

ORDINANCE NO. 587

**ORDINANCE GOVERNING THE POSSESSION
AND USE OF LASER POINTERS**

WHEREAS, laser pointers were developed for use in the educational and business community, and outside these contexts, serve no useful purpose in the hands of a minor;

WHEREAS, laser beams emitted by laser pointers if directed on an eye for several seconds can cause retinal damage;

WHEREAS, laser pointers are being used by individuals in such a manner as to harass, annoy and potentially cause bodily harm to those at whom they are directed;

WHEREAS, aiming laser pointers at motorists may affect their ability to drive safely;

WHEREAS, the resemblance of the red dot emitted by laser pointers to that emitted by the laser sights of firearms creates a safety issue for law enforcement officers and others; and

WHEREAS, the Champaign County Sheriff's Office has received complaints regarding the use of laser pointers, and at least one officer has needed medical treatment because the laser beam from a laser pointer was directed at his eye;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ENACTED AND ORDAINED by the Champaign County Board as follows:

Article 1: General Provisions

Section 1: Title and Period of Effectiveness

This ordinance shall be known as the "Ordinance Governing the Possession and Use of Laser Pointers." This ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage, unless repealed.

Section 2: Interpretation

Unless otherwise stated, for the purposes of this ordinance, present tense includes future tense, singular includes the plural, and vice versa, and the following words shall have the meaning herein indicated.

Section 3: Definitions

LASER POINTER is defined as any hand-held device, which emits light, amplified by the stimulated emission of radiation, which is visible to the human eye.

SCHOOL PROPERTY is defined as the buildings or grounds of any public elementary, secondary, or post-secondary school.

Section 4: Validity

If any court of competent jurisdiction shall declare any part of this ordinance to be invalid, such ruling shall not affect any other provision of this ordinance.

Article 2: Possession of Laser Pointers by Minors

No person under the age of eighteen (18) years shall possess a laser pointer while on public property. Nothing contained in this section shall be deemed to prohibit possession of a laser pointer on school property by a student when such possession is pursuant to a legitimate educational purpose.

Article 3: Unlawful Use of Laser Pointer

Section 1. Use of laser pointer to alarm or disturb prohibited.

It shall be unlawful for any person to focus, point or shine a laser pointer on another person or in the immediate vicinity of such person, in such a manner as to alarm or disturb such person.

Section 2. Use of laser pointer to simulate the laser sight of a firearm prohibited.

It shall be unlawful for any person to focus, point or shine a laser pointer on another person or in the immediate vicinity of such person, in such a manner as to simulate the laser sight of a firearm.

Article 4: Penalty

Any violation of this ordinance shall be deemed a petty offense and shall be punishable by a fine not exceeding \$500.

PRESENTED, ADOPTED, APPROVED and RECORDED this 30th day of March 14th Apr, 1999.

W. Stephen Moser
W. Stephen Moser
Chairman, County Board of
Champaign County, Illinois

ATTEST: Mark Sheldon
Mark Sheldon, County Clerk
and ex-officio Clerk of the
Champaign County Board