

ROSEVILLE *Ethics Tip*

November 2011

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?

A State employee in the Capitol complex habitually parked in the free customer parking lot of a nearby retail establishment (which had “customers only” signs in full view.) After some months, he found a letter from the business on his windshield, notifying him that his car would be towed if it were found there again. In a fit of anger, he dashed off an emotional and profane response to the company manager, using his department’s letterhead and envelope.

In this instance, a public employee thought that his government job entitled him to certain “perks” or status.

- Was this ethical?
- When can you explicitly use your job with the City to wield influence in a public forum?

Certainly you have First Amendment rights to voice your opinion, engage in political activity, or to give testimony on issues of public concern. But in any of these ventures, unless the City Council or other legitimate authority has expressly appointed you as a spokesperson, you must declare that you speak **only** as a private citizen, making it crystal clear that you do **not** represent any elected or appointed government official, any agency or commission.

Remember....

Watch your words as a Roseville employee. The world is listening!

Sent on behalf of the Roseville Ethics Commission

Interested in learning more about City Ethics? Visit CITY ETHICS at <http://www.cityethics.org>
CITY ETHICS is a non-profit organization formed in 2000. Its purpose is to provide a centralized location for information and resources for all forms of local government ethics programs.