

Building Department

Addison Township

September, 2017



Staff:

Doug Lowe (Building Official)
Jim Parrot (Electrical Inspector)
Jamie Martel (Building Department)
Kim Dawe (Building Department)

Includes:

*Zoning Compliance Permits &
Ordinance Complaints*

For all Building Department Calls
contact us at (248) 628-5409

**TOWNSHIP OFFICES
WILL BE CLOSED:
MONDAY, OCT. 9 COLUMBUS DAY
FRIDAY, NOV. 10 VETERAN'S DAY
AND
THURSDAY, NOV. 23
THANKSGIVING**

Signs

"Sign, sign, everywhere a sign.
Blockin' out the scenery, breakin' my mind
Do this, don't do that, can't you read the sign?"

As these lyrics from the seventies song by the *Five Man Electrical Band* so aptly point out, sign regulation is a very important issue, today more than ever. Often sign regulation is part of a zoning ordinance. Alternatively it may be a free-standing law on its own, or be contained in design guidelines or covenants. But let's step back and see why you might want a sign ordinance regulated in your community.

First, such a code improves the communities' aesthetics, keeping visual clutter to a minimum and allowing architecture, storefronts, and landscape to grab the attention they deserve. Especially where businesses have suburban-style parking in front of the building, competition for attention leads to larger and more absurd signs over the years.

But we don't mean to imply that we think that limiting the number and size of signs is the only important aesthetic function that regulation can provide. On the positive side, signs can bring an appealing element of originality and artfulness to a place.

In thinking about the places where you've actually appreciated signs, I bet most of them had a coordinated look and feel, or an actual material, size, shape, or style in common.

Second, sign regulation codes are often justified on the basis of safety concerns. For instance, poor placement of signs could obscure visibility for drivers, dramatic flashing electronic signs could distract drivers, or poor construction standards for signs could turn them into flying hazards in a wind storm. An unlimited quantity and size of commercial signs can make it more difficult to notice important traffic signs.

On the positive side, correctly sized and placed wayfinding signs can help people determine where to turn and thereby eliminate potentially hazardous hesitations on the part of drivers.

Sign Permits

The Addison Township Zoning Ordinance requires that a permit is obtained (generally) for the construction and placement of signs. The advantage of the permitting process is that it allows the township a chance to review sign applications prior to installation to ensure they conform to the regulations. The sign permitting process requires the submittal of a sign application as well as our building official to review and approve the application. Utilizing a specific, well-managed permitting process not only provides the township with a recordkeeping system that allows for easier code enforcement of regulations but ensures that everyone encounters a similar process and knows what to expect when erecting signage in the township.

The Addison Township Building Department currently enforces the following adopted codes:

Building Code (2015 MBC) Michigan Building Code
Residential Code (2015 MRC) Michigan Residential Code
Fire Code (2015 IFC) International Fire Code
Plumbing Code (2015 MPC) Michigan Plumbing Code
Electrical Code (2014 NEC) National Electrical Code with State Amendments
Mechanical Code (2015 MMC) Michigan Mechanical Code
Fuel Gas Code (2015 IFGC) International Fuel Gas Code
Energy Code (2015) Michigan Energy Code

All of these codes are available for viewing within our Building Department Office.

Protect Yourself – When contracting work to be done to your home...

- Always, hire a State of Michigan licensed contractor, licensed in the trade in which they are doing work.
- Always, make sure that your contractor shows you the copy of the permit and displays it in a visible location.

FAQ's

What is considered a sign?

The Addison Township ordinance defines a sign as “Signs : Any structure, or part thereof, on which there is lettered, pictured or displayed matter, the chief purpose of which is for advertising or publicity.”

Why is the proposed or existing use of the property where the sign will be located important?

Sign regulations differ based on the current or proposed use of the property. For example, sign regulations for industrial areas or shopping centers can be very different than sign regulations in residential areas.

Where can I get a copy of the Township's sign ordinance?

Appendix A, Article 4, Section 4.42 of the Township's Code of Ordinances can be searched at the following location on the Township's website:

[https://library.municode.com/mi/addison_township_\(oakland_co.\)/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=COORTOADM1](https://library.municode.com/mi/addison_township_(oakland_co.)/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=COORTOADM1)

Where on my property can I put a sign? Signs must be located out of the right of way and clear of site obstructions for safe vehicular turning movements. Additional details can apply depending upon other factors such as zoning district and adjacent street classification. Refer to the sign ordinance and contact our Building Department for specific questions.

Can I attach a sign to a utility pole or street sign?

No. “Sign construction. All signs must be of a freestanding, self-supporting construction. Signs, except those required for proper identification of the structure, are prohibited from being attached or affixed to telephone poles, fence poles, sign poles, gas line poles, mailboxes, and similar type of structures.”

How do I apply for a sign permit?

A sign permit application can be obtained within our Township Building Department office. Upon completion the application can be faxed to (248) 969-3587 or delivered to our office.

What is the Township's sign enforcement policy?

For signs which constitute a hazard (typically those in obstructions of traffic sight distance): “Signs placed upon public right-of-way contrary to the provisions of this ordinance shall be removed forthwith by the building inspector without notice. This ordinance does not apply to signs posted by duly constituted public authorities in the performance of their public duties.”

Building/Trade Permits Required

The building code (2015 MRC) is very specific about what work can be done without first obtaining a building, electrical, plumbing or mechanical permit.

Section R105.2 **Work exempt from permit** specifically defines that work which can be done without a permit for each of the enumerated disciplines. Please feel free to stop in and reference this very important section of the Michigan Residential Code (MRC).

Zoning Ordinance

The Addison Township Zoning Ordinance controls the location, size and height of structures such as buildings, garages and additions to houses. The Zoning Ordinance also controls what you can do in different parts of the Township. For example, you cannot conduct a commercial business in a residential area, except under certain conditions. If you think someone may be violating the Zoning Ordinance or if you have a question about the ordinance please contact the Building Department at 248-628-5409 during regular business hours. The Zoning Ordinance is designed to protect township residents, their homes and businesses from conflicting activities nearby.

ARTICLE 13. – LAKE LOT DISTRICT (AN OVERLAY DISTRICT)

This extremely important article of the zoning ordinance applies specifically to lake lots (we have numerous lakes in the township) and sets forth particular requirements that pertain to lake lots and their treatment/use.

Building Inspections

Inspections are required after obtaining a building, electrical, plumbing or mechanical permit.

Inspections can be obtained by calling the Building Department 24-hour inspection line at 248-628-5409, ext. 6.

ALL INSPECTIONS ARE CONDUCTED MONDAY-THURSDAY. INSPECTIONS BEGIN AT 9:00AM UNTIL COMPLETED. **NO TIMES ARE GIVEN.** **CALL BEFORE 3:00PM FOR NEXT WORKING DAY INSPECTIONS**

IF YOU NEED TO CONTACT AN INSPECTOR REGARDING YOUR INSPECTION, PLEASE CALL 248-628-5409 BEFORE 9:00AM.



Throughout the year, construction projects are in progress in various locations within Addison Township. Although certain inconveniences are to be expected during any type of construction, there may be circumstances where construction debris or other concerns arise outside of the normal anticipated disruptions.

Should any concerns arise please contact the Building Department Staff at 248-628-5409 during normal business hours. Please be prepared to provide the Building Department staff with your name, telephone number, location of concern or problem, and as much detailed information as possible.