

Chapter 19

Signs

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Part 1**Billboards and Signs****§19-101. Signs.**

Signs may be erected and maintained only when in compliance with the provisions of this Part and any and all ordinances and regulations of the Township of Covington relating to the erection, alteration or maintenance of signs.

(Ord. 3-2004, 12/11/2004, §I)

§19-102. General Regulations.

The following regulations shall apply to signs in all areas of the Township.

A. *Interpretation of Sign Area.*

(1) The area of a sign is hereby deemed to include all lettering, wording, and accompanying designs and symbols, together with the background upon which they are displayed but excluding any framework, posts, or bracing which is incidental to the display itself.

(2) Where a sign consists of individual letters or symbols attached to or painted upon a structure surface ("structure surface" meaning "building"), the area of the sign shall be the area of the smallest rectangle which can be drawn to encompass all of the letters and symbols.

(3) Where there are multiple signs upon a single property, the sum area of all sign surfaces on all signs shall not exceed the permitted maximum stated in this Section.

(4) Where there are single sign structures with more than one sign surface, the sum area of all sign surfaces shall not exceed the permitted maximum stated in this Section.

B. No sign shall be placed within a street right-of-way except traffic signs and similar regulatory notices erected by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, the Township of Covington, or another public agency having jurisdiction.

C. Flashing or moving signs are prohibited. Signs which emit smoke, visible vapors or particles, sound, or smoke are also prohibited.

D. No artificial light or reflecting device shall be used as a part of a sign where such light or device interferes with, competes for attention with, or may be mistaken for a traffic signal.

E. Signs shall be constructed of durable materials and kept in good condition and safe from collapse. Any sign which is allowed to fall into disrepair shall be removed by the Township at the expense of the owner of the sign. The Township shall provide 30-day notice to the sign owner of its intent to remove such a sign.

F. No sign that is a part of or is supported by a building shall be erected upon the roof of such building, nor shall such sign extend higher than the building. Freestanding signs shall not be taller than 35 feet.

G. No sign shall project beyond any lot line. No portion of any free-standing sign shall be located within 5 feet of any lot line. No sign attached to a building facade shall extend more than 12 inches from the facade to which it is attached.

H. No sign shall physically obstruct vehicular ingress or egress from a property or human ingress or egress from a structure.

I. No sign shall be permitted which is posted, stapled, or otherwise permanently or temporarily attached to public utility poles or trees within a street right-of-way.

J. A sign permit issued by the Permit Officer shall be required prior to the erection of any sign, whether temporary or permanent. Where the sign is to be erected by the lessor or tenant of a property, such lessor or tenant shall have written permission from the owner of the property in question to erect such sign. Where the terms of the lease specifically empower the lessor or tenant to erect a sign or signs upon the property in question, such terms shall be acceptable in lieu of the written permission otherwise required.

K Any vehicle used to display signs/billboards must be licensed and inspected and be permitted to comply with the general regulations of this Part.

L. The following signs are permitted throughout Covington Township, subject to the conditions and restrictions noted.

(1) Official, functional, directional, and warning signs properly erected by the Federal, State, County, or local government; by any agency of such governments; by any railroad company; by any public utility; or by any similar agency concerned with the protection of the public health, safety, or welfare.

(2) Temporary signs announcing a campaign drive, or event for the benefit of an entity supported by charity, provided that such temporary sign shall be removed within 1 week of the conclusion of such campaign, drive, or event. The area of such signs shall not exceed 32 square feet.

(3) Business signs offering the sale and rental of the premises upon which the sign is erected, provided that the area of any such sign shall not exceed 10 square feet. No more than one such sign is permitted along each street frontage of the property in question.

(4) Temporary signs of contractors, developers, architects, engineers, builders, and artisans upon a property where such persons are conducting work. No such sign shall have a face exceeding 32 square feet in area. No such sign shall have more than two faces. Such signs shall be removed within one week of the completion of the work.

(5) Trespassing signs; signs indicating the private nature of a road, driveway, or premises; and signs controlling fishing or hunting on the premises. No such sign shall be more than 4 square feet in area.

(6) Signs indicating the existence of and direction to attractions of a natural, scenic, or outdoor recreational nature. No such sign shall be more than 20 square feet in area.

M. The following signs are permitted as an accessory to agricultural and residential uses (including home occupations), subject to the conditions and restrictions noted:

(1) Name plates displaying the name and/or address of the occupants. The area of such signs shall not exceed 3 square feet.

(2) Signs announcing home occupations or office activities carried on upon the premises.

(a) Not more than one such sign shall be erected for each permitted use.

(b) Such sign(s) shall be either fixed flat on the wall of a building or a free-standing sign set back not less than 10 feet from the street right-of-way.

(c) The area of such signs shall not exceed 2 square feet.

(3) Signs offering the sale of farm products, nursery products, or livestock produced or raised on the premises, including signs for roadside farm stands. The area of such signs shall not exceed 12 square feet. No more than one such sign shall be permitted along each street frontage of the property.

