



On July 21, 2015, City Council adopted a new and comprehensive sign ordinance. The new regulations, now in effect, establish updated standards and requirements for different types of signs in different zones. Substantial changes have been made for the height and size of signs in commercial and industrial areas by basing allotments on roadway type. Other notable changes include: updated regulations for abandoned signs, the addition of a “change-in-use” section pertaining to the use of existing sign structures, an increase in the allowable sign area for Office districts and an updated fee schedule. The new ordinance is designed to be a modern and simplified document that will make the sign process easier for the public to navigate and for sign customers to use.

How does this affect me?

A new, simplified permit application is now available. When you submit a permit application, you must also complete a short **Sign Compliance Evaluation** form. If you are reusing an **existing sign structure**, the Zoning Inspections staff will review your permit application and determine whether the existing structure may remain or will need to be removed and replaced with a sign that is compliant with the regulations and standards set in the new sign ordinance. This determination will be based on the current and previous use of the property and type of business. If the use of the property has changed, then **all signs on the property** must be brought into compliance pursuant to the new ordinance.

Do I Need a Permit for My Sign?

Yes. Permits are required for all signs, permanent or temporary. A sign permit is required prior to erecting or installing a sign. Per City of Knoxville Zoning Ordinance, Article 8, Sections 3.8 and 15.1.e, as of June 1, 2001, off-premise advertising is prohibited in the City of Knoxville. Billboards and advertising signs legally existing prior to this date may be rebuilt in compliance with TCA 13-7-208.

How Do I Get a Permit?

For each sign, the applicant must submit the following:

- A completed **Sign Permit application and Sign Compliance Evaluation form** - available at our office and online;
- A non-refundable application fee
- 2 copies of each: Site Plan with sign locations, design detail drawing including layout and dimensions
- Incomplete applications may not be accepted.

All Electrical work associated with signs requires a separate electrical permit. All electrical work must be performed by a City of Knoxville licensed electrical contractor.

Is an Inspection Necessary?

Yes. The Zoning Inspector must inspect all signs. All ground signs will require a footing inspection. The footing inspection must occur prior to the pouring of concrete so that any reinforcing steel can be viewed. Final inspections for all signs should be scheduled only after the sign is installed. All electrified signs will require an inspection by the City Electrical Inspector.

Questions may be directed to **Plans Review & Inspections** at 865-215-2999. For more information, please visit www.knoxvilletn.gov/signordinance.