

Information Sheet

Show Window Signs, Displays & Information on Business Front Windows

Purpose: This information sheet has been prepared to provide businesses with information pertaining to the proper use of show window signs, displays and other information that may be installed on business front windows as regulated by the Germantown Sign Ordinance.

Definition of a Show Window Sign: A show window sign is a temporary sign that can be attached to or located within three (3') feet of the window opening of a business storefront. These signs may be used by businesses to advertise sales and specials offered on the premises by the business.

Definition of Window Opening: Each panel is now considered a separate show window..

Business Districts Allowed to Display Show Window Signs: Show window signs may only be erected in commercial districts zoned SC-1, C-1 and C-2.

Maximum Allowable Space of Storefront Windows that can be Used to Display Show Window Signs:

The total of all show window signs displayed cannot occupy more than fifteen (15%) percent of the window opening of the business front. Window space on doors (if doors are glass) is included in the total window opening available. Where businesses have window openings on more than one front, each front shall be computed separately.

- Example:**
- 1) Total window opening of a storefront = 160 square feet.
 - 2) 15 % of 160 square feet = 24 square feet. The maximum area of the total window opening that can be used to display show window signs is 24 sq. feet.

Content on Show Window Signs:

- 1) Show window sign content may only advertise sales and specials offered on the premises by the business.
- 2) Show window signs **cannot** contain or consist of:
 - a) picture of human figures, animals, food or cartoons.
 - b) obscene, indecent or immoral statements.
 - c) flashing, fluttering, neon, pulsating, strobe, reflective materials or other similar type lights and devices.
 - d) banners, posters, pennants, balloons, ribbons, streamers, strings of light bulbs, spinners or other similar type devices except when approved by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen.

Merchandise Displays:

- 1) Merchandise temporarily displayed in storefront windows that is available for purchase on the premises are allowed. Merchandise displays are not classified as show window signs. The space that merchandise displays occupy is not computed in the allowable space authorized for show window signs.
- 2) Merchandise displayed cannot contain or consist of flashing, running, spinning, neon or colored lights.

Poster Displays: Posters advertising charitable or non-profit events and other events which serve to inform the public about an event of general interest are allowed under the following conditions:

- 1) Posters cannot exceed three (3) square feet.
- 2) Posters must be located on the inside of the window.
- 3) Posters combined with show window signs cannot occupy more than fifteen (15%) percent of the window opening.
- 4) Identification of commercial sponsors including company logos cannot exceed ten (10%) percent of the poster size.
- 5) Posters must be removed within two (2) days after the termination of the event.

Banners: Banners are prohibited except when approved by the Design Review Commission (DRC). The Design Review Commission may allow banners for the following purposes only:

- 1) Charitable and non-profit events.
- 2) Special occasions that allow participation by all tenants occupying the center.
- 3) The opening of new or reconstructed centers.

Banners will not be allowed for individual businesses for any purpose.

Neon Signs: Neon Signs that are setback a minimum of ten (10') feet from the front windows of the store front is permitted provided the sign does not blink, flash, pulsate, flutter, spin, run or give the appearance that there is movement on the sign.

Display of Other Information on Business Front Windows:

Businesses may attach to front windows or doors, decals, numerals, names, addresses, hours of operation and/or credit information provided that the total combined area of such information does not exceed one (1) square foot.

All signs, displays and information located on business front windows except as provided herein and those approved by the Design Review Commission (DRC) are illegal and constitutes a violation of the Sign Ordinance subject to the penalties stated therein.

Any conflict arising between this information sheet and the Germantown Sign Ordinance will be resolved in favor of the Sign Ordinance.

Questions pertaining to this subject may be addressed with Code Compliance by calling 757-7263.