

Chapter
15

Signs

These sign standards are being ordained pursuant to MCL 252.304 of the Highway Advertising Act of 1972 to preserve the public health, safety and welfare of Lake Township.

SECTION 1501. INTENT AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this ordinance is to regulate signs and outdoor advertising in a manner which will minimize their harmful effects while permitting maximum latitude for creative and effective advertising and identification. Signs may be erected or maintained in the Township of Lake only as permitted by this ordinance and subject to all restrictions contained herein. These sign standards are adopted in order to:

- A. To prevent the placement of signs in a manner that will conceal or obscure other signs or adjacent businesses;
- B. To keep the number of signs and sign messages at a level reasonably necessary to identify a business and its products;
- C. To keep sign sizes within a reasonable scale with respect to the buildings to which they relate;
- D. To prevent off-premise signs from conflicting with business, residential and public land uses;
- E. To keep an area adjacent to streets clear of signs which might obstruct or distract the view of motorists;
- F. To reduce the visual and physical obstructions to motorists entering or leaving streets.

SECTION 1502. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1502.1 PROHIBITED SIGNS.

The following signs are considered to be unsafe, dangerous, and hazardous or an attractive nuisance, therefore these signs shall not be permitted, erected or maintained in any zoning district.

- A. Any sign which by reason of its size, location, content, coloring, or manner of illumination constitutes a traffic hazard or detriment to traffic safety by obstructing the vision of drivers or obstructs or detracts from the visibility of any traffic control device on public street or roads.
- B. Signs which make use of words such as STOP, LOOK, DANGER or other words, phrases, symbols, or characters in such a manner as to interfere with, mislead, or confuse traffic.
- C. Signs and sign structures that are no longer in use as originally intended, have been abandoned, are not structurally sound, pose a hazard to health and safety, or not kept in good repair.
- D. Any sign which obstructs ingress or egress from any required door, window, fire or other required exit way.
- E. Any sign unlawfully installed, erected, or maintained after the effective date of this ordinance.
- F. Signs having flashing, blinking or running copy. However, signs of this type which present items such as time, temperature, date and public interest events may be permitted after review by the Zoning Board of Appeals.
- G. Any sign installed prior to the effective date of this ordinance without a permit, when in fact, the previous ordinance required a permit.
- H. Billboards (off-premise advertising) located within three hundred (300) feet of residential district lines for R-R, R-1, R-2, R-3 Districts or on any non-state highway located in the Township.

1502.2 PERMIT REQUIRED.

No sign or billboard shall be erected or altered until approved by the Zoning Administrator and a permit issued.

1502.3 PLACEMENT OF SIGNS WITHIN RIGHT OF WAY AND PUBLIC EASEMENTS.

Signs and billboards are prohibited from all public right-of-way and dedicated public easements. In addition, signs are also prohibited from encroachment or suspension over a public right-of-way or easement.

1502.4 MAINTENANCE AND REMOVAL OF SIGN.

All signs and components thereof shall be kept in good repair and in safe, neat, clean and attractive condition.

- A. **Removal of Sign.** The Zoning Administrator may order the removal of any sign erected or maintained in violation of this code. Said order shall be made in writing, delivered personally or by certified mail, and shall allow the person receiving it thirty (30) days to remove the sign or to bring it into compliance. Said order shall be served upon the owner of such sign, or to the owner or manager of the building, structure, or premises on which such sign is located. The Zoning Administrator may remove a sign immediately and without notice, at cost to the owner or lessee, if it is the Enforcement Officer's opinion that the condition of the sign presents an immediate threat to the safety of the public.
- B. **Abandoned Signs.** A sign shall be removed by the owner or lessee of the premises upon which the sign is located when the business which it advertises is no longer conducted on the premises. If the owner or lessee fails to remove it within one hundred eighty (180) days of the termination of business, the Zoning Administrator, or a duly authorized representative, may remove the sign at the cost to the property owner. When a successor to a defunct business agrees to maintain the signs as provided in this code, this removal requirement shall not apply.
- C. **Traffic Safety.** No sign shall be placed so as to obstruct the view of approaching vehicular or pedestrian traffic from any direction or present a hazard to the safe flow of traffic. In the event that any sign violates this requirement, the Zoning Administrator may remove such sign to protect traffic. The owner of the property, or business operator where such sign is located, shall first be notified of its impending removal. The property owner or business operator shall be given opportunity to alter or replace such a sign within twenty-four (24) hours to make it comply with this Section.

