



CITY OF NEENAH  
Department of Community Development  
(Inspection Department)  
211 Walnut Street Phone: (920) 886-6130  
website: www.ci.neenah.wi.us

## **SIGNS**

The City of Neenah prohibits some signs, allows some without a permit, and limits others to a time limit.

### **PROHIBITED SIGNS**

The following signs shall be prohibited within the City:

- (1) *Abandoned signs.*
- (2) *Off-premises signs.*
- (3) *Sandwich signs* with a paper by-product covering the copy area.
- (4) *Movable signs.*
- (5) *Swinging signs.*
- (6) *Roof signs.*
- (7) *Flashing or moving signs.* No sign shall be permitted which is animated by means of flashing, scintillating, blinking, or traveling lights. Changeable message signs are not subject to this restriction. Signs with physically moving components visible from the public right-of-way are not permitted except for those, which revolve around a vertical axis at speeds less than seven revolutions per minute.
- (8) *Floodlighted signs.* Reflection illuminated signs whose light source is positioned so that 25 percent or more of its intensity is visible from a public right-of-way by vehicular traffic or whose light source is visible from residential property are prohibited.
- (9) *Unclassified signs.* Signs, which are an imitation of, or resemble in shape, size, copy or color any official traffic sign or signal are prohibited.
- (10) *Advertising vehicles.* No persons shall park any vehicle or trailer on a public right-of-way property or on private properties so as to be seen from a public right-of-way, which has attached thereto or located thereon any sign or advertising device for the primary purpose of providing advertisement of products or directing people to a business activity located on the same or nearby property or any other premises.
- (11) *Right-of-way signs.* No sign, except those specifically permitted by Municipal Ordinance, shall be placed in any public right-of-way.
- (12) *Animated signs.*

### **SIGNS NOT REQUIRING A PERMIT BUT SUBJECT TO A TIME LIMIT**

The following signs do not require permits but are subject a time limit:

- (1) *Construction signs.* Two construction signs per construction site, not exceeding 100 square feet in area each, shall be confined to the site of construction and shall be removed 30 days after completion of construction or prior to occupancy, whichever is sooner;
- (2) *Political campaign signs.* Political campaign signs on behalf of candidates for public office or measures on election ballots provided that said signs are subject to the following regulations:
  - a. Said signs may be erected not earlier than the beginning of an election campaign period, as defined in Wis. Stats. § 12.04;
  - b. Each sign shall not exceed 16 square feet in nonresidential zoning districts and 11 square feet in residential zoning districts; and

c. To ensure traffic and pedestrian safety, political signs shall not be located over the right-of-way and those at a street intersection shall comply with vision clearance triangle regulations.

(3) *Real estate signs.* One real estate sales sign on any lot or parcel, provided such sign is located entirely within the property to which the sign applies and is not directly illuminated. In residential districts, such signs shall not exceed 32 square feet in area and shall be removed within 30 days after the sale, rental or lease has been accomplished. Double frontage lots, excluding corner lots, and waterfront lots shall be allowed a second real estate sign;

(4) *Pennants, searchlights or balloons.* These may be permitted as special promotion items in a commercial or industrial establishment for a total period not to exceed 30 days; and, will be allowed in residential districts in conjunction with an open house or model home demonstration conducted by a realtor for up to five days before the opening of such a demonstration or five days after, and not to exceed a total period of 30 days; and, shall not be attached to any vegetation;

(5) *Yard sale signs.* Signs used to advertise yard, garage, rummage, estate or other similar sales are subject to the following:

a. Signs can be placed within the right-of-way, behind the curb, within four blocks or 1,000 feet of the property; whichever is less, provided permission is obtained from the abutting property owner.

b. The signs shall not exceed a height of three feet or a total area of six square feet and shall display the address at which the sale is being conducted and the dates of the sale.

c. The signs may be installed 24 hours prior to the first day of the sale and must be removed within 24 hours of the end of the sale.

d. The signs shall be self-supportive and shall not be placed on or affixed to any telephone pole, electric pole, street light pole, traffic signal, traffic sign, public tree or any other similar structure or appurtenances within the right-of-way.

(6) *Subdivision signs.* Signs used for the marketing of lots or structures in a subdivision are subject to the following:

a. Signs may not exceed 80 square feet in area;

b. The signs must be located on the property being developed and must comply with all applicable setback requirements;

c. One sign is allowed for each major street adjacent to the subdivision; and

d. All signs must be removed once 80 percent of the lots within the subdivision have been sold.

(7) *Banners.* One banner may be permitted as special promotion items in a commercial or industrial establishment for a period not to exceed 45 days within a 180-day period. If a banner is displayed and removed, the display period shall be considered 45 days regardless of actual display time. Banners must be attached to a principal building and cannot exceed a size of 40 square feet or be displayed above a height of 16 feet above grade. Civic banners on City-owned property would be allowed with approval from the appropriate City official(s).

(8) *Portable signs--Residential properties.* One portable sign of six square feet or less may be displayed on a residential property for a period of 30 days within a 90-day period. These signs cannot display off-premises businesses.

