

SIGN PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

Sign installation is regulated by the Department of Planning/Zoning and the Department of Permits and Inspections, therefore separate approvals are required from each Department. Please note that signs are not exempt from Zoning Division approval nor VUSBC code compliance regardless of exemption from building permit application. Please submit the Planning/Zoning approval application, building permit application, electrical permit application if applicable, three (3) sets of construction documents, and applicable fees to the Department of Permits and Inspections relative to each proposed sign project in the City.

The Department of Permits and Inspections enforces the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (VUSBC), which references Appendix H relative to sign installation. The Department requires building permits for all sign installation, alteration, replacement, repair, and demolition including ground, roof, wall, flat, projecting, marquee, pole, pylon, pedestal, monumental, and portable signs, with exception of those signs exempt from building permit application. The Department also enforces the NFPA 70 National Electrical Code (NEC) and requires electrical permits for illuminated signs, with exception of connection to and disconnection from existing electrical circuits located within 3 feet of signs.

Building permit exemptions:

- Temporary sale/lease property signs
- Transportation Authority signs.
- Projecting signs 2.5 square feet or less
- Painted or decaled non-illuminated flat signs
- Repainted or repositioned sign display matter
- Changing of animated or moveable sign parts

Building permit applications for signs shall include construction/installation documents to provide the required construction/installation details. Electrical permit applications for illuminated signs shall include electrical components, details, and information on the construction documents. The construction documents shall be prepared by sign manufacturers/contractors and include manufacturer installation instructions.

Construction document requirements:

- Site plan indicating sign locations
- Footing/Foundation design as applicable
- Building elevation indicating sign locations
- Building wall type, material, and thickness
- Sign/Letter dimensions, weight, and height from grade
- Sign materials and combustibility characteristics
- Sign/Letter attachment, connection, anchorage, fastener type, material, diameter, length, embedment, and spacing
- Structural design, imposed loads and working stresses, i.e. dead, wind, seismic, lateral, and stresses
- Electrical components, details, and information as applicable

Sign installation shall be performed by proper VA DPOR licensed contractors possessing billboard/sign contractor (BSC) specialty designations, inclusive of commercial building contractors (CBC), and highway/heavy contractors (HH) classifications. Sign installation with electrical components shall be performed by proper VA DPOR licensed contractors possessing electrical contractor classifications (ELE). The BSC, CBC, and HH contractor specialty designations may only connect and disconnect signs to existing electrical circuits without the requirement for possessing electrical contractor classifications (ELE).