

Sign Permit Information

The City of Portage regulates the construction, reconstruction, placement, use and dimensions of various signs in order to protect the public health and safety. These regulations balance the need to identify industries or businesses and residential uses with the community goals to reduce street clutter, minimize motorist distractions and to enhance the livability and appearance of the community.

The Zoning Code establishes sign size, height, number and location regulations based on industrial, business and residential zoning districts. Any new, altered, reconstructed or replacement sign requires a permit unless otherwise specified. Several types of signs that are regulated do not require a permit, and examples of these signs are real estate, garage/yard sale, political/election campaign and construction information signs, and holiday decorations. Chapter 42, Land Development Regulations, Article 4, Zoning in the Portage Code of Ordinances explains the regulations (refer to Sections 42-540 through 42-553) with regard to size, height, setback and number of signs. Article 11 of the Code of Ordinances provides construction and maintenance standards for exterior signs. For your convenience, the Code of Ordinances is available online at www.portagemi.gov.

The attached Sign Permit Application must be submitted with required sign, property and building drawing attachments. The application must be reviewed and a permit(s) issued by the city prior to starting work.

Information That Must Be Submitted

To ensure prompt review, please be sure to complete the application information on the accompanying Sign Permit Application form and include the following:

- Scaled drawing showing the new freestanding sign(s) and/or new wall sign(s) with dimensions;
- Scaled plot plan for all freestanding signs (permanent or temporary) with dimensions;
- Scaled drawing showing the height in relation to the elevation of the street curb for freestanding signs, or location on the building wall and relation to building roofline for wall signs; and
- Dimensions of the building wall (wall height x wall length) that the wall sign(s) will be attached.

Note that all of the above drawings are also required for changes to an existing sign.

Sign Permit Fees

The fees for signs have been established by City Council by the type of sign as follows:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| • Permanent freestanding, banner sign, wall sign or changeable copy board sign* | \$110.00 per application |
| • Temporary freestanding sign, wall sign, directional sign or sign panel change** | \$ 55.00 per application |

Notes: * No additional fee is charged for a copy board sign if installed with new or replacement freestanding sign.

** Applies if the sign panel change results in no structural changes to the freestanding or wall sign structure.



Department of Community Development
SIGN PERMIT APPLICATION

Property address where sign will be located: _____

Owner Name: _____ Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Description of Work: _____

Completion date or display date(s): _____ Zoning District: _____

Contractor Name: _____ Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

Applicant or Contractor Signature: _____ Date: _____

Required Sign Information

Permanent Freestanding Sign(s) or Temporary Freestanding Sign(s)

- A scaled plot plan showing locations of existing and proposed sign(s). Please include location, setback from property lines, distance between signs and sign height. NOTE: Setback is measured from the leading edge of the sign. **NOTE: Property lines must be staked for verification when the site inspection is performed by the city.**

Plot Plan complete: Y N

- A scaled drawing/picture showing new sign(s) face, type, dimension of sign and support/anchoring structure (i.e. footing details), and total sign height. NOTE: Sign height is measured from adjacent street grade or top of curb to highest point of sign(s).

Sign Drawing/Picture complete: Y N

- Number of signs: _____ Area (per sign side) _____
- Type of Construction _____ Illumination: internal _____ external _____
- Changeable copy board: Y N Area (per sign side) _____

Permanent Wall Sign(s) or Temporary Wall Sign(s):

- A scaled drawing showing locations of existing and proposed sign(s) including building wall area dimensions, location(s), height(s), and support/anchoring structure. Also, submit a scaled drawing/picture of the wall sign with dimensions.

Location Drawing/Sign Picture complete: Y N

- Number of signs: _____ Area (per sign side) _____
- Type of Construction _____ Illumination: internal _____ external _____

In addition to Chapter 42, Article 4 zoning requirements, signs must also meet all sign material, maintenance, and construction standards set forth in Chapter 42, Article 11.

For signs that include an Electronic Message Display (EMD), please review the attached information and requirements.

Required Permit Fees

<u>Sign Type</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Fee</u>
Permanent Freestanding	_____	\$110.00 per application
Banner (Freestanding)*	_____	\$110.00 per application
Permanent Wall	_____	\$110.00 per application
Permanent Copy Board**	_____	\$110.00 per application
Sign Panel Change Only***	_____	\$55.00 per application
Temporary or Directional	_____	\$55.00 per application

Notes: * Permit required for initial freestanding sign structure and banner. Subsequent changes to banners do not require a permit
 ** No additional fee if installed with new or replacement freestanding sign.
 *** Applies when no structural changes to freestanding or wall sign structure are proposed.

