

TOWN OF LAND O' LAKES
Vilas County Wisconsin

2025-01 Amendment to
SIGN ORDINANCE
No. 2007 - 3

WHEREAS, Town of Land O'Lakes Ordinance #2007-3 upon review was found in need of reformatting and updating; and

WHEREAS, Vilas County Zoning Ordinance #85 does not address control of signs within any of the towns within Vilas County; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board of the Town of Land O' Lakes recognizes the Business Community's legitimate right to advertise, and the Town's responsibility for some measure of control over placement, type, and size of signs to secure their effect on public safety and to preserve the aesthetic qualities of the Town of Land O' Lakes,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED, by the Town Board of the Town of Land O' Lakes, Vilas County, Wisconsin, to allow signs not otherwise regulated by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation for State and Federal highways, and the Vilas County Highway Department for County Roads. The following requirements and restrictions apply to the type, size, and location of signs:

1. Definitions: For the purpose of this ordinance the following definitions apply:

Banner: A sign that is of a non-rigid material such as fabric, paper, cardboard, or flexible plastic.

Bordered Sign: A sign painted on or attached to the exterior of a building, either parallel or perpendicularly, which is completely enclosed in a frame or border.

Changeable Copy Signs: A sign that is designed so that characters, letter, or illustrations can be changed or rearranged without altering the face or surface of the sign.

Commercial Business: Activities occupied in commerce involving the buying or selling of goods and services typically located on a property with an associated building.

Copy: The characters, letters, or illustrations displayed in or on a sign face.

Directory Sign: traditional "white arrow" signs that display the name and/or addresses of residents and business establishments. These signs typically have a white background and black letters, not larger than 6" x 48".

Flagging: See "Banner".

Freestanding Sign: the general term for any on-site sign which is supported from the ground and not attached to a building.

Illegal Sign: A sign that was constructed in violation of regulations that existed at the time it was built or repaired.

Illuminated Sign: A sign illuminated in any manner by an artificial light source, whether internally or externally lit.

Non-conforming Sign: A sign that met all legal requirements when constructed, but that is not in compliance with this ordinance. An illegal sign is not a non-conforming sign.

Off-premises Sign: Any sign which is not located on the premises that it identifies or advertises.

Permanent Sign: Any sign which is placed or displayed for a period which extends beyond the time for an individual advertised event or service. Permanent signs are normally expected to be in place for a period of six (6) months or longer.

Political Sign: Any sign concerned with, engaged in, or advertising a political party, candidate, or government agency.

Portable Sign: A sign that is not permanently affixed to a building structure or the ground.

Sign: A poster, placard, flagging, banner, or similar item displaying any message or advertising visible to the public.

Temporary Sign: Any sign which is placed or displayed for a limited time to advertise events, sales and special offers, or services. Such signs are removed within a specified period following completion of the activity or event being advertised.

2. General Regulations:

- a. All permanent signs shall be made of wood, metal or an appropriate material designed for outdoor durability; shall be erected on their own self-supporting standards or attached to a building. Maximum size shall not exceed one hundred fourteen (114) square feet, if located along County Highway B or a town road, or one hundred ninety-six (196) square feet, if located along U.S. Highway 45, including trim and borders, exclusive of standards.
- b. All signs shall be maintained in a state of good repair by the owner or responsible party.
- c. All signs, except as indicated in the text of this ordinance, shall be subject to town permits and fees.
- d. No off-premises signs will be allowed except along U.S. Highway 45. Signs advertising a business along the County Highway B corridor must be located on the site of that business. White arrow directory signs are exempt.
- e. No signs shall be placed within the Right-of-Way (ROW) of any road and shall have a minimum setback requirement of five (5) feet from the ROW except that those signs located along County Highway B, between U.S. Highway 45 and Little Portage Lake Road, are exempt from the minimum setback requirement of five (5) feet.
- f. All signs located at the intersection of two (2) roadways shall be placed so as to maintain a triangular shaped clear vision zone at road intersections. Within these areas signs shall not be located within the ROW of either roadway and will have a minimum setback distance of fifteen (15) feet along each roadway.
- g. No sign shall be so placed as to interfere with the visibility or effectiveness of any official traffic sign, nor contain wording or pictures used in official directional signage.
- h. Illuminated signs advertising a home occupation or professional office. Wattage may not exceed 4000 lumens of illumination per sign. Neon tubing shall be considered illuminated signage.

