

# SIGN PERMITS

City of Brookfield, Wisconsin  
Inspection Services Department  
2000 North Calhoun Road  
Brookfield, WI 53005

Phone: (262) 796-6646 (7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.)  
FAX (262) 796-6702

## HERE IS A HELPFUL LIST OF THE MOST OFTEN ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS REGARDING SIGN PERMITS

**Q. Does every type of sign need a permit?**

- A. No. The following signs do not need permits:
- (1) Residential name plates 3 sq.' and below
  - (2) Signs less than 4 sq.'
  - (3) Residential sale/lease signs 6 sq.' or less.
  - (4) Window signs if less than 10% of the window is covered.

**Q. Are there any types of signs that are never allowed?**

- A. Yes. The following types of signs are not allowed: (1) tenant boards, (2) portable signs, (3) projecting signs more than 12" from wall, (4) off premise signs, (5) roof signs, (6) pennants or streamers, (7) sandwich boards, (8) bare light bulbs, flashing, blinking or rotating lights, (9) moving or action signs or (10) signs within the road right-of-way.

**Q. Can I put up a banner or special event sign?**

- A. Banners or temporary signs of 30 sq.' or less can be displayed for 30 days at the site of the sale or special event with a permit. The fee for this type of permit is \$25.00. You can have four banners/temporary signs per year. Applications are available at the Inspection Services customer counter.

**Q. Can I put up a sign when I have a rummage sale?**

- A. Yes. However, signs are limited to the day of the sale and cannot exceed 2 square feet, and they may only be displayed **at the site of the rummage sale**. They cannot be placed on the City of right-of-way, trees, utility poles etc, and the number of signs is limited to 3 per sale.

**Q. I want to put up a sign at my place of business. How do I get started, and how do I determine what size I can have?**

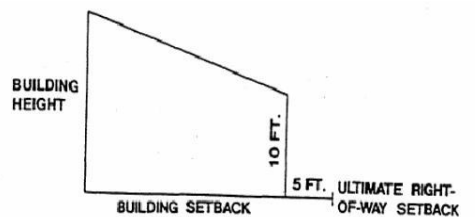
- A. You must prepare a sign permit application, and the sign guidelines are as follows: **MAXIMUM SIZE** = .6 sq.' x the lineal front foot of the lot line or .8 sq.' x the building front foot (whichever is greater to a maximum of 150 sq.' for retail uses and 100 for office or mixed uses). Tenants of centers which have Master Sign Programs are allowed 1.5 sq.' x the lineal front foot of the tenant space.

**Q. Can I have a wall sign and a ground sign at my place of business?**

- A. If there is a free standing and a wall sign, total square footage for combination of both signs must fall within above guidelines.

**Q. How tall can my free-standing sign be?**

- A. At a point five feet from the lot line, the sign may be 10'. Using the following geometric calculation, the sign may be permitted to be up to 16' for retail uses.



**Q. Can I have an electronic message center?**

- A. Yes, if that portion of the monument sign is no greater than 50% of the sign face. Messages must be still (no animation or movement) and may be changed once per hour.

**Q. If I have to have my sign approved by the Plan Review Board, how long after that meeting can I actually have the permit?**

- A. The Board meets once a month (usually the third Thursday). Submittal must be received 2 weeks prior to the meeting. The proposal then must be approved by the Plan Commission and Common Council before the issuance of the permit. This process takes 2-5 weeks.

**Q. Can I put special event signs in various locations around the City, and how do I get the permit?**

- A. Temporary signs up to 30 sq.' are allowed for this type of sign for a maximum period of 30 days. A sign permit is required for this type of sign. However, these signs must be placed on private property, not in City right-of-way; and the applicant must obtain permission from the property owner involved. Applications are available at the Inspection Services Department. A sketch or photograph of the proposed sign is required.

**NOTE: The above questions are for general information only. It is not a summary of the entire code. There are many intricacies of the sign code which may impact your proposal. All sign proposals must be submitted via a "Sign Permit Application" prior to the construction or erection of any signage. Each application is processed with due consideration to all factors involved.**