

article XV

Signs

SECTION 1500 PURPOSE

These sign regulations have been adopted for the following purposes:

- A. Provide general standards for all signs within the Borough and specific standards for signs in each zoning district.
- B. Establish procedures for the review and approval of sign permit applications.
- C. Regulate the location, size, construction, erection, alteration, use, and maintenance of signs.
- D. Protect the safety and general welfare of the community through the proper use and design of structures for signs.
- E. To meet the legitimate demands for signage without the unsightly intrusion of an unlimited type and quantity of signs in Spring City Borough.

SECTION 1501 SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

In all zoning districts, signs may be erected, altered, maintained, used, or removed only when in compliance with the provisions of this Ordinance and any other applicable ordinances and regulations.

SECTION 1502 SIGN TYPES AND CLASSIFICATIONS

As used in this Article, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

- A. Billboard - See "Off-Premises Sign."
- B. Canopy or Awning Sign - Any sign that is a part of or attached to an awning, canopy, or other fabric, plastic, or structural protective cover over a door, entrance, window, or outdoor service area.
- C. Community Special Event Sign - A type of temporary sign which is intended to advertise a non-profit community or civic event.
- D. Construction/Development Sign - A type of temporary sign which is intended to advertise the name of a project or development and/or the contractor, architect, engineer, financier, or similar information.

- E. Double-Faced Sign - A sign which displays a message, information, or advertising on both sides of the sign.
- F. Freestanding Sign - A sign supported by means of poles or standards on the ground. The height of a freestanding sign shall be measured from the proposed finished grade to the highest point of the sign structure.
- G. Off-Premises Sign - A sign which directs attention to a person, business, profession, product, or activity not conducted on the same premises.
- H. Political Sign - Any temporary sign pertaining to political views, an individual seeking election or appointment to a public office or a forthcoming public election or referendum.
- I. Portable Signs - A sign, with or without display or legend, which is self-supporting without being firmly embedded in the ground, or is fixed on a movable stand or mounted on wheels or movable vehicles, or made easily movable in some other manner.
- J. Premises - A separate lot or tax parcel with individual frontage abutting the street line. Premises may include more than one (1) occupant as in an office complex or shopping center.
- K. Projecting Sign - A sign on a wall or other vertical building surface other than a wall sign or a window sign.
- L. Real Estate Sign - A sign pertaining to the sale, lease, or rental of the property upon which it is located.
- M. Sign - Any permanent or temporary structure or part thereof or any device attached, painted or represented, directly or indirectly, on a structure or other outdoor surface that shall display or include any letter, word, insignia, flag, or representation used as or which is in the nature of an advertisement, announcement, visual communication, direction, or which is designed to attract the eye or bring the subject to the attention of the public.
- N. Temporary Sign - A sign intended for short-term use, such as a promotional sign, including signs pertaining to business events, community events, political issues, an individual seeking public office, or a forthcoming public election.
- O. Wall Sign - A sign parallel to a wall or other vertical building surface. Wall signs shall not extend beyond the edge of any wall or other surface to which they are mounted and shall not project more than six (6) inches from its surface.

- P. Window Sign - A temporary or permanent sign which is oriented to the public right-of-way and is located on the inside or outside of a window to direct attention to an activity conducted on the same lot.

SECTION 1503 GENERAL REGULATIONS

A. Sign Area

1. The area of a sign shall be construed to include the two-dimensional space which contains all lettering, wording, and accompanying designs and symbols, together with the background, whether open or enclosed, on which they are displayed, but not including any supporting framework and bracing incidental to the display itself.
2. Where the sign consists of individual letters or symbols attached to or painted on a building, wall, window, canopy, or awning the sign area shall be that of the smallest rectangle or other geometric shape which encompasses all of the letters and symbols.
3. In computing sign area of a double-faced sign, only one side shall be considered, provided both sides are identical in area and wording. If the interior angle between the sign faces is greater than forty-five (45) degrees, than both sides of such sign shall be considered in calculating the sign area.

B. Sign Height

The height of a sign shall be measured from the existing ground elevation at the base of the sign to the highest point of the sign structure. In the case where there is a sidewalk, the height shall be measured from the elevation of the sidewalk.

