

GUIDELINES FOR SIDEWALK SIGNS

Approved by the Board of Public Works 04/23/2004

A. Definition:

"Sidewalk sign" means a temporary sign, which may be an A-frame or sandwich board type sign, placed on the sidewalk or boulevard area within the public right-of-way and, except as provided for estate sale signs, associated with the abutting commercial establishment in compliance with these standards.

B. Permit Required:

1. Sidewalk signs require a Street Privilege Permit from the City of La Crosse, with fee as established by the City.
2. A current year permit sticker showing proof of a valid sign permit shall be legibly attached to the sign at all times.
3. The permit period shall run until the end of the calendar year at which time the permit must be renewed and renewal fee paid.
4. Any applicant for a Street Privilege Permit for a sign shall be required to provide evidence that the applicant maintains liability insurance in an amount not less than \$300,000. Said coverage shall not be canceled or modified without thirty (30) calendar days prior written notice to the City Clerk. Failure to maintain such insurance coverage shall result in revocation of the permit.

C. Permit Submittals:

1. Applicant must submit a completed permit application form along with a liability insurance certificate providing proof of liability coverage of not less than \$300,000.
2. Applicant must submit a dimensioned site drawing showing the sign location, building front and entrances, public sidewalk, boulevard, trees, street signs, street lights, bollards, furniture, and any other pertinent information to allow the Engineering Department to determine location compliance.
3. Applicant must submit a dimensioned drawing that includes sign design, materials, colors, ad copy, letter style, and any other pertinent information to allow the Engineering Department and/or the Board of Public Works to determine design compliance.
4. An application fee of \$35.00 payable to the City Treasurer shall be submitted with the application. The annual renewal fee will be \$35.00.

D. Number, Size, Location, and Placement

1. Maximum of one sidewalk sign per business permitted, including businesses having more than one street frontage. The sign shall be placed in front of and on the same side of the street as the building or establishment it advertises.
2. Buildings with multiple tenants who have access from a common entrance are permitted one sidewalk sign per one hundred (100) feet of building sidewalk front upon which all interior tenants may advertise.
3. Maximum width of sidewalk signs shall be 36 inches, with a maximum of two opposing sign faces per sign. Narrower signs may be required when necessary to maintain 48" clear passage and maintain 24" clearance from curb.
4. Sign height shall be not less than 36 inches nor more than 60 inches above the sidewalk or boulevard surface upon which it is placed.
5. Owners are responsible for the removal of their sidewalk sign during non-business hours and periods of strong winds.
6. Signs shall not be placed nearer than 24" from the street curb face to assure space is available for opening doors of parked vehicles. In areas where parking is not allowed, signs shall not be placed nearer than 12" from the street curb face.
7. No sign may be placed in such a way as to reduce the continuous unobstructed width of a sidewalk or walkway to less than four (4) feet.
8. No sign may obstruct an entrance to a building or any steps.
9. No sign may be placed within 20 feet of a crosswalk, whether such crosswalk is marked or unmarked, or within four feet (4 ft.) of an alley or driveway.
10. No second party advertising shall be permitted on such signs. Signs shall only advertise products or services provided at the location where the sign is placed.
11. No signs may be chained or in any way fastened to boulevard trees, tree guards, signs, bollards, street lights, or any City streetscape furniture or any street furniture owned or placed by the building or business owner.

E. Design:

1. A sidewalk sign may be an "A" frame sign or other type of portable high quality sign as approved by the Board of Public Works or its designee. A sidewalk sign may be single or double-faced, and shall be portable and readily movable from place to place. The sign frame shall be painted or stained wood, anodized aluminum, other appropriately painted metal or rigid plastic. Stenciled or spray painted signs are prohibited.
2. Signs shall be constructed of weather-resistant materials, such as wood, plastic, or metal. Signs constructed of impermanent materials, including but not limited to cardboard, chipboard, particle board, and paper, are prohibited. **Signs that consist primarily of a plastic frame or background onto which removable letters are placed (commander**

board type signs) are not permitted.

