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# Sign Code Guidelines

Brochure #15

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## GENERAL RULES

### Prohibited Signs (MMC 17.80.050)

- Signs that move or have moving parts
- Balloons or any inflatable objects/signs
- Beacons and searchlights
- Billboards
- Signs in disrepair
- Obscene signs
- Portable reader board signs
- Signs placed on the roof or above the eave line
- Streamers and pennants
- Signs that create a traffic hazard or create a threat to public safety

### Signs that Do Not Require a Permit (MMC 17.80.060)

Just because a sign doesn't require a permit doesn't mean they're not regulated. An asterisk indicates there are regulations for that type of sign.

- Address signs
- Artwork, seasonal decorations, street furniture, mosaics and sculptures which do not convey a commercial message or identify a business by name
- Historical signs
- Incidental signs
- Drive-thru menu boards
- Signs inside a building if not legible from more than 3 feet away
- Flags\*
- Unlit wall signs less than 10 square feet in area

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City of Mukilteo  
Planning and Community Development Department  
11930 Cyrus Way  
Mukilteo, WA 98275  
(425) 263-8000

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- Seasonal decorations
- Signs not visible from the street or public walkway
- Special event banners\*
- Window signs\*
- Human signs (on private property only)\*
- Temporary signs\*

## PERMANENT SIGNS

### Wall Signs (MMC 17.80.070A)

- Number allowed
  - A maximum of 3
  - 2 on the main facade (the sign owner determines which facade is the main facade)
  - 1 each on any two of the secondary facades
- Sign area
  - Total signage area of all signs on the main facade may not exceed 10% of the main facade area
  - Total signage area of secondary facade signs may not exceed 5% of the area of the facade on which it is located

Regardless of the above, any business which faces a public street may have a wall sign of at least 20 square feet in area because every business (except those located in a residential zone where wall signs of all types are prohibited) are entitled to have at least one wall sign.



### Freestanding Signs (MMC 17.80.070B)

- Pole or Pylon signs
  - ✦ Only allowed in commercial or industrial zones
  - ✦ Maximum height = 8 feet
  - ✦ Maximum width = 10 feet
  - ✦ Maximum sign area = 60 square feet
  - ✦ Maximum copy area width = 6 feet
  - ✦ Maximum number of sides = 2
  - ✦ Maximum copy area = 24 sq ft per side; 48 sq ft per sign

- ✦ Maximum number = 1 per lot
- Monument signs
  - ✦ Maximum height and width (the taller a side the narrower it must be)
    - 8 feet high if 6 feet 3 inches wide
    - 7 feet high if 7 feet 4 inches wide
    - 6 feet high if 8 feet 3 inches wide
    - 5 feet high if 13 feet wide
    - 4 feet if 15 feet wide
  - ✦ Maximum number of sides = 2
  - ✦ Maximum copy area = 32 square feet per side; 64 square feet per sign
  - ✦ Maximum number = 1 per lot unless certain criteria are met which could allow 2 per lot

### **Projected/Suspended/Blade Signs (MMC 17.80.070A)**

Projected/suspended/blade signs are those perpendicularly attached to a front facade. They are pedestrian-oriented signs.

- Maximum number = 1 per business
- Maximum area = 10 square feet
- Minimum clearance = 8 feet above sidewalk
- Separation distance = 20 feet between signs (this could prevent some businesses from having a projected sign if the adjacent business already has one)

## **TEMPORARY SIGNS**

### **Portable Signs (MMC 17.80.120)**

Portable signs are temporary signs that can be moved by a one person without assistance and is not permanently affixed in the ground or to a building.

#### **Rules applicable to all portable signs**

- Signs may only be on display when the business/event is open to the public. They may not be left up overnight.
- Portable signs shall not:
  - ✦ Be illuminated
  - ✦ Have moving parts
  - ✦ Have balloons, flags or pennants attached to them
  - ✦ Damage landscaping to accommodate the sign other than a hole in sod for a sign post
  - ✦ Be attached to a fence, utility pole, fire hydrant, tree, traffic light or street light.
- Maximum height = 4 feet high
- Maximum area = 8 square feet in area per side
- Maximum number of sides = 2
- No sign permit is required (except for Community Event Special Use Sign permits).
- Signs may only provide visible information about the organization/event and the direction of travel to get to the organization/event. (All signs, at a minimum, must have contact information for the sign owner located somewhere on the sign.)



**Rules applicable to portable signs for businesses/events located in a non-residential zone**

- Maximum number of signs
  - ✦ 1 on private property; and
  - ✦ 1 in the right-of-way
- Location
  - ✦ On private property, no restrictions except can not block sight distance near driveways
  - ✦ In right-of-way may only be located in nonresidential zones and may not block sidewalks or interfere with pedestrian, bicycle or vehicle movements nor may they create a safety hazard by blocking sight lines.

**Rules applicable to portable signs for businesses/events located in a residential zone**

- Maximum number of signs
  - ✦ 1 on private property; and
  - ✦ In the right-of-way:
    - A maximum of 1 sign may be located in a Commercial or Industrial zone; and
    - In Residential zones signs may be located at every turning point (intersection). Only 1 sign per business/event per intersection is allowed but there is not maximum number of signs allowed.
- Location
  - ✦ On private property, no restrictions except cannot block sight distance near driveways
  - ✦ In right-of-way may only be located in nonresidential zones and may not block sidewalks or interfere with pedestrian, bicycle or vehicle movements nor may they create a safety hazard by blocking sight lines.

