

SIGNS

Land Use Code Section 10

Do I need a Sign Permit?

Signs that **require** a sign permit:

Certain signs in Larimer County require a sign permit from the Building Department before installation.

Examples are:

- Non-residential or commercial signs
 - Freestanding signs
 - Monument signs
 - Wall signs
 - Canopy signs
 - Awnings
 - Projecting signs
 - Oddly shaped signs
- Temporary project & construction marketing signs
- Temporary commercial signs

Signs that **do not require** a permit:

(Land Use Code Section 10.6)

The most common types of signs that do not require a permit are:

- Agricultural product signs
- Election signs
- Flags and governmental signs
- Home occupation signs
- On-site traffic directional signs
- Real estate signs
- Rural property identification signs
- Window signs
- Daily special (A-Frame type) signs



Real Estate Signs

Real estate signs are generally considered 'signs that do not require a permit', listed in Land Use Code Section 10.6. Although most real estate signs don't require a permit, there are regulations that need to be considered.

Number of Signs per Property

Type of property	# per property	Size & Height
Single family or two family dwelling	1 sign per street frontage	8 sq ft per face 6 ft in height
Vacant land (unplatted & undeveloped)	1 sign per street frontage	48 sq ft per face 6 ft in height

A sign permit is NOT required for these types of signs.



Please Note – Signs cannot be posted at a turn off, corner, intersection, or location that directs people to an area where a property is for sale.

Temporary Project Marketing Sign

- A sign permit is required for this type of real estate sign
- On site for no more than 2 years following issuance of permit

Zoning District	# per property	Size & Height
Residential & rural zoning	1 sign per entrance 2 signs per project	50 sq ft per face 8 ft in height
Non-residential zoning	1 sign per entrance 2 signs per project	64 sq ft per face 8 ft in height

Sign Limitations

Off Premises Signs (Section 10.5.E)

Off premises signs are **not allowed** in unincorporated areas of Larimer County (even with a property owner's permission). Off premises signs generally include signs directing people to a property or business offered or existing elsewhere. Advertisements and signs on a property must be related to an event or activity occurring on the same property.

Prohibited Signs (Section 10.5)

- Billboards (an off premises sign)
- Inflatable signs.
- Moving signs (with flashing, rotating, animated or otherwise moving features).
- Electronic or changeable message signs cannot change more frequently than once every minute.
- Signs mounted to trees, landscaping, traffic signage, utility and light poles, fences or similar structures.
- Pennants and wind-driven signs
- Roof-top signs
- 'Searchlights'
- Strings of light bulbs

Nonconforming Signs (Section 10.14)

Signs that have existed prior to current regulations may be considered nonconforming.

The sign content may be changed, but a nonconforming sign cannot be:

- Structurally or physically changed to another sign
- Maintained to prolong the life of the sign
- Altered so as to increase the degree of nonconformity

Signs in the Public Right-of-Way (Section 10.2.B)

Signs may not be placed on or over public roads, rights-of-way, or in road or access easements. The right-of-way is generally wider than the width of the pavement. Signs cannot be posted at a turnoff, corner, intersection, or location that directs people to an area where a property is for sale.



Frequently Asked Questions

Q How do I apply for a [Sign Permit](#)?

A Sign permits are processed like building permits. Sign applications are available at the Larimer County Planning/Building Department - 200 W. Oak Street, 3rd floor, Fort Collins, CO 80521.

Sign permit applications are also available online:

www.larimer.org/building/sign_application.pdf

Q Who can apply for a sign permit?

A A [licensed sign contractor](#) must apply for a sign permit for any sign other than a temporary commercial sign. Read Contractor Licensing information online at www.larimer.org/building/contractor_license_handout.pdf

Q What documentation needs to be included with a [Sign Permit application](#)?

A A sign permit application needs to include **3 copies** of an accurately scaled and detailed drawing showing:

- The property dimensions & location of the sign(s)
- Dimensions of buildings and signs
- If the sign is freestanding, show setbacks from property lines to sign structure
- Sign text and type of construction
- Mounting details, including foundation, size of any posts and sign height

Q Which signs need to be 'engineered'?

A Some sign permit applications require drawings [stamped and certified by an engineer](#).

- Canopy and canopy signs
- Freestanding signs that exceed 40 ft in height or have more than 2 posts or columns for support
- Freestanding signs with cabinets that have more than 3 cabinets on a pole or set of poles
- Monument signs, especially those that support a large amount of weight
- Signs of unusual dimension or unique shape.
- Foundation plans are required for Monument, Freestanding, and single & double pole signs

Q When is a [Sign Inventory](#) form required?

A Sign Inventory forms are required for commercial businesses in non-residential districts.

Q Can I change a [sign face](#) without a permit?

A Yes- the location size, shape, or any other feature **the** sign needs to remain the same. Only the face can change.

Q Who can I call if I have questions about sign permits?

A The sign code is administered by the Planning Department. Please call 970-498-7683 and ask to speak to the 'planner-on-call'.