3. All sidewalk signs shall be designed to be of sufficient weight or structure to resist wind gusts. Signs shall be promptly removed when strong winds rise that could threaten sign stability
4. Exterior sign colors shall be non-reflective, subtle, neutral or earth tone colors. The use of high intensity, bright colors such as metallic, neon or fluorescent is prohibited. All sidewalk signs shall have a current permit sticker attached, and shall also show the name and address of the sign owner.
5. Sidewalk signs may not contain "dispensing pockets" or be used in any way to dispense materials such as, but not limited to, menus, sales flyers, advertising brochures, etc.
6. Sidewalk signs may accommodate a single replaceable item like a single restaurant menu, sale brochure, etc., or chalk or marker boards for listing specials, etc._
7. No materials (such as paper, flags, pennants, streamers, balloons, windsocks, etc.) may be attached to sidewalk signs. The height of such signs shall not be artificially increased above the allowed maximum by the placement of material underneath the base of the sign
8. Signs shall be designed to be read by pedestrians, and shall not be designed to be read by passing motorists.
9. No sign shall contain foil, mirrors, bare metal, or other reflective materials that could create hazardous conditions to motorists, bicyclists or pedestrians.
10. No sidewalk sign may contain lights of any kind or any devices that emit sound, odor, smoke, or other airborne materials.
11. Sidewalk signs shall not contain images or shapes that could be reasonably confused with traffic control signs or signals.

F. Estate Sale Signs

1. Signs for estate sales shall comply with the design requirements of these guidelines except where the signs are placed on a grass boulevard more than 12 inches from the sidewalk, the minimum height requirement does not apply.
2. Estate signs in the public right-of-way shall be limited to three off-site signs per sale. An off-site sign is a sign placed in the right-of-way adjacent to any property other than the property on which the estate sale is being held.
3. Permission of the abutting property owner shall be obtained before placing any off-site sign.
5. Signs shall not be placed earlier than 4:00 PM on the day preceding the start of the sale, and shall be removed on the last day of the sale.

6. Estate sale signs are not permitted more than two days per year for sales at any single location. (These signs are not to be used for repeated sales at the same location.)
7. Estate sale sign permits issued to firms that conduct estate sales are valid for one calendar year, with fees the same as for other sidewalk signs, except the fee covers up to four signs (one on-site, and three off-site). Each sign must have a current year sticker.
8. Permittees holding an annual permit for estate sale signs shall notify the Engineering Department three working days in advance of each estate sale, giving the location and date of the sale.

G. Compliance and Abatement

1. All new sidewalk signs shall comply immediately with the above standards. All sidewalk signs (conforming and non-conforming) in existence with valid permits prior to May 1, 2004 shall comply with the above standards by August 1, 2004, or within 90 calendar days of the date on which the City mails a copy of these standards to the permit holder, whichever is later. Any existing sign that does not have a valid permit shall be removed within 10 calendar days of the date the City mails a notice to the property owner. Such signs shall not be placed on the sidewalk or boulevard until a valid permit is approved, and the sign is in full compliance with these standards.
2. Failure to comply with any of the above standards at any time may result in the Engineering Department ordering removal of said sign and/or issuing a citation. If the City removes a sign, written notice of said sign removal will be mailed to the business owner at the address listed on the sign permit application via U.S. Postal Service "regular mail". Said notice shall state the reason for removal. The confiscated sign will be stored for ten (10) calendar days after the mailing of such notice. The owner of any sign removed by the City may retrieve said sign upon payment of an impoundment fee, payable to the City Treasurer. Any sign not retrieved by the owner within ten (10) calendar days after the date of the notice of impound may be destroyed.

The impound/citation fee shall be as follows:

-First Offense: \$25.00
-Second Offense: \$100.00
-Third Offense and thereafter: \$250.00 per occurrence

H. Appeal Process.

Within seven (7) working days after the date of the mailing of notice of confiscation, the Owner of any confiscated sign may file an appeal with the City Engineer regarding the confiscation of said sign or the amount of the impoundment fee. The City Engineer's decision can be appealed to the Board of Public Works. All confiscated signs will be held by the City until disposition of the appeal.

I. Legal Intent Of Sidewalk Sign Guidelines

The provision of these sidewalk sign guidelines are not intended to create and shall not create a cause of action or provide the basis for a claim against the City, its officials, or employees for the performance or failure to perform any action under this section. Any duty, obligation, or action created or permitted by these standards is intended to be and shall be construed to run in favor of the general public for its health, safety and welfare and not to any individual.