

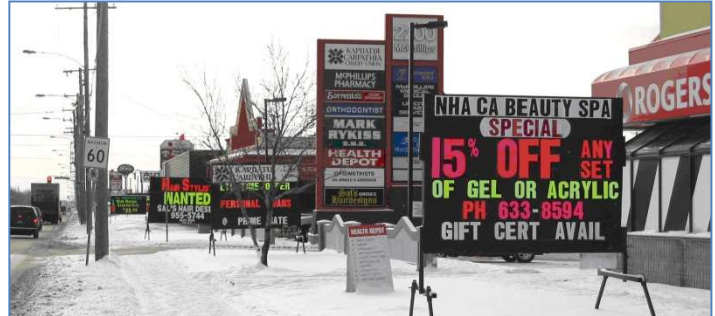


**CITY OF IMPERIAL BEACH**  
**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**  
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## COMMERCIAL AREA SIGN ENFORCEMENT

The City of Imperial Beach Community Development Department is charged with implementing the sign code, IBMC 19.52, and regulating outdoor signage throughout the City. The purpose of these sign regulations are to encourage the effective use of signs as a means of communication in the City; to maintain and enhance the aesthetic environment and the City's ability to attract sources of economic development and growth; to improve pedestrian and traffic safety; to minimize the possible adverse effects of signs on nearby public and private property; and to enable the fair and consistent enforcement of these sign regulations. Particular attention is focused on signage in and around commercial areas and Design Review Corridors where visual clutter has significantly increased, causing unsightly, and in many cases unsafe, situations.



### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ADVERTISING SIGNS

#### ➤ What is a Sign?

A sign is any device, fixture, placard, or structure that uses any color, form, graphic, illumination, symbol, or writing to advertise, announce the purpose of, or identify the purpose of a person or entity, or to communicate information of any kind to the public.

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

#### ➤ Can I place a sign on the sidewalk?

**No.** Signs on the streets or sidewalks are **PROHIBITED**, and subject to confiscation.

#### ➤ Is a sign permit required for a new permanent sign?

**Yes.** A Sign Permit is required and must be obtained to install, construct, or erect any new, altered, or relocated sign.

#### ➤ Do I need City approval to put up a temporary banner?

**Yes.** A temporary sign permit is required, and is good for thirty (30) days.

#### ➤ Can I put signs on my windows?

**Yes.** But, window signage is limited to 35% of total window area. This includes any window, even windows that are blocked by shelves.

#### ➤ Can I put up signs such as balloons, flags, pennants, or air dancers to attract customers?

**No.** Animated signs such as balloons and inflatable signs or inflatable attention-getting devices, beacons, pennants, pole signs and portable signs are **EXPRESSLY PROHIBITED**.



If you have any questions about signage please contact either the Code Compliance Division or the Planning Division.

**SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR ADDITIONAL DETAILS AND INFORMATION**

### **IBMC 19.52.030. Sign Definitions and interpretation**

- A. **Animated Signs.** Any sign that uses movement or change of lighting to depict action or create a special effect of scene.
- B. **Balloon and Inflatable Signs or Inflatable Attention Getting Devices.** Any air or gas filled device located, attached, or tethered to the ground, site, merchandise, building, or roof and used for the purposes of signage, advertising, or attention getting.
- C. **Banner.** Any sign of lightweight fabric or similar material that is permanently mounted to a pole or a building by a permanent frame at one or more edges. National flags, State or municipal flags, or the official flag of any institution or business shall not be considered banners.
- H. **Commercial Message.** Any sign wording, logo, or other representation that, directly or indirectly, names, advertises, or calls attention to a business, product, service or other commercial activity.
- T. **Portable Sign.** Any sign not permanently attached to the ground or other permanent structure, or a sign designed to be transported, including, but not limited to, signs converted to A or T-frames; menu and sandwich board signs; balloons and inflatable or inflatable attention-getting devices used as signs; umbrellas used for advertising; and signs attached or to painted on vehicles parked and visible from the public-right-of-way, unless said vehicle is used in the normal day-to-day operations of the business.
- Q. **Pennant.** Any lightweight plastic, fabric, or other material, whether or not containing a message of any kind, suspended from a rope, wire, or string, usually in a series, designed to move in the wind.
- DD. **Temporary Sign.** Any sign that is used only temporarily and is not permanently mounted.
- FF. **Window Signs:** Any sign, pictures, symbol, or combination thereof, designated to communicate information about an activity, business, commodity, event, sale or service, that is placed inside a window or upon the window panes of glass and is visible from the exterior of the window.

