

ONE SAFE HOUSTON

Ch. 125 & Lighting Requirements



In announcing the One Safe Houston program on February 2nd, Mayor Turner put a special emphasis on crime hotspots and city efforts to crack down on areas where criminals gather.

“On January 28, 2022 the City filed a common nuisance lawsuit against the operator of MVP Food Store at 4718 Lockwood, the property owner, and the property itself under state law, Chapter 125 of the Texas Civil Practices & Remedies Code (“Chapter 125”).

The City’s lawsuit alleges criminal activity at MVP Food Store including rampant drug dealing, aggravated assaults, and shootings over the past year. MVP Food Store is a known drug haven located close to Kashmere Gardens Elementary School and has significantly impacted the health and safety of the community. The City’s lawsuit seeks injunctive relief and asks the court to compel the Defendants to abate the criminal activity at MVP Food Store.”

Chapter 125 has been an effective tool in helping the City and HPD combat criminal hot spots where property owners and operators fail to take reasonable measures to address the criminal activity on their property.

The Mayor noted that even with pandemic restrictions, in the past year alone, the City successfully closed 8 massage parlors with suspected human trafficking activity, 4 of which were through lawsuits filed and have ongoing lawsuits with Chapter 125 claims against 2 sexually oriented businesses.

On April 20th, Houston City Council passed an ordinance requiring security cameras and lighting at certain businesses. Under the new guidelines, nightclubs, bars, sexually-oriented businesses, convenience stores and game rooms operating in the city will have to install security cameras for enhanced safety, ensuring coverage from the exterior of the business to its property line. The cameras must be working at all times.

In a Press Release date February 23rd, Mayor Turner announced the City of Houston has filed a Texas Civil Practice and Remedies Code Chapter 125 common nuisance lawsuit seeking a temporary and permanent injunction against the owners of Spivey’s Bar and Lounge located at 3000 Blodgett St., the owner of the property, and the property itself.

The lawsuit alleges that Spivey’s and the property owner allow aggravated assaults and shootings to habitually occur on the premises and fail to take reasonable measures to abate such criminal activity.

<https://www.houstontx.gov/mayor/press/2022/nuisance-lawsuit-bar-criminal-history.html>

Earlier in the week, the mayor joined neighbors from the MacGregor Super Neighborhood and Riverside Civic Association as they expressed concern over increasing crime in their community after five people were shot in a fight that spilled into the streets at Spivey’s at the corner of Blodgett and Ennis last week.

In order to prevent places from becoming magnets for criminal activity, the Mayor wanted to follow through on his call for additional measure to protect the public safety.

“It is imperative that we continue our efforts to reduce crime at local business through increased crime prevention through environmental design. To that end, the Administration has asked the City Attorney to draft an ordinance for council approval requiring security cameras on certain classes of businesses where the increase in crime is concentrated.”