

SECTION XX - SIGNS

Subdivision 1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this section is to protect the natural scenic beauty of roadsides in Yellow Medicine County.

The regulations contained herein do not apply to signs painted, attached by adhesive, or otherwise attached directly to or visible through windows and glass portions of doors.

Subdivision 2.0 General Standards:

1. All signs erected, altered, substantially repaired, relocated, or maintained following the effective date of this Ordinance shall conform to the regulations in this Ordinance.
2. No sign may be erected that, by reason of position, shape, movement, color, or any other characteristic, interferes with the proper functioning of a traffic sign or signal or otherwise constitutes a traffic hazard; nor shall signs be permitted which would otherwise interfere with traffic control.
3. All signs, other than public utility warning signs, are prohibited within the public right-of-way of any major highway, County road, or other County property.
4. Political signs are allowed in any district on private property with the consent of the owner of the property. Such signs must be removed within 10 days following the date of the election or elections to which they apply.
5. Illuminated signs shall be diffused or indirect so as not to direct rays of lighting onto any major highway or County road. No illuminated signs or their support structure shall be located closer than 150 feet from the centerline of a major highway or County roadway surface.
6. Flashing signs shall be prohibited. Signs giving off direct light that may be confused with traffic, aviation, or emergency signaling are also prohibited.
7. Real estate sales signs may be placed in any yard providing such signs are not closer than 10 feet to any property line.
8. Real estate development project sales signs may be erected for the purpose of selling or promoting a single-family or multiple-family residential project. The plat of the development must be recorded with the Yellow Medicine County Recorder prior to the erection of a sign. Signs are subject to the following standards:
 - a. Such signs shall not exceed 32 square feet in area.
 - b. Only one such sign shall be erected.
 - c. Such signs shall be removed when the project is completed, sold, or leased.
 - d. Such sign must be located on the property that is for sale. Off-site development project signs are prohibited.
9. One construction/development identification sign shall be allowed for each development project. The sign shall not exceed 32 square feet in area. The sign shall not exceed eight feet in height.
10. Signs shall not be painted directly on the outside wall of a building. Signs shall not

- be painted on a fence, tree, stone, or other similar objects in any district.
11. Roof signs are prohibited unless a licensed engineer certifies that the roof structure is designed to carry the weight of the sign structure.
 12. All signs and displays using electric power shall have a cutoff switch on the outside of the sign and on the outside of the building or structure to which the sign is attached. No electrically illuminated signs shall be permitted in the Rural Preservation District.
 13. Billboard/advertising signs are allowed only in the Industrial (I) District and shall not be located closer than 1,320 feet to any other sign on the same side of a road. The maximum size of an advertising sign shall not exceed 600 square feet and shall not exceed an overall height of 35 feet. Billboard advertising signs shall require a conditional use permit (CUP).
 14. Multi-faced signs shall not exceed two times the allowed square footage of single-faced signs.
 15. Except for more restrictive parts of this sign section, no sign that exceeds 100 square feet in area shall be erected or maintained:
 - a. Which would prevent any traveler on any road from obtaining a clear view of approaching vehicles on the same road for a distance of 500 feet.
 - b. Which would be closer than 1,350 feet to a national, state, or local park or historic site.
 - c. Which would partly or totally obstruct the view of a lake, river, rocks, wooded area, stream, or other point of natural and scenic beauty.
 16. Any sign erected following the effective date of this Ordinance which does not conform with regulations in this Ordinance shall be taken down and removed by the owner, agent, or person having the beneficial use of the building or land upon which the sign may be found within 30 days after written notice from the zoning administrator.
 17. Portable signs shall not exceed 32 square feet and must advertise the use located on the premises. Portable signs must be securely placed so as to avoid damage or creation of a nuisance. Portable signs may be erected for up to 30 consecutive days. Any portable sign that is in place longer than 30 consecutive days shall be considered a ground sign, must meet the definitions and requirements of a ground sign, and must have a permanent base and framing.
 18. Wall signs shall not project more than 12 inches from the wall.
 19. The total of all canopy or marquee signs, wall signs, and projecting signs attached to a structure shall not exceed 300 square feet in total area.
 20. Projecting signs shall not project over a public sidewalk and shall not be less than 10 feet in height or more than 30 feet in height.
 21. Pedestal signs shall not exceed 75 square feet. The height of such a sign shall not exceed 35 feet, and the sign elements shall be more than 10 feet above the grade.
 22. Ground signs shall not exceed 75 square feet and must be firmly attached to the ground.
 23. Any home occupation as permitted under Section VI of this Ordinance shall be allowed a sign no greater than 32 square feet in area.