C. Sign Illumination

Signs may be illuminated by direct (internal) or indirect (projection) lighting. In all cases, lighting shall be shielded so that no light will directly shine or glare onto abutting properties or in the normal line of vision of the public using the streets or sidewalks. All lighting shall be in compliance with the applicable standards of Section 1305 of this Ordinance.

D. Sign Placement

Except for official traffic and street signs, no sign shall be erected so that it:

1. Is located within five (5) feet of or projects over a point within five (5) feet of the curbline in the Downtown Commercial District or within ten (10) feet of the street right-of way in any other District.

2. Is located within the clear-sight triangle required by Section 1301.E, Visibility at Intersections, of this Ordinance.
3. Obscures the view of a motorist of traffic signals, stop signs, or other warning devices as viewed from any distance of five-hundred (500) feet along established thoroughfares.
4. Obscures the view of a motorist of a roadway or intersections ahead as viewed from a distance of five-hundred (500) feet along established thoroughfares.
5. Limits pedestrian view of vehicular traffic to less than five-hundred (500) feet while standing at the curblin at an intersection or other established pedestrian crossing.
6. Is located within a distance of five (5) feet from any side property line within the (DC) Downtown Commercial District and within ten (10) feet in any other District.
7. Is located within a parking or fire lane.
8. Blocks the movement of pedestrians traveling along public thoroughfares.
9. Blocks the entrance, exit, fire escape, or fire lane to a building.

E. Other General Requirements

1. Temporary signs placed outdoors directing attention to commercial promotions or activities on the same lot shall be moved indoors at the end of each business day.
2. In those zoning districts in which freestanding and projecting signs are permitted, only one (1) of the foregoing types of signs may be erected on any one (1) premises.
3. With the exception of off-premises signs, the content of permanent signs shall refer to a use, business, service, or activity conducted on the same lot or premises on which the sign is located.

SECTION 1504 EXEMPT AND PROHIBITED SIGNS

A. Exempt Signs

The following signs are permitted in all districts and do not require a permit provided that the applicable conditions have been met:

1. Official highway route number signs, street name signs, directional, or other official federal, state, county, or borough signs.

2. Signs displaying only the name and address of the occupant of the premises, provided that the area of any such sign shall not exceed one (1) square foot and not more than one (1) such sign shall be erected for each property held in single and separate ownership, unless such property fronts on more than one (1) street, in which case one (1) such sign may be erected on each street frontage.
3. Governmental flags or insignias not exceeding eighty (80) square feet.
4. Legal notices.
5. No-trespassing signs and signs indicating the private nature of a road, driveway or premises, provided that the area of any such sign does not exceed one (1) square foot.
6. Real estate signs shall be permitted provided that the area of such sign shall not exceed six (6) square feet and that not more than one (1) such sign shall be placed on the property unless the property fronts on more than one (1) street, in which case one (1) sign shall be permitted along each street. All such signs shall be removed within five (5) days after a final settlement or rental agreement has been reached.
7. Window signs indicating the store hours or names of credit institutions, provided that the total area of such sign or signs does not exceed two (2) square feet.
8. Vending machine signs bearing the brand name of a product or the price of such product when displayed on a vending machine selling such product.
9. Directional, information or public service signs such as those advertising the availability of restrooms, telephone, or similar public conveniences, and signs advertising meeting times and places of non-profit service or charitable clubs and organizations, provided that such signs do not advertise any commercial establishment, activity, organization, product, good or service, excepting public utilities. Any public service and information sign shall not exceed four (4) square feet.
10. Memorial signs or historical signs or tablets, provided that such sign or tablet does not exceed four (4) square feet.
11. Signs which are a permanent architectural feature of a building or structure, such as a cornerstone, or identifying letters carved into or embossed on a building, provided that the letters are not made of a reflective material nor contrast in color with the building.

