

NEWS



NEWS

MAYOR'S OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

John F. Street, Mayor
Joe Grace, Acting Director of Communications
www.phila.gov

City Hall - Room 216
Philadelphia, PA 19107
Phone: 215-686-6210
Fax: 215-686-2170

For Immediate Release: August 9, 2006

Illegal "8-Sheet" Signs To Be Removed Citywide at No Cost to Taxpayers

Philadelphia, PA – Mayor John F. Street and representatives from the outdoor advertising industry today announced a settlement of a protracted legal dispute between the City and the industry that will lead to stronger regulation of billboards and the removal of 900 illegal "8-sheet" signs throughout the City – at no cost to taxpayers.

"Illegal outdoor advertising is a form of blight," said Mayor Street. "This settlement provides the City with stronger oversight of the billboard industry and it will enhance the quality of life in our neighborhoods."

As part of the settlement, the billboard industry has agreed to take down at its own expense every "8-sheet" in the City. The approximately 900 8-sheets have long been a source of controversy in Philadelphia and were often used to advertise alcohol products.

As a result of this settlement agreement, the City will know the location of every legal billboard in Philadelphia. This is significant because the City's records of billboards are incomplete and in many cases not automated. The responsibility for providing the location and permit status of every billboard will shift from the City to the industry. The City will continue to monitor compliance.

The Mayor credited Solicitor Romulo L. Diaz, Jr., Councilman Darrell Clarke and Councilwoman Donna Reed Miller for working together with the billboard industry in a spirit of cooperation to fashion the settlement agreement. "By working together, they achieved a fair resolution that provides the City with greater regulatory control of billboards and improved quality of life in neighborhoods while protecting the rights of a legitimate industry to continue to do business in Philadelphia," Mayor Street said.

- more -

Illegal 8-sheet billboards to be removed/Add Two

“Clear Channel Outdoor, along with our industry colleagues, are pleased to have reached a fair and equitable settlement agreement with the City of Philadelphia,” said George Kauker, President Clear Channel Outdoor, Philadelphia division. “On behalf of Clear Channel Outdoor, I thank Mayor Street and City Solicitor Diaz for their diligence in negotiating a good faith settlement that greatly benefits the City and its residents, and which will result in the prompt removal of more than 900 hundred 8-sheet billboards throughout the city. The settlement agreement also provides regulatory clarity for this important medium for commercial and noncommercial communications in the Greater Philadelphia region.”

As part of the agreement, all 8-sheet signs will be removed by the billboard industry in 180 days – at no cost to the public. Half of the eight sheets will be removed within the first 90 days and the City will receive a progress report on removed signs every 30 days. For the first time the City will have a definitive, certified and final list of legal billboards – all of which will have fully paid licenses.

The City will review inventories with input from community groups, and may dispute the legality of any billboard submitted on a company inventory. If the parties cannot resolve the matter it will be submitted to a Special Master for a final and binding determination.

###