- i. No sign shall contain, include, or be illuminated by a flashing light, or by any light directed toward a neighboring residence or toward the water.
 - j. Vehicles or other movable structures will not be allowed as permanent signage along town roads or county highways within the town, or in front of any building, as intended use for stationary advertisement, and may be subject to removal or dismantling at the owner's expense.
- 3. Signs Authorized Without A Sign Permit (Permit Exempt Signs):** Subject to other applicable requirements and permits, the following signs are authorized without a Sign Permit provided the sign does not contain flashing lights or moving parts.
- a. Governmental Signs: Signs placed or posted by the State of Wisconsin, Vilas County, state or county agencies or the Town of Land O'Lakes.
 - b. Real Estate for sale signs not exceeding four (4) square feet in area which advertise the sale, rental, or lease of the premises upon which said signs are located, provided such signs are removed upon the sale, rent or lease of the subject property. There may be one sign per road facing the property.
 - c. Flagging, streamers, banners of any kind, or portable signs may be placed for a period of two (2) weeks prior to and two (2) weeks after an event. Such events include, but are not limited to: Grand openings, sale events, new management, going out of business, community activities, etc. Banners and flagging may not be in a tattered, torn, or faded condition.
 - d. Window signs placed on the inside or painted on the outside of the building. Window signs advertising the name, address, and lawful business conducted in the building, provided such signs do not cover more than 25% of the total window area to which applied.
 - e. Temporary signs identifying construction sites or commercial services: only one sign will be allowed per construction firm, or commercial service provider per project site; it may be attached to the building or free standing and must be removed no later than two (2) weeks after completion of the project.
 - f. Political signs shall not exceed eight (8) square feet in size. Such signs shall be removed within ten (10) days following the election the sign has been posted for. Political signs applicable to both the primary and general election may remain in place until ten (10) days after the general election.
 - g. Historical, Cultural and Natural Site Signs: A sign erected or authorized by a government agency, which exclusively denotes a recognized historical, cultural, or natural sites.
 - h. Commercial occupational and directional signs: Business directional "White Arrow" signs measuring 6" x 48" nominal size located along county highways or town roads and 8" x 60" on state and federal highways (as regulated by Vilas County) denoting only the name and profession or business use of an occupant in a dwelling, commercial or institutional building. These Signs are allowed in the Highway Right of Way on Town Roads and shall only be installed by the Town Road Crew on posts supplied by the Town.
 - i. Traditional recreational directory signs indicating the direction to a cottage, resort, or similar use:
 - 1. Shall not be more than six (6) feet by eight (8) inches in area.

2. Shall be colored with high contrast lettering.
 3. Shall be attached to a common posting standard, if such standard is provided, when multiple business or residential property names are being displayed in one location.
 - j. **Warning Signs:** Signs which identify the presence of dangerous conditions, unusual hazards, such as drop offs, high voltage, fire danger, and explosives, or the presence of septic systems, buried utility lines or other areas which require marking for reasons of health, safety, or public welfare. Warning Signs may not exceed sixteen (16) square feet.
- 4. Signs Authorized With a Permit:** The Zoning Administrator shall issue a Permit for signs in accordance with the following provisions.
- a. Signs attached to a commercial or an industrial building advertising a business conducted or a service available on the premises meet the following standards in addition to the general regulations described in Section 2:
 1. Bordered or framed signs erected parallel or perpendicular to a building facade or sides, or separate signs erected at the roof ridge, shall not exceed the aggregate size described in Section 2 a.
 2. Shall be no higher than four (4) feet above the roof ridge.
 3. Where signs consist of individual letters, painted, or raised, without a border or frame and attached to the facade or sides of the building, the letters may not exceed more than twenty-four inches (24") in height,
 4. Illuminated signs shall not exceed a maximum size of sixty (60) square feet.
 - b. Signs identifying apartment buildings, condominiums or multiple business establishments located in a single building. Such signs shall meet the requirements described in Section 4 a. for signs attached to a building, and the requirements described in Section 4. c. for freestanding signs.
 - c. Freestanding, On-premises signs advertising a public or semi-public use:
 1. Shall have no more than one such sign for each highway on which the property faces.
 2. May be placed at the right-of-way of the highway.
 3. May be double-faced, which shall be considered one sign.
 4. Shall not exceed the roof ridge of the business for which it is advertising, *or* a maximum of twelve (12) feet in height. Gasoline and manufacturing franchise signs, existing at the writing of this ordinance, are exempt from this provision.
 5. Portable, freestanding, changeable copy signs and signs on wheels are discouraged but are considered signs subject to all conditions and restrictions of this ordinance.
 6. Illuminated signs shall not exceed a maximum size of sixty (60) square feet.
- 5. Prohibited Signs:** The following limitations, obligations, and prohibitions apply to all Signs subject to this Ordinance.
- a. **Absence of a Sign Permit:** Any Sign, for which a Permit has not been issued and which is not a "Sign Authorized Without A Permit" is prohibited.