12. Temporary signs of mechanics, contractors, and artisans may be erected and maintained during the period such persons are performing work on the premises on which such signs are erected, provided:
 - a. The size of any such sign shall not exceed six (6) square feet per side.
 - b. Not more than one (1) sign for each such mechanic, contractor, or artisan shall be placed on any one (1) property on which such person is performing work.
 - c. The sign shall be removed within five (5) days after the work has been completed.
13. A sign advertising a yard sale or garage sale is permitted provided that the sign is on the premises of the sale, does not exceed four (4) square feet, is erected no more than two (2) days prior to the first day of the sale, and is removed immediately upon completion of the sale. No more than three (3) off-premises signs shall be permitted.
14. Bunting, pennants, and similar materials are permitted to announce the opening of a new business or industry provided they are removed within seven (7) days of the opening day or first day of business. Such temporary displays shall only be permitted in the (GC) General Commercial, (DC) Downtown Commercial, and (I) Industrial Districts.
15. Revolving barbershop pole sign, provided that it does not exceed thirty-six (36) inches in height. Such a sign shall only be permitted in the (GC) General Commercial, (DC) Downtown Commercial, and (I) Industrial Districts.
16. Temporary window signs announcing a drive or event of civic, philanthropic, educational, or religious organization, less than four (4) square feet placed in a store or office window.
17. Community Special Event Signs where such signs are located on the premises of the organization sponsoring the event. The sign shall not exceed twelve (12) square feet in area and shall be removed immediately upon completion of the campaign, drive, or event.
18. Temporary signs advertising political parties or candidates for election may be erected provided that:
 - a. The size of any such sign shall not exceed four (4) square feet per side.
 - b. Such signs are removed within five (5) days following the election.

B. Prohibited Signs

The following signs are unlawful and prohibited:

1. No signs shall be of a flashing, rotating, or revolving type, with the exception of barbershop poles (see 1504.A.15).
2. Any sign suspended between poles and lighted by a series of lights is prohibited.
3. Any sign erected on a tree or painted or drawn on a rock or other natural feature is prohibited. Signs shall only be attached to utility poles if they are in conformance with all applicable State laws and utility regulations.
4. Any banner sign or sign of any other type across a public street or on any private property is prohibited, except for such Community Special Event signs which are of general benefit to the municipality or for public convenience, necessity, or welfare and which comply with the applicable district requirements of Section 1505.
5. Any sign suspended between poles which is either a pennant which blows in the wind or a spinner which spins in the wind is prohibited.
6. Any sign is prohibited which does not conform to the requirements of the sign ordinance which was in effect when the sign was erected.
7. No sign may be erected containing information on which it states or implies that a property may be used for any purpose not permitted under the provisions of the Spring City Borough Zoning Ordinance.
8. No sign may use the words "stop," "look," "danger," or any other word or character which attempts or appears to attempt to direct the movement of traffic or which interferes with or resembles any official traffic sign, signal, or device within seventy-five (75) feet of a public right-of-way or within two-hundred (200) feet of a traffic control device, whichever is greater.
9. Except for traffic control signals, red or green lights are prohibited within seventy-five (75) feet of a public right-of-way or within two-hundred (200) feet of a traffic control device signal, whichever is greater.
10. A sign that uses any method of illumination that can cause glare is prohibited, except in accordance with the following:
 - a. It shall be effectively shielded so that glaring beams or rays of light are not directed to any portion of any street, highway, or adjacent property or structure.

- b. It shall be less than one-quarter (1/4) foot candle, as measured from the curb line or road shoulder, so as not to cause glare or impair the vision of any motorist or otherwise interfere with a driver's operation of his motor vehicle.

SECTION 1505 APPLICABILITY BY DISTRICT

No signs, other than those specifically exempted in Section 1504, Exempt and Prohibited Signs, shall be permitted except as follows:

