

## CHAPTER 3

### SIGNS

PURPOSE - The purpose of regulating signs is to prevent the distraction of and obstruction of vision, to ensure safe travel by pedestrians, motorized and non-motorized vehicles, in addition to serving to protect the aesthetics, and to assist in maintaining the rural character of Elk Rapids Township.

Section 3.01 - AUTHORIZED SIGNS (without a Permit required)

The following signs are permitted on private property in any zone and may be erected and maintained, as provided for herein, without a permit being required.

- A. Official Signs - All signs (on or off premise) erected by any governmental unit or political subdivision.

Number Limitation:	None
Size Limitations:	None
Time Limitations:	Permanent

- B. Residential Identification Signs - On-premise signs primarily intended to identify the name and/or address of the occupants of a residence.

Number Limitation:	One (1)
Size Limitations:	Ten (10) square feet
Time Limitations:	Permanent

- C. Realtor or Builder Signs - On-premise signs identifying premises for sale or lease or under construction.

Number Limitation:	One (1)
Size Limitations:	Nine (9) square feet
Time Limitations:	May continue until the premises are sold, leased or completed and occupied by new residents.

- D. Realtor or Builder Lead-In Signs - All signs placed on or off-premises that lead or direct a potential buyer or supplier to a remotely located residence or construction site.

Number Limitation:	One (1) per construction site or residence(s).
Size Limitation:	Two (2) square feet
Time Limitation:	May continue until the premises are sold, leased or completed by the new residents.

E. New Subdivision (Lots for sale) Signs - On premise signs advertising lots for sale in a new plat or other development.

Number Limitation: One (1) per access road from the major public highway.  
Size Limitation: Fifty (50) square feet  
Time Limitation: May remain until ninety (90%) percent of the lots are sold.

F. Subdivision or Resort Area Identification Signs - On premises signs which identify a subdivision or other collection of vacation, residential or resort properties.

Number Limitation: One (1) per access road from the major public highway.  
Size Limitation: Fifty (50) square feet  
Time Limitation: Permanent

Section 3.02 - SEASONAL OR TEMPORARY SIGNS (without a Permit required)

The following signs are permitted in any zone and may be erected and maintained, as provided for herein, without a permit being required provided they are not located in the public right of way and do not obstruct the vision of the motoring public.

A. Garage Sale, Yard Sale or Private Sale Signs - All signs identifying such sales not to exceed two (2) square feet are permitted as a part of the Yard Sale Ordinance provisions.

B. Farm Market Signs - All signs identifying such markets not to exceed sixteen (16) square feet each sign, are permitted seasonally May through November in agricultural zones.

C. Political Signs - All such signs not to exceed sixteen (16) square feet may be displayed during any political campaign, but the same are to be removed as soon after the election as possible.

Section 3.03 - AUTHORIZED SIGNS (with a permit required)

The following signs are permitted in any zone specified and may be erected and maintained, as provided for herein, after having obtained all necessary permit(s).

A. Business Identification Signs – On premise signage that identifies a business or other commercial enterprise. A permanently fixed changeable copy sign may be used in combination as an integral part with a business identification sign.

Number Limitation: Two (2)  
Size Limitation: Fifty (50) square feet total signage  
Time Limitation: Permanent  
Zones Allowed: C & M Zones

Winery Identification Sign – On premise signage that identifies a winery authorized in Section 6.01(O) is permitted. A permanently fixed changeable copy sign may be used in combination as an integral part of the signage provided the following standards are met.

Number Limitation: Two (2)  
Size Limitation: Fifty (50) square feet total signage

Time Limitation: Permanent

- B. Off-Premises commercial Signs - Off-premises signs and billboards may be established in the Commercial and Manufacturing zone district classification provided that they meet the following conditions:
1. Not more than three billboards may be located per linear mile of street or highway regardless of the fact that such billboards or signs may be located on different sides of the subject street or highway. The linear mile measurement shall not be limited to the boundaries of the Township of Elk Rapids where the particular street or highway extends beyond such boundaries. Double-faced billboard structures (i.e., structures having back-to-back billboard faces) and V-type billboard structures having only one face visible to traffic proceeding from any given direction on a street or highway shall be considered as one billboard. Additionally, billboard structures having tandem billboard faces (i.e., two parallel billboard faces facing the same direction and side-by-side to one another) shall be considered as one billboard. Otherwise, billboard structures having more than one billboard face shall be considered as two billboards and shall be prohibited in accordance with the minimum spacing requirement set forth in Subsection "2" below.
  2. No billboard or off-premises sign shall be located within 1,000 feet of another billboard or off-premises sign abutting either side of the same street or highway.
  3. No billboard or off-premises sign shall be located within 200 feet of a residential zone, existing residence, church or school. If the billboard or sign is illuminated, this required distance shall instead be 300 feet.
  4. No billboard or off-premises sign shall be located closer than 75 feet from a property line adjoining a public right-of-way or 10 feet from any interior boundary lines of the premises on which the billboard or sign is located.
  5. The surface display area of any side of a billboard may not exceed 300 square feet. The surface display of any other off-premises sign may not exceed 50 square feet. In the case of billboard structures with tandem faces, the combined surface display area of both faces may not exceed 300 square feet.
  6. The height of a billboard shall not exceed twenty (20) feet above the (1) grade of the ground on which the billboard sits or (2) the grade of the abutting roadway, whichever is higher.
  7. No billboard shall be on top of, cantilevered or otherwise suspended above the roof of any building.
  8. A billboard or off-premises sign may be illuminated, provided such illumination is concentrated on the surface of the sign and is so located as to avoid glare or reflection onto any portion of an adjacent street or highway, the path of on-coming vehicles, or any

adjacent premises. In no event shall any billboard or sign have any flashing or intermittent lights, nor shall the lights be permitted to rotate or oscillate.

