

San Jose, California

When Evette Dilley learned of San Jose's plans to impose new restrictions on RV parking in 2002 as part of a new urban blight law, she contacted the Good Sam Club and was 1,000 address labels for Good Sam members who lived in the city. But while the Good Sam Club provided informational materials, Mrs. Dilley herself was recruited by the Parking Rights Advisory Council to serve as the primary point person for San Jose's parking rights effort. She was encouraged to rally local RV owners to stand up for their rights and make their viewpoints known to the Mayor and Council. Mrs. Dilley succeeded in mobilizing enough opposition to the proposed restrictions to overturn the longstanding prohibitions to parking trailers and boats in the front yard of a person's home and to preserve the rights of persons owning motorhomes to store their vehicle on their property.

However, notifying San Jose's RV owners proved to be a significant challenge. While Mrs. Dilley had address labels for more than 1,000 Good Sam Club members in San Jose, she knew there were many more Good Sam members and RV owners in the area. So Mrs. Dilley and her husband, Jim, spent two weeks driving the streets of San Jose, passing out fliers that alerted RV owners about the city's intentions. They also recruited the help of other RV owners, 10 of whom donated 100 stamps a-piece to pay for all the mailing using the 1,000 Good Sam Club mailing labels. With some help and guidance from Jamie Matthews, San Jose's Code Enforcement Administrator, the effort quickly gained traction. The initial show of force prompted the city council to table discussion of the proposed RV parking restrictions so that they could study the issue in greater detail. Mrs. Dilley estimates the campaign ultimately generated between 1,700 and 1,800 letters and emails from RV owners to city council members, all of which complemented the physical presence of RV owners who attended several council meetings. One of the RV owners also contacted RV storage companies and found that there were only 100 to 117 immediately available RV storage sites in the San Jose area. The bottom line: Most of San Jose's RV owners couldn't find anywhere to store their RVs even if they wanted to because of a scarcity of such facilities. The entire campaign lasted about eight months, Dilley said, with the new ordinance taking effect Oct. 1, 2002.

TO SUMMARIZE THE RV PARKING RIGHTS CODE PASSED

ALL RV's or TRAILERS:

- *Must be in good running order.*
- *No Recreational Vehicle that is in need of wrecked dismantled or in need of repairs shall be parked, stored, or maintained in an area visible from any street for a period of time in excess of seventy-two (72) consecutive hours. (17.72.565)*
- *Must not be used as living quarters, but may be used as guest quarters upon residential premises with the consent of the resident, not to exceed 72 hours (17.72.585)*
- *Must not discharge waste water, except into legal sewer connection (17.72.585)*

- *Parking area must be paved.*
- *No person shall keep, store or park any trailer, Boat or Motor Vehicle on any portion of a front yard or side yard adjacent to a street of a property when it is visible from a street and has not been removed for at least 24 consecutive hours during a seventy-two consecutive hour period. (17.72.600)*
- *No person shall keep a Recreational Vehicle that is defaced with Graffiti and is in an area visible from any street for a period of time in excess of seventy-two (72) consecutive hours.*
- *Must be parked perpendicular to street. No person shall park or store any Recreational Vehicle in the front yard of property designed or used as a residence unless the Recreational Vehicle is parked or stored perpendicular to the street. (17.72.610)*
- *An owner or operator of a Recreational Vehicle parked or stored on property designed or used as a residence shall be an occupant of the property upon which the Recreational Vehicles parked or stored, except as set forth in Section 17.72.580. (17.72.610)*
- *Any parking, storage, or maintenance of a Recreational Vehicle in a side or rear yard shall either be in an accessory building constructed in accordance with the provisions of the Code; or In an area that provides for a five-foot (5') setback from any property line and, is not visible from any street. In addition to the setback requirement, at least one thousand five hundred (1,500) square feet or sixty percent (60%) of the remaining rear yard area, whichever is less, must be maintained as useable outdoor recreational space.*
- *It is permissible to repair, wash, clean, or service a Recreational Vehicle that is owned, leased, or rented by the owner, lessee, or occupant of the property so long as any repairing or servicing performed shall be completed within a seventy-two (72) consecutive hour period. (17.72.585)*
- *No person shall park any trailer upon any premises within the city, other than authorized mobile home park, public garage or repair shop, without the written consent of the owner of such premises (6.46.030)*