

Section 134-179, 180 Table 134-180 Sign area permitted on general, commercial and retail premises.

1. *Staff is currently reviewing these sections of the sign ordinance in order to simplify the calculation method of determining allowable sign area for businesses in Rochester Hills. Staff has found the current method to be somewhat cumbersome and difficult for business owners and contractors to comprehend. It is not expected to impact the “actual” allowable area as is currently provided.*

Wall signs attached to the building shall not exceed the midline of the elevation, and shall not exceed the roof line/parapet.

2. *Staff is proposing that consideration be given to allowing wall signs (particularly on general commercial multiple tenant sites) to be placed at the “mid-line” level of elevations regardless of height limitations currently at twenty (20) feet. With the varied elevation designs today, this appears to be a more aesthetically appealing and uniform application of sign placement.*

Section 134-7 Exemptions

3. Directional signs shall not exceed two (2) square feet in area, and shall not exceed five (5) feet in height from grade. No more than one (1) sign shall be located at each drive location. These signs must maintain a 15-foot visual corner clearance at entranceway.

*Presently there are no provisions for limiting these types of signs within the sign ordinance. Additionally, current sign design has included monument style directional signs, i.e., banks, offices, etc. Staff is concerned about the actual height and location impacting, entranceway visual lines.*

Section 134-180 Footnote (G) Gasoline stations and automotive service premises

4. Canopy sign shall be permitted for each face of the canopy that abuts a major road right-of-way as defined in the City’s Sign Ordinance. These signs shall be limited to a maximum of twenty (20) square feet each and no more than one (1) sign per canopy elevation to a maximum of no more than two (2) such signs.

*Approximately ten years ago, the provision to allow these types of signs was removed from the sign ordinance. At that time these signs were only limited by the total allowable area for each site and not by its location on the canopy i.e., 100 sq ft maximum. Consequently, extremely large signs were appearing on gasoline canopies. Staff has received numerous requests for these types of signs from businesses and contractors. It appears that by allowing these types of signs on a limited basis would provide a more appealing look to gas stations canopies in contrast to what has now transformed into a stark appearance.*

5. Section 134-1 Definitions, electronic message boards and table 134-180 footnote (o)  
Color – the sign shall be equipped with photosensitive equipment, which automatically adjusts the brightness, and contrast adjusts to the brightness and contrast of the sign in a direct relation to the ambient outdoor illumination. The use of animation, or flashing, scrolling, or blinking characters is prohibited. Letters, words, or pictures are not in motion and are not changed more often than 10 seconds.

*It is staff's opinion based on businesses and contractors input, that technology is reaching a level whereby multiple colors, rather than a single color limitation is now more of the business standard. Currently size limitation is only controlled by the maximum single sign area (100 sq ft) for general commercial signs. This has resulted in much larger electronic boards than was anticipated. Therefore, staff is recommending a limitation of 32 sq ft., consistent with electronic signs currently being allowed for schools/churches.*

6. Section 134-148 Temporary Signs, Banners, Pennants, Strings of Flags or Streamers, Freestand and Hand Held Portable Signs and Sandwich Boards  
Temporary signs freestanding or wall may be erected on any business for a maximum of 30 days (4) four times per year.

*The present ordinance provides for a 14-day limitation at 4 times per year. Again, businesses and contractors feel that this regulation does not provide enough exposure time for individual events. This change would be a return to what was previously allowed prior to the ordinance change in 2005.*

8. Mixed Uses/Projects Sign Area – Currently there is not a provision for calculating sign area for mixed-use developments.

*These uses are somewhat new to our community, as a result it has proved difficult to calculate and allocate sign area for these uses. Staff is proposing to research and develop a sign ordinance section for determining sign area for mixed-use developments.*