

503 SIGNS

All signs shall conform to all codes and ordinances of the Township of West Traverse and excepting "Exempted Signs" (subsection 503:4), shall require approval and a permit issued by the Zoning Administrator for erection or alteration.

503:1 PERMITTED SIGNS AND DISTRICT REQUIREMENTS FOR SIGNS

Signs and devices in designated zoning districts are subject to the following regulations and requirements:

1. All Districts

Signs established for the township, county, state or federal governments for public information or direction are permitted without special requirements.

2. A-1, R-1, C-I Districts

- a. Signs shall have a maximum total surface area of twelve (12) square feet in an A-1 and R-1 District and thirty-two (32) square feet in a C-I District, and thirty-two (32) square feet for businesses operating under Special land Use approval.
- b. Signs shall be permitted anywhere on the premises except that they shall be at least ten (10) feet from the lot line and no closer than ten (10) feet to the highway right-of-way. The distance from the right-of-way may be decreased by the Zoning Administrator for temporary signs and the Planning Commission for permanent signs in specific instances where a finding is made that topography, geography, or unalterable site vegetation render the signs unreadable.
- c. One on-premise freestanding sign shall be allowed per road frontage, up to a maximum of two freestanding signs per parcel or lot. In addition, one sign attached to the building shall be allowed.
- d. Signs shall not be altered or used for other purposes than originally permitted and shall be removed within fourteen (14) days of termination of the original use.
- e. Signs shall indicate only the name of the use, product and/or occupant of the property upon which the sign is located and may include the address of said property.
- f. Signs with illumination shall be permitted providing the source of light is not visible from any roadway or any adjoining property.
- g. The height of free standing signs shall not exceed fifteen (15) feet above the average finished grade. The height may be increased by the Zoning Administrator for temporary signs and the Planning Commission for permanent signs in specific instances where a finding is made that topography, geography, or unalterable site vegetation render the signs unreadable.

503:2 PROHIBITED SIGNS

The signs and devices listed in this subsection shall not be permitted, erected or maintained in any district.

1. Signs which incorporate, in any manner, flashing lights, moving lights, scrolling motion with more than 6 characters visible, or string lights.
2. Signs affixed to trees, shrubs, rocks or other natural features.
3. Any sign which has any visible moving parts, visible revolving parts, or visible mechanical movements of any description or other apparent visible movement achieved by electrical, electronic or mechanical means, including intermittent electrical pulsations or by action of natural wind currents.
4. Any sign or sign structure which is structurally unsafe, or constitutes a hazard to safety or health by reason of inadequate maintenance, dilapidation or abandonment or is not kept in good repair, or is capable of causing electrical shocks to persons likely to come in contact with it.
5. Any sign which, by reason of its size, location, content, coloring or manner of illumination, constitutes a traffic hazard or a detriment to traffic safety by obstructing the vision of drivers or by detracting from the visibility of any traffic sign or control device on public streets or roads.
6. Any sign which obstructs free ingress or egress through a required door, window, fire escape or other required exit way.
7. Signs which make use of words such as "STOP," "LOOK," "DANGER," or any other words, phrases, symbols or characters, in such a manner as to interfere with, mislead or confuse traffic.
8. Any sign on the highway right-of-way or otherwise unlawfully installed, erected or maintained.
9. Any sign which is not necessary to the business being conducted on the property on which the sign is located, except a sign which is for the purpose of direction only and which contains only the name of the business and its location.
10. Portable signs except as listed in subsection 503:3 of this Ordinance.

503:3 TEMPORARY SIGNS

The signs and devices listed in this subsection shall be permitted on a temporary basis and shall not require a permit.

1. Construction signs which identify the name of the building, the owner, the architect, engineer, contractor and other individuals involved with the construction but not including the advertisement of any product or service, during the period of construction. These signs shall have a maximum surface of twelve (12) square feet, shall be confined to the site of construction and shall be removed within seven (7) days following occupancy for the intended use of the project.

2. Real estate signs advertising the sale, rental or lease of the premises or part of the premises on which the signs are displayed. Such signs shall not exceed a total of twelve (12) square feet and shall be removed within seven (7) days after the sale, lease or rental.
3. Election campaign signs announcing a candidate or issue to be voted upon. Such signs shall not exceed a total area of twelve (12) square feet for each premises, shall be confined to private property and shall be removed within seven (7) days following the election to which they pertain.
4. Community or special event signs advertising a public entertainment or event. Such signs shall not exceed a total area of twelve (12) square feet and shall be removed within seven (7) days following the event.
5. Signs on farms advertising products raised and sold on the farm. Such signs shall not exceed a total area of twelve (12) square feet.

503:4 EXEMPTED SIGNS

The signs and devices listed in this subsection may be used without permit or approval when not in violation of any law or safety standard or any other portion of this Ordinance.

1. Signs erected by an official governmental body or agency and deemed necessary for the protection of the public health, safety, and welfare.
2. Holiday decorations and greetings in season.
3. Signs required by law to be displayed.
4. Exempt signs on nonresidential establishments shall be limited to the following:
 - a) Temporary window signs not occupying more than 25 percent of the window space.
 - b) Wall signs and behind the window signs with lettering or symbols of three (3) inches or less may be permitted in addition to the permitted signs per establishment.
 - c) One (1) gasoline changeable price sign no larger than twelve (12) square feet for each establishment selling gasoline or diesel fuel as part of its principal permitted use.
5. One (1) non-illuminated nameplate, not more than two (2) square feet in area, which shall contain only the name and/or occupation of the resident of the premises.

503:5 APPLICATION

Any application for sign not covered by this section of the Ordinance will be referred to the Zoning Board of Appeals for granting or denying a permit, based on practical difficulties or unnecessary hardship.