### **IBMC 19.52.050. Signs Allowed on Private Property**

Window Signs: 35% of total window area.

### **IBMC 19.52.060. Sign Permits required.**

If a sign allowed under the provisions of this code is to be placed, constructed, erected, or modified on a lot, the owner of the lot shall secure a sign permit prior to the construction, placement, erection, or modification of such a sign.

No sign permit of any kind shall be issued for an existing or proposed sign unless such sign is consistent with the requirements of this code in every respect.

### **IBMC 19.52.070. Design, Construction and Maintenance.**

All signs shall be designed, constructed, and maintained in accordance with the following standards:

- A. All signs shall comply with applicable provisions of the Uniform Building Code, National Electrical Code, and Uniform Sign Code of the City at all times;
- B. Except for banners, flags, temporary signs, and window signs conforming in all respects with the requirements of this code, all signs shall be constructed of permanent materials and shall be permanently attached to the ground, a building, or structure;
- C. All signs shall be maintained in good structural condition, in compliance with all building and electrical codes, and in conformance with this code, at all times; and,
- D. All signs shall be maintained in good order and repair at all times so that they do not constitute any danger or hazard to public safety, or visual blight, and are free of peeling paint, major cracks or loose and dangling materials.

### **IBMC 19.52.080 Signage Plan or Comprehensive Signage Plan.**

No permit shall be issued for an individual sign requiring a permit unless and until a Signage Plan or Comprehensive Signage Plan for the lot on which the sign will be erected has been submitted to the Community Development Department and approved by the Community Development Department as conforming with this code. (Ord. 94-884)

### **IBMC 19.52.230. Signs prohibited under this code.**

All signs listed below are considered expressly prohibited under the provisions of this Chapter:

1. Roof signs;
2. Pole signs;
3. Billboards;
4. Changeable Copy signs, except time and temperature signs;
5. Animated signs, balloons and inflatable signs or inflatable attention-getting devices, beacons, pennants, and portable signs, except for special events as provided for in this Chapter;
6. Signs located within or projecting into the public right-of-way, not including governmental or public service signage or as otherwise permitted in this Chapter;
7. Signs posted on trees, rocks, or other natural features;
8. Signs made of paper or cardboard displayed on the outside of windows or exterior walls except as otherwise permitted in this Chapter;
9. Any sign which has been more than fifty percent destroyed, and the destruction is other than facial copy replacement, and the display cannot be repaired within thirty (30) days of the date of its construction.

### **IBMC 19.52.210. Other signs forfeited.**

Any sign installed or placed on public property, except in conformance with the requirements of this code, shall be forfeited to the public and be subject to confiscation. In addition to other remedies hereunder, the city shall have the right to recover from the owner or person placing such sign the full costs of removal and disposal of such sign.

### **IBMC 19.52.250. Temporary signs.**

Upon written showing of good cause, the community development department may permit temporary signs not otherwise provided for in the chapter in any zone for a period not to exceed thirty days. Continuance of such signs may be permitted by the Planning Commission in the manner provided for by zoning variance.

## **CITY OF IMPERIAL BEACH**

### **Community Development Department:**

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**City Website: <http://www.imperialbeachca.gov>**

**Municipal Code: <http://qcode.us/codes/imperialbeach/>**