



City of Saint Paul

WINDOW SIGN ORDINANCE

New ordinance

The Saint Paul City Council adopted a new ordinance, #11-32, amending the sign code that regulates temporary signs within windows, effective February 8, 2012.

Definition of a temporary sign

A sign, flag, banner, pennant or valance constructed of cloth, canvas, light fabric, cardboard, wallboard or other light materials, with or without frames, which is not permanently secured, and is intended to be displayed for a limited period of time only.

Temporary window signs

New temporary window signs placed within 4 feet of a window and visible to the outside cannot cover more than 30% of the window space between 4 feet and 7 feet above grade and shall not block views into the cashier area. If individual letters or designs are placed directly on the window, allowing visibility into the store between the letters, only 50% of those signs are counted toward the maximum window coverage. These regulations do not apply to permanent signs inside of a window or signs located on the exterior of windows. Permanent and temporary signs located on the exterior of windows must meet all requirements of the sign code.

Existing temporary interior window signs that do not block views into the cashier area and existing exterior signs are allowed to remain.

Signs must be removed

To improve visibility and promote public safety, by August 8, 2012, temporary signs located on the inside of commercial storefront windows must be located so that they do not block views into the cashier area.

Interior signs with dynamic display

New signs with dynamic display located inside and within 3 feet of a window and visible to the outside are subject to the same regulations as those signs with dynamic display located on the exterior of a building (see the summary of regulations for signs with dynamic display on the reverse side).

Permits

A permit is not needed for any type of sign inside of windows that advertise a commodity, service or entertainment conducted, offered, sold or manufactured on the premises. A sign permit is needed for any exterior sign over 6 square feet in area.

For more information

Contact the zoning section of the Department of Safety and Inspections at 651-266-9008.

Summary - Regulations for signs with dynamic display

Sign with dynamic display. Any sign capable of displaying words, symbols, figures or images that can be electronically or mechanically moved or changed by remote, automatic or electronic mean, but not including merely the ability to turn the sign on and off. Signs providing only time and/or temperature information are not considered to be signs with dynamic display for regulatory purposes.

Signs with dynamic display shall be at least 75' from a residential district measured along the road and 50' measured radially.

The area of the sign face shall be no more than 200 square feet and shall occupy no more than 20% of the total allowable signage of the property.

The sign face shall not exceed a maximum illumination of 0.3 foot candles above ambient light level as measured from 50' from the sign's face and must be equipped with an automatic dimmer control that automatically controls the sign's brightness to comply with this requirement.

Stable text and/or stable images may not change their text or image more than once every 12 seconds and the transition from one static display to another must be direct and immediate without any special effects except for fading and dissolving that takes less than one second.

Scrolling text and/or scrolling images may not scroll at a rate faster than 1 word per second.

Text shall be only one color but images may be full color.

If the sign is located within 100 feet of a residential property line, it shall not scroll and shall be turned off between 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. or after business hours, whichever is later.

Moving video images and flashing messages are prohibited. No sound may be emitted.

Exceptions from above dynamic display sign regulations for property located in a T1-T4 and OS, B1, BC and B2 zoning districts:

The sign display must only be one color (in the B2 zone this only applies if the sign is located within 100' of a residential property line), except that interior window signs 6 square feet or less in area with only text providing only open/closed information may have more than one color.

The sign display shall not scroll and shall not change the display faster than every 20 minutes.

The sign shall be turned off between 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. or after business hours, whichever is later.