(4) Signs denoting membership in agricultural associations, co-operative organizations, or indicating specialization in a particular breed of livestock or type of crop. The area of each such sign shall not exceed 6 square feet. No more than one such sign per association shall be permitted along each street frontage of the property.

(5) Signs for multi-unit structures and developments.

(a) Free-standing real estate signs for advertising the sale or rental of the premises upon which the sign is erected. The area of use signs shall not exceed 50 square feet. No more than one such sign shall be permitted along each street frontage of the property. No such sign may stand taller than the building(s) advertised for sale or rent. Such real estate signs may not stand for more than 12 months after completion of construction.

(b) Directional signs, not to exceed 2 square feet in area, shall be permitted to direct persons to the rental or sales office, model units, or facilities within the development.

(c) One temporary sign in residential subdivisions for the sale of lots, provided that the area of the sign shall not exceed 32 square feet and shall be removed when 50% of the lots are sold or within 3 years of final plan approval, whichever comes first. Where such developments are built in phases, signs of this type may remain on display as long as the number of lots available for purchase exceeds the number of lots sold.

(d) Permanent identifying signs displaying the name of the project or development as well as signs indicating the names of building within such developments. Not more than one sign identifying the name of the project or development shall be permitted for each entrance to the subdivision or development. The area of such signs shall not exceed 10 square feet. Signs to identify individual buildings within the project shall not exceed 6 square feet in size.

N. The following signs are permitted as an accessory to institutional uses, defined as an entity created by law or public authority for benefit of the public in general, such as hospitals, charities, schools, colleges, etc., subject to the following

conditions and restrictions:

(1) Signboard, bulletin board, announcement board, or identification sign for the use for the purpose of displaying the name of the institution and its activities or services. The area of such signs shall not exceed 12 square feet. No more than one such sign shall be permitted along each street frontage of the property.

O. The following signs are permitted as an accessory to commercial and industrial uses, subject to the conditions and restrictions noted.

(1) Business or commercial signs on the same lot as the use to which it relates. The area of such signs shall be limited to 2 square feet for every 1 lineal foot of the facade length of the largest building on the premises. Up to an absolute maximum of 160 square feet.

(2) Signs directing customers or visitors to parking areas. The area of each such sign shall not exceed 3 square feet. No more than one such sign shall be permitted per access drive.

(3) Signs directing patrons, members or audience to temporary exhibits, shows, or events. The area of such signs shall not exceed 65 square feet. Such signs shall not be posted more than 2 weeks prior to the event so advertised and shall be removed within 2 weeks of the conclusion of the event so advertised.

(4) Special temporary promotional devices, signs, and displays (including banners and pennants hung on the exterior of buildings) shall not be permitted for more than 30 consecutive days.

P. *Off-Premises Signs and Non-Commercial Signs.*

(1) An off-premises sign is hereby defined as any sign announcing or advertising an activity or service on premises other than upon which the sign is located. A non-commercial sign is hereby defined as a sign which advertises neither a product nor a service and is unrelated to any commercial, industrial, institutional, or residential use. Off-premises signs shall include signs referred to generally as billboards. Such signs are permitted in commercial and industrial areas.

(2) The erection of an off-premises or non-commercial sign shall require a sign permit to be issued by the Permit Officer. The Permit Officer shall not issue such a permit until the applicant therefore provides written permission from the owner of the property upon which the sign is to be placed.

(3) Sign structures shall be designed and located to comply with all setback and building separation requirements. No part of any sign structure may extend more than 35 feet above the ground.

(4) The display area of the sign structure shall not exceed 160 square feet.

(5) Sources of illumination shall be shielded so as to be not visible from any point off the lot on which the sign is placed, shall not create glare, shall not shine directly upon traffic lanes, and shall not interfere with traffic in any other way.

P. *Nonconforming Signs.*

(1) Nonconforming signs, once removed or destroyed, shall be replaced only with conforming signs. If damaged, nonconforming signs may be repaired to their pre-existing condition; however, such repairs may not include additions to the sign which increase the degree of nonconformity.

(Ord. 3-2004, 12/11/2004, §II)

§19-103. Penalty for Violation.

Any person, partnership or corporation who violates any provision of this Part shall, upon conviction, be subject to a judgment of not more than \$500 together with all the court costs, said judgment to accrue to the benefit of the Township of Covington. Each day that the violation exists shall constitute a separate violation. Notwithstanding same, the Township reserves the right to avail itself of any civil remedy available either in law or in equity.

(Ord. 3-2004, 12/11/2004, §II)

§19-104. Grandfather Clause.

Any existing sign which was in compliance prior to this Sign Ordinance, but now is out of compliance, shall be grandfathered and nonconforming. All nonconforming signs shall be registered with the Permit Officer within 60 days of passage of this Part to establish the sign as nonconforming. If the nonconforming sign holder does not register a non-conforming use, the grandfathering of such sign is forever vacated.

(Ord. 3-2004, 12/11/2004, §IV)