Subdivision 3.0 Signs Permitted Per District.

Type of Sign	District Allowed	Maximum Number	Maximum Area
1. Real estate signs	RP, I, UE	Unlimited	None
2. Political signs	RP, I, UE	Unlimited	None
3. Directional and parking signs	RP, I, UE	One per entrance/exit	None
4. Public signs	RP, I, UE	Unlimited	None
5. Identification and nameplate signs	RP, I, UE	Unlimited	None
6. Memorial signs	RP, UE	Unlimited	None
7. Real estate development/ construction signs	RP, UE	One	32 square feet
8. Agricultural product signs	RP	Unlimited	None
9. Crop demonstration signs	RP	Unlimited	None
10. Holiday signs	RP, I, UE	Unlimited	None
11. Institutional signs	RP, I, UE	One	32 square feet
12. Portable signs	RP, I	One	32 square feet
13. Ground and pedestal freestanding signs	RP, I	One	75 square feet
14. Wall and projecting signs, canopy or marquee signs	RP, I	One	A total of 300 square feet
15. Billboard/advertising signs	I	One	600 square feet
16. Home occupation signs	RP, I, UE	One	32 square feet

KEY: RP = Rural Preservation I = Industry UE = Urban Expansion

Subdivision 4.0 Maintenance

1. All signs, together with all of their supports, braces, guys, and anchors, shall be kept in repair and in a proper state of preservation. All signs shall be maintained in a safe, presentable, and good structural condition at all times. Maintenance shall include painting, repainting, cleaning, replacement or repair of defective parts, and other necessary acts. The display surfaces of all signs shall be kept neatly painted or posted at all times.
2. Any sign which becomes structurally unsafe or endangers the safety of a building or premises or endangers the public safety shall be taken down and removed or structurally improved by the owner, agent, or person having the beneficial use of the building, structure, or land upon which the sign is located within 10 days after written notification from the zoning administrator.
3. All sign locations shall be kept free from unreasonable growth, debris, or rubbish. Failure to correct such conditions after being so directed in writing by the zoning administrator shall be cause for removal of the sign or signs on said location or locations.

Subdivision 5.0 Abandoned Signs

1. Removal Required. Abandoned signs should be removed by the owner of the sign. Any such sign not removed shall be subject to removal by the County 30 days after the zoning administrator shall have served a notice of removal on the owner thereof by mail or, if the owner cannot be found, publication in the legal newspaper of the County. The notice of removal shall specify the nature of the violation, the action required by the owner, and the date by which the action must be completed. If the owner of the sign is not the owner of the premises on which the sign is located, the owner of the premises shall also be served. The expense of removal, if not paid by the owner of the sign within 30 days after removal thereof by the County and billing of the owner of the sign, shall be assessed against the real estate on which the sign is located in the manner in which improvements are assessed. This shall not limit any other rights that the County has to enforce collection of the cost against the owner of the sign and the owner of the property.
2. Exception. Permanent signs applicable to a business temporarily suspended because of a change of ownership or management of such business shall not be deemed abandoned unless the property remains vacant for a period of more than six months.

Subdivision 6.0 Variances

Variances from sign standards may be granted if, upon showing that the size and location of the proposed sign, the size of the structure to which the sign will be affixed, if any, and other space consideration of the area, it is determined that the proposed signs will not be hazardous and will not obstruct the view for or otherwise be detrimental to property or persons in the area.

Subdivision 7.0 Inspection

Signs may be inspected periodically by the zoning administrator for compliance with this Section and other ordinances of the County.

Subdivision 8.0 Enforcement

1. Right of Entry. The zoning administrator shall have the right to enter at any reasonable hour upon any premises, for the purpose of enforcement of this Ordinance.
2. Violations. If the zoning administrator shall find that any of the provisions of this Ordinance are being violated, the zoning administrator shall notify in writing the person responsible for such violations, indicate the nature of the violation, and order the action necessary to correct it or shall take such action authorized by this Ordinance to ensure compliance with or to prevent continued violation of its provisions. The person responsible for the violation shall be given 30 days to correct the violation except in the case of a violation involving portable signs where the person responsible for the violation shall be given five days to correct the violation.

3. **Removal Without Notice.** If a sign is found to be an immediate and serious danger to the public because of its unsafe condition, it may be removed without notice, and notice of removal and reasons for such shall be served as soon as possible under the terms of this Section. The costs of removal may be enforced and assessed as provided in this Ordinance.