

AN ORDINANCE amending Chapter 82, Offenses and Miscellaneous Provisions, of the Joplin City Code by enacting Section 82-19, "Sale, Possession, and Use of Laser Pointers"; and containing an emergency clause.

WHEREAS, the Food and Drug Administration has issued a warning to parents and school officials about the possibility of eye damage to children from hand-held laser pointers. These products are generally safe when used as intended by teachers and lecturers to highlight areas on a chart or screen. However, recent price reductions have led to wider marketing, and the City Council is concerned about the promotion and use of these products as children's toys; and,

WHEREAS, laser pointers may be, and have been, used by individuals in the City so as to harass, annoy, and potentially cause bodily harm to those receiving contact with the laser beam; and,

WHEREAS, laser pointers have been used to interfere with police officers while in the process of carrying out their official duties.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOPLIN, MISSOURI, as follows:

Section 1. That Chapter 82, Offenses and Miscellaneous Provisions, of the Joplin City Code, be amended by the enactment of a new section thereto, Section 82-19, "Sale, possession, and use of laser pointers", to read as follows:

"Section 82-19. Sale, possession, and use of laser pointers.

1. (a) It shall be unlawful for any person to focus, point, or shine a laser beam directly or indirectly on another person or animal in such a manner as to harass, annoy, or injure said person or animal;

(b) It shall be unlawful for any person under the age of eighteen (18) years of age to possess a laser pointer except with the permission and under the direction and supervision of a person twenty-one (21) years of age or older;

(c) Nothing herein shall apply to laser devices that are used in professions or occupations, by those trained or schooled in their operation.

2. Penalty. Any person violating any provision of this section, upon conviction, shall be punished in accordance with Section 1-5 of this Code.”

Section 2. That this Ordinance dealing with the immediate preservation of public health and safety is an emergency within the meaning of Section 2.12(1) of the Home Rule Charter of the City of Joplin, Missouri, and, as such, shall be in full force and effect immediately from and after its adoption and approval.

PASSED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOPLIN, MISSOURI, THIS  
7<sup>th</sup> day of September, 1999, by a 8-0-1 vote.

Earl S. Carr  
Mayor

ATTEST: Barbara Hogelin, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM: Chuck Brown, City Attorney

\* \* \* \* \*