A. Signs Permitted in the R-1, R-2, and R-3 Residential Districts and the PN Planned Neighborhood District

1. Wall or freestanding signs for bulletin or announcement type boards or for the identification of schools, churches, hospitals, recreation areas, and other principal uses and buildings other than dwellings, provided that the area of any such sign shall not exceed twelve (12) square feet and not more than one such sign shall be placed on property in single and separate ownership, unless such property fronts on more than one (1) street, in which case one such sign may be placed on each street frontage.
2. Wall or freestanding signs for the identification of a residential development of fifteen (15) units or more, erected on the site of said development and containing only the name of the development and the location of a sale or rental office, provided that the area of any such sign shall not exceed nine (9) square feet and not more than one (1) such sign shall be placed on property in single and separate ownership, unless such property fronts on more than one (1) street, in which case one (1) such sign may be erected on each street frontage.
3. One (1) sign for major home occupations, indicating only names of persons, telephone numbers, and the occupation, provided that the area of any such sign shall not exceed two (2) square feet. A permit for such a sign shall not be required if the home occupation has been approved by the Zoning Hearing Board. Home occupation signs shall be located at least five (5) feet behind the sidewalk or street line where no sidewalk exists.
4. One (1) construction/development sign, provided that the area of any such sign shall not exceed twelve (12) square feet and such sign shall be removed within twenty (20) days after the final inspection by the Borough Building Inspector or eighteen (18) months after the erection of the sign, whichever occurs first.

B. Signs Permitted in the DC Downtown Commercial District

1. All signs permitted in the R-1, R-2, R-3, and PN Districts shall be permitted in the DC Downtown Commercial District.

2. Wall signs for nonresidential uses shall be permitted, subject to the following conditions:
 - a. No portions of the signs shall be less than eight (8) feet above the proposed finished grade. If the wall sign does not extend more than three (3) inches from a wall of a building, the sign need not conform to the eight-foot height limit.
 - b. The total area of the wall sign(s) shall not exceed fifteen (15) percent of the area of the building face, including window and door area and cornices, to which it is attached.
 - c. Permanent window signs shall be considered wall signs and included in this computation; temporary window signs shall not be included in this computation but shall nevertheless not exceed forty (40) percent of the total window area of the premises.
 - d. Wall signs which are part of the architectural design of a building shall be exempt from size requirements if they are limited to the area on the building specifically designed for sign placement.
3. Projecting signs for nonresidential uses are permitted subject to the following conditions:
 - a. No portion of a projecting sign shall be less than eight (8) feet nor more than twenty (20) feet above the proposed finished grade, and no such sign shall be less than five (5) feet from the plane of the face of the curb or project more than four (4) feet from the face of the building.
 - b. The area of such signs shall not exceed sixteen (16) square feet.
 - c. If a projecting sign is utilized at a premises, then the premises shall not have a freestanding sign.
4. Freestanding signs for nonresidential uses shall only be permitted in the DC Downtown Commercial District where they can be set back at least six (6) feet from the curblines and are subject to the following conditions:
 - a. They shall be limited to one (1) such sign per structure. If more than one (1) use is carried on in a single structure, the one (1) permitted freestanding sign may indicate the presence of all uses in the structure.
 - b. No portion of the sign shall be more than six (6) feet above the ground.
 - c. The area of the sign shall not exceed sixteen (16) square feet.

- d. If a freestanding sign is utilized at a premises, then the premises shall not have a projecting sign.
- 5. Canopy or awning signs for nonresidential uses subject to the following conditions:
 - a. Use of a canopy or awning sign shall be limited to not more than one (1) for each establishment.
 - b. Where a wall sign already exists, the size of the canopy or awning sign shall not exceed eight (8) square feet. Where no wall sign exists, a canopy sign not larger than twelve (12) square feet may be erected.
- 6. Community Special Event Signs - Where such signs are in the form of banners proposed to be suspended across Borough streets the following standards shall apply:
 - a. The sign shall not exceed three (3) feet high by thirty (30) feet wide and the bottom edge of the sign shall be at least fifteen (15) feet above the road surface.
 - b. Signs shall be removed within one (1) week after the date of the exhibit, show, event, or election.
 - c. No such sign shall be posted earlier than three (3) weeks before the occurrence of the event to which it relates.
 - d. The Borough shall be notified prior to the erection of such signs.

