

# SIGN CODE REQUIREMENTS

## Temporary Signs

Temporary mobile signs, attention getting devices (pennants, hot air balloons, flags, etc.) and banners can be used by businesses for temporary promotional purposes. A permit may or may not be required for the sign you wish to install. The following information describes the types of temporary signage and the code requirements for each.

### **A. Temporary Mobile Ground Signs.**

- A temporary sign is a free-standing sign not larger than 72 square feet.
- This sign is allowed one time per calendar year for a 30-day period.
- It cannot be located on the terrace, public right-of-way or in required parking stalls.
- The sign may not block traffic vision at driveways or intersections.
- A permit is required. The fee is \$60.

### **B. Attention-Getting Devices.**

- Pennants, hot air balloons, flags and other attention-getting devices are allowed one time per calendar year for a period of seven (7) days.
- Devices may not be located on the city terrace, public right-of way or in required parking stalls.
- A permit is required. The fee is \$60.

### **C. Banners.**

Banners may be displayed on a commercial building without a permit under the following conditions:

- Only one banner may be displayed by each business at any time and shall be no greater than 32 square feet in area.
- No banner may be displayed unless the commercial message contained in the banner relates to a specific, special promotion of limited duration.
- The banner shall be completely attached to the building. Banners are not allowed to be displayed in any other location.
- No banner may be displayed or used as a general or ongoing advertisement of the business or its customary activities.
- No banner may be displayed or used as a replacement for permanent signage.
- Building Division shall have the authority to order the removal of any banner that:
  1. Is displayed or used contrary to any of the above provisions.
  2. Is, or appears to be, out of date.
  3. Is, or appears to be, deteriorated or in a state of disrepair, wear, or neglect.
  4. Is, or appears to be, abandoned.
  5. Has been displayed for more than thirty (30) days.

### **D. Snap-Lock Signs; Prohibited**

A snap-lock sign is a two-sided promotional type of sign which is generally mounted on a pole and may have changeable faces. Several times a year, the City receives requests by business owners wishing to install them on existing light or utility poles. This type of signage is not permitted for temporary use and may never be mounted to any pole which is being used for any other purpose than to support a sign. A permit is required for all permanent types of signage.

## Permanent Signs

The City is divided into Sign Districts A-E, and each district has specific rules which limit the face size and height of a sign. Permits are required for all types of permanent signs and only a City licensed sign installer may apply for these permits.

Please call Building Division for the following:

- A list of licensed sign installers.
- More information to become licensed.
- More information pertaining to what is allowed for permanent signage in your business location.

## Electronic Message Centers (EMC)

- EMC's are allowed on ground signs only.
- EMC's are allowed in all sign districts under specific limitations. Any sign that does not comply with the regulations may be eligible for review by the Janesville Plan Commission. This application fee is \$500.
- The EMC portion of the sign is limited in size to 30 percent of the overall area of a ground sign.
- There can be no flashing or movement of any kind on the display screen. Messages must appear and remain on for at least 4 seconds before another message may appear.
- EMC operation cannot interfere with traffic signal visibility at street intersections.
- The City may require an EMC owner to reduce the brightness of the sign.
- No EMC may be greater than 40 feet above the curb elevation in District A, greater than 25 feet in District B, 20 feet in District D and 10 feet in District E.
- Permits for installation are required. Cost is 75¢ per square foot with a \$60 minimum per sign face.
- Time, temperature and gas pricing electronic signs are exempt from the code and do not require a permit.

## Outdoor Display of Seasonal Merchandise

Seasonal merchandise is defined as “merchandise which is sold only part of the year during one of the four seasons: winter, spring, summer or fall.” Seasonal merchandise shall include firewood, Christmas trees, fruits and vegetables, soda, outdoor plants, topsoil, garden fertilizer, ornamental stone, charcoal, mulch, lawn mowers, rototillers, bicycles, wading pools, lawn furniture and other similar items. Seasonal merchandise shall not include products such as packaged food or other packaged products, furniture, clothing or other similar merchandise.

Outdoor display of seasonal merchandise may be displayed on a commercial property provided such display does not encroach upon a required setback, a required off-street parking area, a required green area or obstruct vehicular vision or pedestrian access.

Storage of materials and equipment, business servicing and processing and display of merchandise not defined as seasonal merchandise shall be stored within completely enclosed buildings. Contact the Building Division at 755-3060 with questions.

### Please Remember To:

**Contact Building Division at 608-755-3060 for more specific information not covered in this brochure regarding these types of signs.**

**Email inquiries and permit applications to:**

**Tayler Woida**  
[woidat@janesvillewi.gov](mailto:woidat@janesvillewi.gov)

Office hours:

**Monday—Friday**  
**7:30AM to 4:30 PM.**

## SIGNS AND OUTDOOR SEASONAL DISPLAYS

### CODE REQUIREMENTS



*What is a temporary sign?*

*What signs require a permit?*

*How often can a temporary sign be used?*

*How long can a temporary sign remain in use?*

*What merchandise can be displayed outside?*



**JANESVILLE**

Building Division  
Department of Public