TOTAL CHARGES: _____

Sign Permit, Construction and Inspection Reminders

1. The applicant or owner must call the Department of Community Development at 269-329-4477 or 269-329-4466 to request a final inspection once sign is installed. At this time, the property line and leading edge of the sign should also be staked for setback verification.
2. Electrical permits are required for all new wall signs (including interior signs) with new circuits, and new freestanding signs with new circuits (does not include change of sign panels). For other signs, electrical inspector will determine electrical permit requirements per applicable code provisions.
3. Michigan Law requires that you must contact **MISS DIG at 1-800-482-7171** three working days before you break ground.
4. The sign permit will expire if the work authorized is not commenced within 180 days from the date of issuance of the permit, or if the work authorized is suspended or abandoned for a period of 180 days.
5. Please review the Sign Permit after it is issued for important information. In addition, please refer to the following sections of City Code for applicable sign regulations: Sections 42-540–42-553 and Sections 42-1271–42-1285 for applicable sign regulations.

ELECTRONIC MESSAGE BOARD SIGNS – WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Advances in technology have made Electronic Message Display (EMD) signs, which allow for words, symbols or images to be electronically or mechanically changed, more popular for business purposes. EMD sign regulations are provided in Section 42-542 of the Zoning Code. In an effort to ensure that businesses and others can take advantage of this sign technology, and ensure EMD signs are consistent with the sign regulations that reflect community standards, the following is provided for you.

EMD Signs, generally.

- An EMD sign may use static frames that do not move or have the appearance of movement;
- EMD frames may be changed not less than every four seconds;
- The transition between EMD frames may be changed through dissolve, travelling, scrolling, or fade transitions not exceeding one second in length. Such transitions shall not include text or images that expand/contract, rotate, twist flash, bounce, undulate, pulse, or use other similar movements;
- An EMD sign can be used as a freestanding sign or wall sign, subject to the requirements for freestanding sign or wall sign number and area that are specified for the property;
- An EMD sign must be equipped with an ambient light sensor to automatically adjust intensity to exterior light conditions;
- An EMD sign may be incorporated into a freestanding sign or wall sign. If so, a “copy board” element to the sign would not be permitted;

EMD signs in non-residential zoning districts. For an EMD sign located within 200 feet of a residential zoning district and where the EMD sign is visible from a residential dwelling, the following applies:

- Between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. the EMD is limited to the display of only one message frame. A frame is a complete, static display screen that does not change.

EMD signs in residential zoning districts. For an EMD sign located in a residential zoning district, the following applies:

- One property line must abut a major thoroughfare and the EMD sign must be located along such property line.
- If the EMD is visible from a one-family residential dwelling located within a residential zoning district, the following also applies:
 - Between 9:00 p.m. and 12:00 midnight, the EMD is limited to the display of only one frame. A frame is a complete, static display screen that does not change.
 - Between 12:00 midnight and 7:00 am, the EMD sign must be turned off.

EMD signs that incorporate a conforming “copy board” element and were in existence before the new EMD sign regulations took effect on October 1, 2007 are considered conforming signs.

The attached form letter must be signed by the sign owner/operator acknowledging they have read and understand EMD requirements and shall be provided prior to issuance of an EMD sign permit.

The attached form letter must be signed by the sign contractor verifying an ambient light sensor has been installed and calibrated ambient light condition after the sign installation.

For further assistance, please feel free to contact the Department of Community Development at 269-329-4477. Thank you for your interest in the City of Portage.

**SIGN OWNER/OPERATOR LETTER OF ACKNOWLEDGMENT
OF ELECTRONIC MESSAGE DISPLAY REQUIREMENTS**

1. I am owner/operator of a proposed Electronic Message Display (EMD) sign to be located on the premises at _____, Portage, MI, as shown on the attached drawing.
2. I have been provided a copy of the City of Portage EMD sign regulations and have read and understand the requirements contained therein.
3. I certify that the EMD will be operated and maintained at all times in accordance with all provisions of the City of Portage sign regulations.
4. I further certify that I will notify future owners/operators of these requirements and will provide them copies of the same.

DATED: _____

SIGNATURE

PRINTED NAME

**SIGN CONTRACTOR LETTER OF ACKNOWLEDGMENT
OF ELECTRONIC MESSAGE DISPLAY REQUIREMENTS**

1. I am a sign contractor licensed with the State of Michigan and registered with the City of Portage
2. I have obtained a permit and installed the above referenced EMD sign at _____, Portage, MI.
3. I attest that the EMD is equipped with an ambient light sensor which has been calibrated to ambient light conditions.

DATED: _____

SIGNATURE

PRINTED NAME