



## QUICK GUIDE TO THE TOWN OF RIDGWAY SIGN CODE

**HUGE Disclaimer:** This guide does not pertain to traffic or non-conforming signs. It is a brief summary of the Town's Sign Code, and is paraphrased to help with simple sign code interpretation. This guide does not substitute for the complete regulations, which are in Chapter 7, Section 3-12:

[http://town.ridgway.co.us/code/code\\_7\\_3v2.pdf](http://town.ridgway.co.us/code/code_7_3v2.pdf)

### 1) What is a sign?

Any object, device, or message which is used to advertise, identify, display, direct, attract attention, or convey any message about any object, person, institution, organization, business, products, service, event, or location by any means, including words, letters, figures, designs, symbols, fixtures, colors, motion, illumination, or projection. Not sure, just ask.

### 2) How do I determine the sign size?

Calculate the area surrounding all words, symbols, designs and coloring, distinctive from the wall upon which it is painted. Only one side of double-faced signs with the same message on both faces is included. Non-structural trim and decoration are counted. Supports and uprights are not.

### 3) Can I illuminate my sign?

Yes, except for the Downtown Service District. External lights are mounted above the sign, shielded and facing down. Interior lights (neon signs) are allowed during normal business hours. Blinking, flashing, rotating or moving lights are prohibited. No more than 50% of any sign face may be internally illuminated.

Signs lit with a dark-skies compliant external source are recommended over internally lit signs. A "halo"

type sign, which uses solid letters with a light source behind them, illuminating the wall around the letters are acceptable. If internally illuminated signs must be used, illumination of letters and graphics is allowed; however illumination of the background is prohibited.

### 4) What types of signs are not allowed?

Generally if it moves, it's probably not going to fly. Animated or flashing signs, balloons, pennants, wind-powered devices, search lights, and similar devices are not allowed. No part of any sign shall be above the roof or parapet of the highest building on the property and no higher than 35 feet. No part of any freestanding sign shall be higher than 20 feet above finished grade. No sign shall be larger than 32 sf in area, except a freestanding sign with more than one business, then it can have a sign face up to 56 sf.

### 5) Can I place signs on property I don't own, or on property where my business is not located?

The answer to this is pretty much 'No'. You may work with CDOT to get a Tourist-Oriented Directional sign on the state highway (*your major income must be from visitors >50 miles away*). The crew at Town Hall can help.

### 6) How much signage can I have?

*All businesses* – max 16 sf of temporary, non-permitted signage. Multiple signs are allowed. The largest any sign may be is 32 sf. Freestanding signs w/ multiple businesses may be 56 sf. The total sf for any business depends on the lineal street frontage of the property, with a maximum of 150 sf for any parcel/lot.

Max 7 sf for temporary "For Sale/For Rent" sign.

*One building, one business* - 1 sf of sign for every 1 lineal foot of street frontage, up to a max of 150 sf.

*One building, multiple businesses* - 1 sf of sign for every 1 lineal foot of street frontage, max 150 sf. Each business may have a minimum of 32 sf of total signage, up to the total max of 150 sf. The Master Sign Plan is a good idea for single buildings w/ multiple businesses.

*Downtown Services Zone:* Max 12 sf per business, non-illuminated, attached to the building, and no higher than the roof line.

### 7) Do I have to get a sign permit?

Not always, signs allowed w/o a permit are:

Temporary signs with a max 3 sf in Residential Districts, and a max 16 sf everywhere else.

Temporary real estate "For Sale/Rent" signs.

Signs within buildings, no closer than 6" to any window or not legible from distances of  $\geq 5'$ .

### 8) When do I need a permit?

Generally, if it's not temporary you need a permit. Some temporary signs need a permit. Permits are not issued for signage in the Residential Districts (*you must comply with the code regulations*).

Any sign hanging on or over Town-owned property requires a permit.

Any sign that costs \$1000 or more requires a building permit and will need to meet the requirements of the Building Codes.

It will cost you \$25 for each Sign Permit.

### 9) Are there performance criteria for signs?

There are a number of performance criteria and responsibilities for erecting and maintaining signage, regardless of whether or not a permit is issued. Please refer to the Municipal Code for details.

### 10) What is a Master Sign Plan?

A Plan reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission that allows for more signage than is otherwise allowed.

Questions... Please contact the Building Inspector: John Hatfield, (970) 901.1882 or [jhatfield@town.ridgway.co.us](mailto:jhatfield@town.ridgway.co.us).

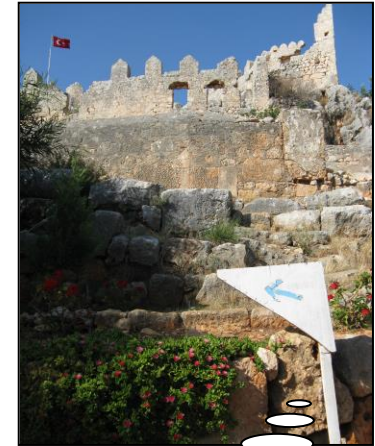


Sign Codes are actually good for business

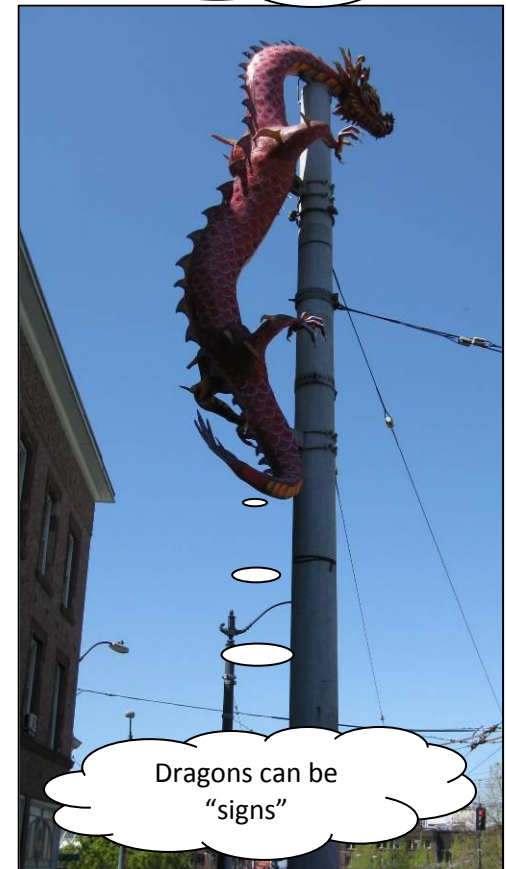
Temporary Sandwich Boards are ok



Signs on the Town Rights of Way (sidewalks) need a little extra review



Your sign must be on your property...



Dragons can be "signs"