### **SIGNS NOT REQUIRING A PERMIT OR A TIME LIMIT**

The following signs do not have a time limit:

(1) *Directional and instructional signs.* Directional and instructional signs, which provide instruction or direction and are located entirely on a property to which they pertain; do not exceed eight square feet in area; and, do not display a business name or logo on more than 20 percent of the sign face. This includes, but is not limited to, such signs as those identifying restrooms, telephone, parking areas, entrances and exits;

- (2) *Nonilluminated emblems, or insignia.* Nonilluminated emblems, or insignia of any nation or political subdivision, profit or nonprofit organization;
- (3) *Government signs.* Government signs for control of traffic and other regulatory purposes, danger signs, railroad crossing signs, and signs of public utilities indicating danger, and aids to service or safety which are erected by or on the order of a public officer in the performance of his public duty;
- (4) *Home occupation signs.* Signs associated with a home occupation as defined in the zoning code;
- (5) *House numbers and name plates.* House numbers and name plates not exceeding one square foot in area for each residential, commercial or industrial building;
- (6) *Interior signs.* Signs located within the interior of any building or structure, which are not visible from the public right-of-way. This does not, however, exempt such sign from the structural, electrical or material specifications of this chapter;
- (7) *Memorial signs and plaques.* Memorial signs or tablets, names of buildings and date of erection, which are cut into masonry surface or inlaid so as to be part of a building or when constructed of bronze or other noncombustible material not more than four square feet in area;
- (8) *No trespassing or no dumping signs.* No trespassing and no dumping signs not to exceed one and one-half square feet in area per sign;
- (9) *Public notices.* Official notices posted by public officers or employees in the performance of their duties;
- (10) *Public signs.* Signs required as specifically authorized for a public purpose by any law, statute or ordinance;
- (11) *Temporary window signs.* In business, commercial and industrial districts, the inside surface of any ground floor window may be used for attachment of temporary signs. The total area of such signs, however, shall not exceed 50 percent of the total window area and shall not be placed on door windows or other windows needed to be clear for pedestrian safety;
- (12) *On-premises symbols or insignia.* Religious symbols, commemorative plaques of recognized historic agencies, or identification emblems of religious orders or historic agencies;
- (13) *Neighborhood identification signs.* A sign, masonry wall, landscaping, or other similar material and feature may be combined to form a display for neighborhood or subdivision identification provided that the legend of such sign or display shall consist only of the neighborhood or subdivision name; and
- (14) *Portable signs--Commercial and industrial properties.* One portable sign of ten square feet or less may be displayed on a commercial or industrial property. These signs cannot display off-premises businesses.

All other signs require the issuance of a permit. The application for a sign permit shall be accompanied by a plan or design showing the location and nominal dimensions of the proposed sign; the kind of material used in the construction and/or erection; the construction specification if required; the location, size, and type of other signs on the premises; and the area of the building facia if sign is to be attached to it.

<u>PERMIT FEES</u>	
<b>WALL SIGN</b>	<b>\$40.00</b>
<b>POLE/GROUND MOUNT SIGN</b>	<b>\$60.00</b>

All signs that are located within the applicable setback requirements or the vision clearance area shall maintain a minimum vertical distance of ten (10) feet between the bottom of the sign and ground level, or shall not be more than three (3) feet in height, measured from ground level to the top of the sign.

Other design requirements are specifically discussed in Chapter 24 [Neenah Municipal Code](#).

## SIGN REQUIREMENTS BY ZONING DISTRICT

### ZONING DISTRICT

Applicable Requirements	R1/R-2	M1/M2	C-1	C-2	I-1	I-2
Permitted Signs	Wall and One Ground Mount	Wall, directional and one ground mount	Directional, wall projecting, canopy, window and one ground mount	Same as C-1	Refer to either C-1 or I-2 Requirements	Wall, canopy, projecting and one ground mount
Maximum Area	Wall-1ft <sup>2</sup> Ground -10 or 20 ft <sup>2</sup> for special uses	Refer to R-1	Wall 15% of bulding facia Ground-100ft <sup>2</sup>	Same as C-1	Refer to either C-1 or I-2	Wall-10% of building facia Ground -100 ft <sup>2</sup>
Maximum Height	12'	25'	35'	35'	Refer to either C-1 or I-2	35' unless along divided Hwy
Setbacks	20'	20'	10'	None	Refer to either C-1 or I-2	10'
Other Restrictions	None	None	Area may be increased for large multiple tenant and if adjacent to divided highway	Refer to C-1	Refer to C-1	None

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Other design requirements are specifically discussed in Chapter 24 [Neenah Municipal Code](#).

**FOR MORE DETAILED INFORMATION REGARDING SIGN REQUIREMENTS, PLEASE CONTACT THE BUILDING INSPECTOR'S OFFICE AT: (920) 886-6130**

email [inspections@ci.neenah.wi.us](mailto:inspections@ci.neenah.wi.us)

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