C. Signs Permitted in the GC General Commercial and I Industrial Districts

- 1. All signs permitted in the R-1, R-2, R-3, and PN Districts shall be permitted in the (GC) General Commercial District and the (I) Industrial District.
- 2. Wall signs for nonresidential uses are permitted subject to the following conditions:
 - a. No portion shall be less than eight (8) feet above the proposed finished grade and extend more than six (6) inches from the building wall. If not extending more than three (3) inches from a wall of a building, the sign need not conform to the eight-foot height limit.
 - b. The total area of the sign shall not exceed fifteen (15) percent of the area of the building face, including window and door area and cornices, to which they are attached.

- c. Permanent window signs shall be considered wall signs and included in this computation; temporary window signs shall not be included in this computation but shall nevertheless not exceed forty (40) percent of the total window area of the premises.
 - d. Wall signs which are part of the architectural design of a building shall be exempt from size requirements if they are limited to the area on the building specifically designed for sign placement.
- 3. Freestanding signs for a shopping center or industrial complex use shall be subject to the following conditions:
 - a. The sign shall be limited to one (1) sign indicating the name of the development and the name of other uses within the development.
 - b. No portion of the sign shall be more than twenty (20) feet above the ground, and the bottom edge of the sign shall be less than four (4) feet or more than eight (8) feet above the ground.
 - c. The area of the sign shall not exceed thirty-five (35) square feet.
 - d. Individual uses at the shopping center or industrial complex shall not utilize freestanding signs.
- 4. Freestanding signs for nonresidential uses other than a shopping center or an industrial complex shall be subject to the following conditions:
 - a. They shall be limited to one (1) such sign per structure. If more than one (1) use is carried on in a single structure, the sign may indicate the presence of all uses in the structure.
 - b. No portion of the sign shall be more than fifteen (15) feet above the ground. The bottom edge of the sign shall be less than four (4) feet or more than eight (8) feet above the ground.
 - c. The area of the sign shall not exceed twenty-four (24) square feet.
- 5. Projecting signs for nonresidential uses are permitted subject to the following conditions:
 - a. No portion of a projecting sign shall be less than eight (8) feet nor more than twenty (20) feet above the proposed finished grade, and no such sign shall be less than five

- (5) feet from the plane of the face of the curb or project more than four (4) feet from the face of the building.
- b. The area of such signs shall not exceed sixteen (16) square feet.
 - c. If a projecting sign is used at a premises, then a freestanding sign shall not be permitted on the premises.
6. Canopy or awning signs for nonresidential uses subject to the following conditions:
- a. Use of a canopy or awning sign shall be limited to not more than one for each establishment.
 - b. Where a wall sign already exists, the size of the canopy or awning sign shall not exceed eight (8) square feet. Where no wall sign exists, a canopy sign not larger than twelve (12) square feet may be erected.
7. Portable signs for nonresidential uses are permitted subject to the following conditions:
- a. The sign shall be permitted for a period of time not to exceed thirty (30) days in any one calendar year for any one premises or commercial use.
 - b. The sign shall not exceed sixteen (16) square feet.
 - c. Application for a portable sign permit shall be made to the Borough Code Enforcement Officer accompanied by the required permit fee and an escrow deposit, as established in the Borough fee schedule, as a guarantee that the portable sign shall be promptly and completely removed at the end of the authorized period. If not removed within the ten (10) days of the permit expiration date, the Borough shall remove the sign and keep a sum necessary from the escrow account to cover the expense incurred in removal.
8. Off-premises signs shall only be permitted in the GC General Commercial District and shall be subject to the following conditions:
- a. Only one (1) off-premises sign may be erected on a property. An off-premises sign shall not be permitted on the same premises as a freestanding sign.
 - b. No such sign shall be within three-hundred (300) feet of any other such sign.
 - c. No off-premises sign or any part thereof shall be erected within fifty (50) feet of the future right-of-way of a public street.

- d. No off-premises sign shall be erected within thirty (30) feet of any side or rear property line.
- e. The area of such signs shall not exceed fifty (50) square feet, including border and trim, but excluding supports.
- f. The height of such signs shall not exceed (20) feet.