9. A billboard must be constructed in such a fashion that it will withstand all wind and vibration forces which can normally be expected to occur in the vicinity. A billboard must be maintained so as to assure proper alignment of structure, continued structural soundness, and continued readability of message.
10. A billboard established within a Commercial or Manufacturing zone as defined in the "Highway Advertising Act of 1972" (1972 PA 106, as amended) bordering interstate highways, freeways or primary highways as defined in this Act shall, in addition to complying with the above conditions, also comply with all applicable provisions of said Act and the regulations promulgated thereunder, as such may from time to time be amended.
11. Billboards shall be prohibited along the following designated corridors of special scenic and/or historic significance:
  - a. US-31 North from the Village of Elk Rapids boundary North to Winters Road.
  - b. Elk Lake Road from the Village of Elk Rapids boundary South to Townline Road.
  - c. Cairn Highway from the Village of Elk Rapids boundary Northeast to Birch Lake Road.
  - d. North Bayshore Drive from the Village of Elk Rapids boundary North to Inwood Harbor.
12. No person, firm or corporation shall erect a billboard or other off-premises sign within Elk Rapids Township without first obtaining a permit therefore from the Elk Rapids Township Zoning Administrator, which permit shall be granted upon a showing of compliance with the provisions of this Ordinance and payment of a fee therefore as established by the Elk Rapids Township Board in their Fee Resolution Schedule. Permits shall be issued for billboards and other off-premises signs for a period of one year, but shall be renewable annually upon inspection of the structure and face by the Elk Rapids Township Zoning Administrator confirming continued compliance with this ordinance and payment of the billboard fee.

#### Section 3.04 - PERMIT PROCEDURE

All required permits for signs are to be obtained from the Zoning Administrator with the completion of a Sign Permit Application that shall contain at least the following information:

- A. The name, address and telephone number of the Applicant(s).
- B. Location of the lot on which sign or advertising structure is to be placed.
- C. A site plan showing the proposed location of the sign on the property drawn to scale.

- D. A scale drawing of the proposed sign to be retained by the Zoning Administrator.
- E. The name, address and telephone number of the party erecting the sign.
- F. Written consent of the property owner.
- G. Detailed information regarding the type, intensity, and hours of lighting.
- H. Issuance of Permit - It shall be the duty of the Zoning Administrator, upon the filing of an application for a sign erection permit to examine the plans and specifications and other data and the premises upon which it is proposed to erect the sign or other advertising structure and if it shall appear that the proposed structure is in compliance with the requirements of this Ordinance, the remaining provisions of the County Building Code and State law, he/she shall then issue the erection permit. If the work authorized under a sign erection permit has not been completed within six (6) months of the date of issuance, the permit shall become null and void.
- I. Permit Fees - Every applicant, before being granted a permit for any sign requiring a permit other than a temporary sign, shall pay to the Township Treasurer a fee as established in the Fee Resolution Schedule.

Section 3.05 - GENERAL REGULATIONS RELATING TO SIGNS & BILLBOARDS

- A. No portable or trailer based signs shall be permitted.
- B. No sign with the exception of Official signs shall be located upon any highway or road right-of-way.
- C. No sign shall impede traffic or obstruct any view of the same from any sidewalk, driveway or roadway.
- D. No sign shall remain if obsolete or otherwise no longer pertinent.
- E. No sign shall remain if not maintained in good repair and kept freshly painted.
- F. Illumination. When illumination of a sign or billboard is proposed, or the sign is illuminated, illumination shall comply with the following requirements:
  - 1. Illumination of the sign shall not adversely affect any neighboring residence.
  - 2. Illumination shall not be flashing, blinking, intermittent, video, or an on-and-off type of lighting.
  - 3. Illumination shall be arranged so that light is directed away from adjacent properties and away from any public right-of-way, and so that no direct sources of light are visible to any motorist or pedestrian located in a public right-of-way or street easement or from any adjacent property.

4. Any external lighting of signs shall be downward facing or otherwise directed to illuminate only the sign face.
  5. Illumination shall be of a continuous white light.
  6. The light from any illuminated source shall be designed so that the light intensity or brightness at the property line shall not exceed one (1) foot candle.
- G. All signs that require a permit shall have the permit number and date issued recorded thereon in letters not less than one (1) inch in height.
- H. All electrical signs shall be erected and maintained according to all applicable codes.
- I. All references to square footage include the frame and borders in addition to the sign face. Double faced signs having only one face visible to traffic proceeding from any given direction on a street or highway shall be considered as one sign.
- J. No sign shall be erected or maintained on the property of another without written permission of that property owner.
- K. No sign shall be higher than fourteen (14) feet above the grade of the ground on which the sign sits or the grade of the abutting roadway, whichever is higher.
- L. Signs featuring flashing, strobe or other varied lighting effects are strictly prohibited.
- M. No signs shall contain moving parts.

Section 3.06 – CONTINUATION OF NONCONFORMITIES

Nonconforming signs may be continued and shall be maintained in good condition, but shall not be:

- A. Expanded or altered so as to increase the degree of nonconformity of the sign.
- B. Re-established after its discontinuance for six (6) months.
- C. Continued in use after cessation or change of the business or activity to which the sign pertains;  
or
- D. Re-established after damage or destruction if the estimated cost of reconstruction exceeds fifty percent (50%) of the estimated replacement cost, as determined by the Zoning Administrator.
- E. Relocated or replaced.

