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Press Release  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **CODE ENFORCMENT ADDS LEIN MUSCLE**

Everett's Inspectional departments will be adding another layer of protection for the city. Starting later this month the Board of Health, the Building department and the Code Enforcement Department will have the added capacity of a municipal hearing officer to arbitrate fines and violations. This move, introduced by the Mayor as a home rule petition late last year, became a state law this past spring, giving local communities the option to install a hearing officer for violations and to place liens on unpaid violations.

For the last couple of years, the City of Everett has increased the number of tickets given for abandoned property, improper trash disposal, and non-compliance from residents and businesses that are not complying with the City's ordinances. However, violators who fought the tickets would go to Malden Court to be heard in front of a magistrate, requiring city officials to appear in court on the City's behalf. The delays from overload of the local court system would allow offenders a lengthy reprieve from paying the fines, and also take away the ability of the city's officials to always be on the street.

With the Municipal Fines law in place, the city can fine violators, and require them to pay on time or face a lien on the property. Violators can appeal decisions, much like a parking violation, but are required to do so within a twenty-one day window. Mayor Carlo DeMaria Jr. is thrilled at this new tool, citing the opportunity to crack down on absentee landlords, and illegal rooming house owners. "We needed this ability, and I'm glad the State Legislature agrees," states Mayor DeMaria. "It strongly portrays the message that we will not tolerate blight in our communities."

The Mayor has been a long time advocate for aggressive Code Enforcement throughout the city. In recent years Code Enforcement increased their presence, shutting down many of the unsafe and illegal rooming houses, tracking the status of foreclosed and abandoned property in the City, and monitoring the neighborhoods to ensure property owners are maintaining their property as dictated by the ordinances. With the added bonus of having a locally appointed hearing officer, the Department can concentrate on targeting repeat

offenders, and putting a lien on properties that don't comply. The Mayor is thrilled that the City can move forward, get aggressive with irresponsible landlords, and put a stop to a common blight.

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For additional press information please contact Matt Laidlaw, Director of Communications, City of Everett.

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