**Rules applicable to portable signs for non commercial businesses/events**

Examples of non commercial organizations/events include places of worship, public schools, garage/yard sales and notfor- profit events open to the public

- Location
  - ✦ 1 on private property; and
  - ✦ In the right-of-way:
    - A maximum of 1 sign may be located in a

- Commercial or Industrial zone; and
- ✦ In Residential zones signs may be located at every turning point (intersection). Only 1 sign per business/event per intersection is allowed but there is not maximum number of signs allowed.
- Location
  - ✦ On private property, no restrictions except cannot block sight distance near driveways
  - ✦ In right-of-way may only be located in nonresidential zones and may not block sidewalks or interfere with pedestrian, bicycle or vehicle movements nor may they create a safety hazard by blocking sight lines.
- Signs may only be displayed when the organization is open or the event is taking place. They may not be left up over-night.
- No sign permit is required for signs that comply with regulations.
- However, a no-cost Community Event Special Use Sign Permit may be obtained from the City for non-commercial events which can modify:
  - ✦ The maximum number of signs allowed; and
  - ✦ The maximum size of signs; and
  - ✦ Places where signs may be located; and
  - ✦ Hours when signs may be displayed.

### **Special Event Signs (MMC 17.80.120G)**

- Special event signs are those related to grand openings, infrequent promotions and other events that occur on an irregular basis.
- Signs may only be displayed:
  - ✦ For a maximum of 30 consecutive days
  - ✦ A maximum of 2 times per calendar year with a minimum of 60 days between each time
- Sign area shall not be more than 45 square feet. The area of the special event sign does not count as part of the total sign area allowed for the business.
- Signs shall be attached to a building. They cannot be:
  - ✦ Attached to a fence, tree or pole
  - ✦ Free standing
  - ✦ Strung between two anchor points
- Signs shall not:
  - ✦ Extend above the building facade
  - ✦ Be illuminated
  - ✦ Have moving parts
  - ✦ Have balloons, flags or pennants attached to them
- No sign permit is required. However, before erecting a special event sign the sign owner shall submit a letter to the City that:
  - ✦ Describes the sign, including dimensions and text and construction materials; and
  - ✦ Lists the days the sign will be on display.

## OTHER SIGNS

### Vehicle Signs (MMC 17.80.050R)

- Signs on vehicles and trailers and vehicles/trailers that act as signs are prohibited if:
  - ✦ visible from a public right-of-way; and
  - ✦ more than 5 square feet in area (the area being the area of the smallest rectangle that can be drawn around all of the sign's text on one side of a vehicle or trailer)
- Exceptions to the above
  - ✦ If sign is on a government vehicle, franchised bus or taxi; or
  - ✦ Vehicle or trailer is being temporarily loaded or unloaded; or
  - ✦ Vehicle or trailer is operating (being driven) during normal course of business; or
- Parked vehicles or trailers with signs more than 5 square feet are allowed if:
  - ✦ Parked within 100 feet of the building occupied by the business related to the sign; and
  - ✦ Not parked more than 24 hours in the same location; and
  - ✦ Validly licensed and/or registered under the laws of the State of Washington; and
  - ✦ Are operational; and
  - ✦ Business to which the sign relates has an active/valid City of Mukilteo business license.

### Human Signs

- Prohibited in the right-of-way
- Allowed on private property but are the 1 portable sign on private property that is allowed.

### Flags (MMC 17.80.050)

- National/political subdivision flags are not regulated
- Flags >20 sq ft prohibited (except national flags)
- Commercial flags <20 square feet are allowed; no permit required
  - ✦ Content of flag can only identify the organization and not promote a product
  - ✦ Flag must be left loose to fly in the breeze
  - ✦ Flag must be attached to a freestanding vertical pole or to a pole attached to a building.
  - ✦ Maximum number = 1 per lot

### Other Information

- Service station signs have special regulations
- Electronic reader board messages cannot change more rapidly than once every 5 seconds
- Master signage plans are for all multi-tenant buildings or group of buildings. With a master signage plan the standard signage regulations can be modified
- Off-premise directional (OPD) signs (for businesses with low street visibility) require a special use sign permit. Certain criteria must be met.

- ✦ They may only be located on private property.
- ✦ Minimum separation = 300 ft from any other OPD sign
- ✦ Maximum numbers
  - A business may use no more than 2 OPD signs
  - 1 OPD sign per any single lot
  - Each OPD may advertise up to 4 businesses
- ✦ Maximum height = 8 feet
- ✦ Maximum number of sides = 2 per sign
- ✦ Maximum copy area = 24 square feet per side; 48 square feet per sign

**For questions or additional information:**

Call... City of Mukilteo  
Planning Department (425) 263-8000  
City Hall (425) 263-8000

Location...  
11930 Cyrus Way  
Mukilteo, Washington 98275

Hours...  
Monday - Thursday  
7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
Friday  
7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

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