SECTION 1506 PERMITS

- A. A permit shall be obtained from the Borough before the erection of any signs in the Borough, unless specifically exempted herein.
- B. Exemptions from the necessity of securing a permit shall not be construed to relieve the owner of the exempted sign from responsibility for its construction and installation in a safe manner and in accordance with all applicable provisions of this Ordinance.
- C. Before any permit is granted for the erection of a sign or sign structure, plans and specifications shall be filed with the Borough showing:
 - 1. The dimensions of the sign and, where applicable, the dimensions of the wall surface of the building to which it is to be attached;
 - 2. The dimensions of the sign supporting members;
 - 3. The maximum height of the sign;
 - 4. Where applicable, the proposed location of the sign in relation to the face of the building in front of which it is to be erected;
 - 5. The proposed location of the sign in relation to the boundaries of the lot upon which it is to be situated;
 - 6. Where the sign is to be attached to an existing building, a current photograph of the face of the building to which the sign is to be attached;
 - 7. The materials, finish, and details of construction including loads, stresses, anchorage, and any other pertinent engineering data; and
 - 8. The application for the permit shall be accompanied by the written consent of the owner or lessee of the premises upon which the sign is to be erected for Borough officials to enter said premises to inspect such sign.

- D. The following changes to a sign shall not require a permit:
 - 1. Changing of the advertising message;
 - 2. Regular maintenance of the sign, including the electrical, repainting, or cleaning of a sign; and
 - 3. The repair of a sign.
- E. Permit fees to erect a sign shall be in accordance with the fee schedule adopted by the Borough Council by resolution.

SECTION 1507 CONSTRUCTION, MAINTENANCE, AND REMOVAL

A. Construction and Maintenance Requirements

- 1. All signs permitted by this Ordinance shall be constructed of durable materials and kept in good condition and repair.
- 2. All signs requiring the use of electricity shall be manufactured in accordance with the Underwriter's Laboratories specifications.

B. Removal of Unsafe, Unlawful, or Abandoned Signs

- 1. Unsafe or Unlawful Signs
 - a. Upon written notice by the Borough of Spring City, the owner, person, or firm maintaining a sign shall remove said sign when it becomes unsafe, is in danger of falling, or it becomes so deteriorated that it no longer serves a useful purpose of communication, or it is determined by the Borough to be a nuisance, or it is deemed unsafe by the Borough, or it is unlawfully erected in violation of any of the provisions of this Article.
 - b. The Borough may remove or cause to be removed said sign at the expense of the owner and/or lessee in the event the owner or the person or firm maintaining said sign has not complied with the terms of said notice within thirty (30) days of the date of the notice. In the event of immediate danger, however, the Borough may remove said sign immediately upon the issuance of said notice to the owner, person, or firm maintaining said sign.

2. Abandoned Signs

- a. No person shall maintain or permit to be maintained on any premises owned or controlled by him a sign which has been abandoned. An "abandoned sign," for the purpose of this Article, is a sign erected on or related to the use of a property which becomes vacant and unoccupied for a period of six (6) months or more or any sign which was erected for a prior occupant or business or any sign which relates to a time, event, or purpose which is past. Any such abandoned sign shall be removed by the landowner or person controlling the property within ten (10) days of the abandonment as described above.
- b. The Borough may remove or cause to be removed said sign at the expense of the owner and/or lessee in the event the owner or the person or firm maintaining said sign has not complied with the terms of said notice within thirty (30) days of the date of the notice.

SECTION 1508 NONCONFORMING SIGNS

Any sign legally existing at the time of the passage of this Ordinance that does not conform in use, location, height, or size to the regulations of the district in which such sign is located shall be considered a nonconforming sign and shall be bound by the regulations of this Article regarding nonconforming signs.

- A. Nonconforming signs, once removed or damaged more than sixty (60) percent, including structural framing or bracing, shall be replaced only with conforming signs. Nonconforming signs with damage of sixty (60) percent or less may be repainted or repaired, provided that such repainted or repaired sign does not exceed the dimensions of the existing sign.
- B. A nonconforming sign shall be removed within fourteen (14) days of notice from the Borough or made to conform to this Article in every respect whenever:
 1. It becomes so deteriorated that it no longer serves a useful purpose of communication and is a nuisance as determined by the Borough.
 2. The copy of the sign is changed due to a change of business or ownership.