

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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SECOND UNIT AMNESTY PROGRAM

SIERRA MADRE, CA. October 10, 2012 -

Sierra Madre is initiating a Second Unit Amnesty Program for a six month period, from October 15, 2012 to April 15, 2013. The City recognizes there are a number of second units in the community built without permits; these can be counted towards meeting the State-mandated regional housing needs allocation (the state requires the City have a certain number of affordable housing unit available to residents). Second Unit Amnesty Program offers incentives to property owners registering existing, non-permitted second units demonstrating safe and habitable conditions. Incentives for the property owner include a full waiver of the building application fee, a 50% break on building permit and planning fees if necessary, and relaxation of zoning standards.

What is a Second Unit?

A second unit is a self-contained residential dwelling unit either attached to the main house (with separate entry from the outside), or in a separate structure on the property. A second unit provides complete independent facilities for living, sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation.

The City's goals in establishing the amnesty program are:

- 1) To encourage healthy and safe conditions in existing housing units.
- 2) To meet the City's share of affordable housing units required by the State.
- 3) To reduce or eliminate the requirement to establish zoning for higher density multi-family housing.

Survey

A Citywide survey was mailed to all households, to help the City gather information on how many second units exist, what are the rent ranges, size of the units, and who lives in them. The survey is completely anonymous and no identifying information is required. If you received a survey, please fill it out and return it in the self-addressed stamped envelope by October 18, 2012.

Why Would I Want A Second Unit Amnesty Permit?

- A legal second unit can increase your property value and make it more attractive to potential buyers.
- Provides an opportunity to register existing second units with the City.
- Allows for the relaxation of development standards during the amnesty period, such as reduced setbacks, and increased height and square feet limits.

City staff can provide additional information regarding eligibility requirements and other zoning standards. The City stresses that property owners who inquire about the amnesty program will not be penalized for their non-permitted second unit. Information applicants provide on the Amnesty Permit application will not be used as the basis for enforcement action unless there is a clear and imminent danger to public safety and/or environmental health.

For additional information please contact the Sierra Madre Development Services Department at (626) 355-7138.

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