



TO: Business Owners in the City of Bellevue

SUBJECT: Prohibited Signs and Penalties

Dear Business Owner:

Attached are excerpts from the City of Bellevue's Sign Ordinance. Bellevue Code Section 22.B.10.150 prohibits A-Board signs, banners, pennants, balloons and directional signs under most circumstances.

Prohibited signs in the City Right-of-Way will be confiscated, and Notices of Violation issued for illegal signs. There is a mandatory fine of \$100 per sign for the first offense. Fines are double for each repeat violation.

New businesses in commercial zones only can obtain a **one-time Grand Opening Permit** valid for thirty days, during which time many types of temporary signs are allowed.

Please visit the City of Bellevue's website at www.bellevuewa.gov for additional information of the Sign Code. If you have any questions about the Sign Code, sign permit requirements, or whether a particular sign may be illegal, please contact Dennis Barry at 425-452-6984.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Thomas Campbell
Code Compliance Supervisor
Department of Development Services
City of Bellevue, Washington

Bellevue City Code Section 22B.10.150 Prohibited signs.

The following signs or displays are prohibited, except as indicated. Prohibited signs are subject to removal by the city at the owner's or user's expense (see BCC 22B.10.170).

A. Window signs containing material unrelated to the merchandise for sale or service performed by the person or business on whose premises or property the sign is located (except real estate "open house," subdivision directional, and commercial "estate sale" signs as governed by BCC 22B.10.120(C)(2), (C)(6) and (G)(2)); provided, however, on-premises signs may call the attention of the public to public holidays or community events, the time and temperature;

B. Signs which purport to be, or are an imitation of, or resemble an official traffic sign or signal, or which bear the words "stop," "caution," "danger," "warning," or similar words;

C. Signs which, by reason of their size, location, movement, content, coloring or manner of illumination may be confused with or construed as a traffic control sign, signal or device or the light of an emergency or radio equipment vehicle; or which obstruct the visibility of any traffic or street sign or signal device;

D. Signs which rotate or have a part or parts which move or revolve except that the movement of the hands of a clock or digital changes indicating time and temperature or national market indices which do not advertise a specific company or commodity, or indicating whether a parking garage is full are permitted;

E. Displays, banners, clusters of flags, posters, pennants, ribbons, streamers, strings of lights, spinners, twirlers or propellers, flashing, rotating or blinking lights, chasing or scintillating lights, flares, balloons, bubble machines and similar devices of a carnival nature, or containing elements creating sound or smell. Exception: Certain of these devices are permitted on a limited basis as seasonal decorations under BCC 22B.10.130(I), for temporary event signage under BCC 22B.10.120(D), and for joint sales signage under BCC 22B.10.120(H);

F. Signs identifying or window signs advertising, activities, products, businesses or services which have been discontinued for more than 60 days on the premises upon which the signs are located;

G. Private signs on utility poles or public property, except as provided in BCC 22B.10.120(F) and 22B.10.125;

H. Searchlights, except as permitted for temporary event signage under BCC 22B.10.120(D), and for joint sales signage under BCC 22B.10.120(H). The beam of the searchlight shall not flash against any building or sweep an arc greater than 45 degrees from vertical;

I. Billboards;

J. Portable signs, except for sandwich board signs as permitted under BCC 22B.10.130(L), political signs meeting the requirements of BCC 22B.10.120(E) and (F), and temporary signs meeting the requirements of BCC 22B.10.120;

K. Signs for which a permit has been granted under conditions with which the permittee does not comply;

L. Signs for which a permit has been granted and subsequently revoked for cause by the director;

M. Directional signs, except where specifically authorized under provisions of this code;

N. Signs erected, altered or relocated without a permit issued by the city or any other governmental agency which requires a permit by law; and

O. LED readerboard signs, except as follows:

1. LED readerboard signs meeting the design review requirements of BCC 22B.10.025 are allowed within the downtown at locations of public assembly pursuant to LUC 20.10.440. The frequency of message changes shall be limited to a maximum of once every four minutes; or

2. LED readerboard signs meeting the requirements of BCC 22B.10.107 are allowed in any land use district when used only as a noncommercial public service sign. The frequency of message changes shall be limited to one message change every eight hours.

LED readerboard signs permitted under the terms of these exceptions must comply with the requirements of all other provisions of the sign code applicable to the land use district within which the sign is located. (Ord. 5490 §§ 25 – 29, 2003; Ord. 5357 § 12, 2002; Ord. 4818 § 15, 1995; Ord. 4626 § 5, 1994; Ord. 3683 § 5, 1986; Ord. 3206 § 2, 1982; Ord. 2301 § 2, 1976; Ord. 2133 §§ 10, 11, 1974; Ord. 2045 § 4, 1974; 1961 code § 17.01.120.)