SECTION 1503. SIGNS ALLOWED IN ANY DISTRICT

The following signs are permitted without a sign permit in all zoning districts where the principal permitted use to which they are related is a permitted use in that district.

- A. "No hunting", "No trespassing", and "On premise directional" signs not exceeding four (4) square feet in area.
- B. Signs located in building interiors.
- C. Identification, address or temporary "for sale" signs affixed to a wall, mailbox, post, lamp post, pillar, or tree which otherwise meets the requirements of this ordinance in terms of location and area.
- D. Traffic control or other municipal signs such as, but not limited to, directional signs on public right-of-ways, railroad crossing sign, waning, danger, temporary emergency signs and legal notices.
- E. Memorial signs or tablets, names of buildings and date of their erection when cut into masonry surface, or when constructed of bronze or other noncombustible material.
- F. Flags bearing the official design of a nation, state or municipality.
- G. Signs used for advertising property for rent, lease, or sale shall not exceed six (6) square feet in area and shall be exempt from permit and fee requirements of this ordinance.
- H. Billboards, when located along State Highway per the National Highway Beautification Act.

SECTION 1504. DISTRICT REQUIREMENTS

Signs are permitted as follows for each district. If a new zoning district is created after the enactment of this ordinance, no new signs shall be permitted therein until this ordinance shall be amended to include said district.

1504.1 AG DISTRICT.

- A. For each residential use, one sign not exceeding two (2) square feet in area.

LAKE TOWNSHIP ZONING ORDINANCE

- B. For non-residential uses, one sign not exceeding thirty-two (32) square feet in area.
- C. The height of the signs may not exceed five (5') feet above the uniform finished grade size and must meet the following setback requirements:
 - 1. **Front:** Three (3') feet but cannot obstruct the view of drivers as determined by the Zoning Administrator.
 - 2. **Side:** Ten (10') feet
 - 3. **Rear:** Ten (10') feet

1504.2 R-1, R-2, R-3, R-R DISTRICTS.

- A. For each residential use, one sign not exceeding two (2) square feet in area.
- B. For non-residential uses, one sign not exceeding thirty-two (32) square feet in area.
- C. The height of the signs may not exceed five (5') feet above the uniform finished grade size and must meet the following setback requirements:
 - 1. **Front:** Three (3') feet but cannot obstruct the view of drivers as determined by the Zoning Administrator
 - 2. **Side:** Ten (10') feet
 - 3. **Rear:** Ten (10') feet

1504.3 B-1 AND R-B DISTRICTS.

- A. One (1) free standing advertising sign, billboard or advertising pylon of fifty (50') feet square feet in area. Signs attached to a building shall not exceed ten (10%) percent of the wall upon which it is mounted or thirty-two (32) square feet, whichever is less.
- B. The height of the signs may not exceed twenty (20') feet above the uniform finished grade size and must meet the following setback requirements:
 - 1. **Front:** Ten (10') feet but cannot obstruct the view of drivers as determined by the Zoning Administrator.

2. **Side:** Ten (10') feet.
3. **Rear:** Ten (10') feet.

SECTION 1505. SPECIAL CONDITIONS

1505.1 ILLUMINATION.

The light source which illuminates signs shall be directed or shaded so as to not interfere with the vision of persons on adjacent highways or property.

1505.2 FEES.

Fees for the issuance of sign permits shall be paid to Lake Township in advance of the issuance of the permit. Such fees are necessary to cover the costs involved and shall be established by the Lake Township Board.

1505.3 APPEALS AND SPECIAL PROCEDURES.

Shall be the responsibility of the Zoning Board of Appeals. Fees for appeals shall be paid to Lake Township. Such fees shall be established by the Lake Township Board.