

Santa Rosa City Code

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20-38.080 Prohibited signs.

The following signs are not permitted within the City:

A. Abandoned signs. No person shall maintain or permit to be maintained on any property owned or controlled by him or her, any sign which has been abandoned. Any such sign shall promptly be removed by the owner or persons controlling the premises. Any sign which is located on property which becomes vacant and unoccupied for a period of six months or more, or any sign which was erected for any occupant or business unrelated to the present occupant or his or her business, or any sign which pertains to a time, event, or purpose which no longer applies, shall be presumed to have been abandoned, except that permanent signs applicable to a business temporarily suspended by reason of a change of ownership or management of such business shall not be considered abandoned unless the property remains vacant for a period of six months.

B. Signs on public property. The tacking, posting, painting, marking, writing, gluing, taping or otherwise affixing of signs, including, but not limited to, posters, flyers and handbills, to or on any tree, pole, post, or any other structure, whether publicly or privately owned, which is located on public property or within the public right-of-way, without the prior written authorization of the governmental entity owning or in control thereof, is a public nuisance and is prohibited. Signs posted in violation of this subsection are subject to immediate removal. Violation of this subsection shall be prosecuted as an infraction. Any person who owns an interest in or is an officer, partner or member of any business or association or venture, including performing arts groups, whether for profit or not for profit, which is advertised in a sign covered by this subsection or any person who tacks, posts, erects or otherwise affixes or procures the doing of same of a sign covered by this subsection shall be strictly liable for such violations. The posting of each sign shall constitute a separate violation.

C. Moving, flashing, electronic/digital and windblown signs. No moving, rotating, flashing, or changing of color intensity or signs with electronic/digitally created content (i.e., electronic reader board signs), and no windblown signs, such as posters, pennants, streamers, or strings of light bulbs, balloons, or other inflated objects are permitted. The only exceptions to these requirements are time and temperature devices and signs installed by a governmental agency in carrying out its responsibility to protect public health, safety and general welfare.

D. Freeway oriented signs. Signs primarily oriented toward freeways and highways are prohibited. Signs shall be oriented toward local streets and businesses entrances.

E. Off-site signs (billboards).

1. Unless specifically allowed by other provisions of this Chapter, a sign of any kind which identifies, advertises or promotes a commercial use, enterprise, business, service, or product which is not located or sold on the property on which the sign is located is prohibited.

2. The provisions of Subsection E.1 shall not apply to any nonconforming sign during its amortization period nor to an off-site sign that is not permitted to be removed under local regulations or laws without the payment of just compensation as required under provisions of the California Outdoor Advertising Act that validly preempt this City's police power and other authority which has been granted to it by the State Constitution, the City's Charter, and/or general law; provided, however, that any off-site sign not permitted to be removed without the payment of compensation under such provisions of the Act, shall be removed under Subsection E.1, in the manner required by law, upon the adoption of a resolution by the Council authorizing the payment of such just compensation, as may be required by law, for its removal.

F. Portable signs. An "A" frame sign or other sign attached to a device used to allow the sign to be rolled or moved around is prohibited. Included in this category are signs larger than three square feet affixed to a vehicle intended for the purpose of business identification, directional to a business, or advertisement of a business.

G. Roof signs. No sign shall be installed upon, against or directly above a roof or on top of or above the parapet of a building. Exception: if found by the Design Review Board to qualify as an architectural element designed in

conjunction with the building architecture the provisions of this subsection shall not apply.

H. Cabinet signs. Internally illuminated cabinet signs which utilize two-dimensional plastic faces with the entire background illuminated are prohibited. Cabinet signs which incorporate three-dimensional textured faces, routed faced push-through copy and/or opaque (plastic/metal/wood) backgrounds are appropriate.

I. Pole mounted signs. A freestanding sign mounted to a visible structural support structure is prohibited.

J. Temporary and portable signs. Temporary and portable signs, except as allowed by Sections 20-38.070.O and P, are prohibited.

K. Vision triangle. Placement of any sign within a vision triangle is prohibited.

L. Other signs. Signs that are obscene, illegal, hazardous to traffic, imitative of official government signs (i.e., Stop, Danger, Caution, etc.) or obstructive to public visibility, so as to create a hazard to the public are prohibited.

(Ord. 4028 § 2, 2014; Ord. 3995 § 8, 2012; Ord. 3711 § 1, 2005; Ord. 3677 § 1, 2004)

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