- b. Abandoned Signs: Signs and their support structures made obsolete or abandoned by either the closing of a business or changing of business or landowner are prohibited.
- c. Signs advertising a business or event which has become inactive, closed, or terminated, excluding seasonal closure. Such signs shall be removed or covered within 30 days following the event or business becoming inactive, closed, or terminated.
- d. Utility poles and trees: Posting of bills and placard, poster and circulars on utility poles or trees is strictly prohibited. Exempt from this restriction are the posting of NO TRESSPASSING and PRIVATE signs, CLOSED AREA, and WEIGHT RESTRICTION signs on trees on private and public property. Also exempt are trail and directional signs which are in conformity with Wisconsin Statutes 84.30(3)(a) for official marking.

6. Permits and Fees:

- a. All signs, unless expressly exempt by specific provisions of this ordinance, shall be subject to zoning permits.
- b. Fees for permits are identified in the Town fee schedule.
- c. No permit and fee shall be required for repair or replacement of an existing sign unless the repair or replacement exceeds the size of the original sign.

7. Administration, Enforcement, and Penalties:

- a. Permits for signs shall be issued by the Town of Land O' Lakes Zoning Administrator.
- b. Fees for sign permits shall be made payable to: Town of Land O' Lakes.
- c. Signs erected without the authority of a legal sign permit are subject to removal. Notice to remove shall be issued by the Zoning Administrator, with an allowance of ten (10) days from receipt of notification for compliance. Failure of owner to remove the illegal sign within the allotted time will cause the sign to be removed by town personnel, at the owner's expense.
- d. The Zoning Administrator may order repair of signs which are determined to be in disrepair or unsafe, with corrections to be made within thirty (30) days from receipt of notice. If the repairs are not completed within thirty (30) days, notification of intent to remove the sign shall be given within ten (10) days of the action to be taken. In all cases where any sign is eminently or obviously unsafe, the Town Board is authorized herewith to remove such sign as a public nuisance, without any demand for removal or repair of the same upon the owner or any person maintaining such a sign.
- e. Signs advertising a commercial establishment which is no longer in business shall be removed by the property owner within thirty (30) days of the closing of the business. Establishments merely closed for a season, with an intent to reopen within one (1) year, are exempt from this clause.
- f. All illegal signs shall be removed immediately by the owner or responsible party, or at the owner's or responsible party's expense.
- g. Owners of signs that are abandoned or deteriorate beyond repair shall be given notice to remove them, following same procedure as in Section 7. d.

- h. Any persons violating any provision of the ordinance shall, upon conviction thereof, forfeit not less than Ten Dollars (\$10.00), nor more than Two Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$250.00), plus court costs involved in the prosecution.
- i. Any provision of this ordinance which creates an undue hardship, may be appealed to the Land O' Lakes Board of Adjustment.

8. Nonconforming Signs:

Signs existing and lawful on the date of the enactment of this ordinance may be continued even though such use may not be in conformity with the provisions of this ordinance.

9. Severability:

The several sections and provisions of this ordinance shall be deemed severable and if any provisions of it or the application thereof to any persons or circumstances is held invalid, the remainder of the ordinance and the application of such provisions to other persons and circumstances shall not be affected thereby.

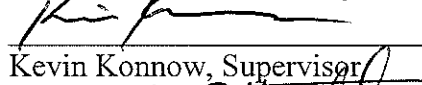
This ordinance is effective on publication and posting.

The Town Clerk shall properly post or publish this ordinance as required under s. 60.80, Wisconsin Statutes.

Adopted this 16th day of April, 2025

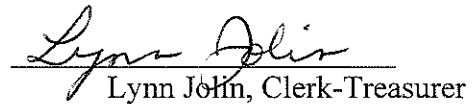
Approved:


Daniel Balog, Chairman


Kevin Konnow, Supervisor


Samuel Otterpohl, Supervisor

Attest:


Lynn John, Clerk-Treasurer