Police Department. It was through this police affiliation that the Code Enforcement Officers were initially provided City-issued

weapons. Duffey detailed the many administrative changes shaping the weapons policy in the City of Compton.

- 1980's Officers issued weapons as part of the Compton Police Department
- 1980's to 2000 Officers managed in several departments (Police, City Manager's Office, Building Department, and City Attorney's Office)
- 2002 Municipal Law Enforcement Department formed, weapons authorized by ordinance
- 2013 Municipal Law Enforcement Department disbanded and authorizing ordinance rescinded
- 2014 Weapons authority revoked by City Manager

No Weapons Issued Illegally

Duffey stressed that at no time in the 30 or more years did the City issue weapons illegally, and that this action brings the city in line with industry best practices in California and the nation, without jeopardizing public or employee safety.

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