



If you are considering putting up new signage, or changing the existing signage for your business you will need to obtain a sign permit. The following information about signs and sign permits will be of interest to you.

The Sign Bylaw

The *City of New Westminster's Sign Bylaw* controls all signs within the City. A "sign" is defined as "any structure, device or visual display which communicates information or attracts the attention of persons for any purpose." Each zoning district has requirements for the types and size of signs allowed. A copy of the *Sign Bylaw* may be obtained from the Development Services Department.

Processing Applications for Sign Permits

1. The applicant submits a sign permit application to the Building Division. Each sign erection or installation shall require a sign permit except when two or more signs are to be installed at the same time on any one building, premise or parcel. In such cases only one sign permit may be required.
2. The applicant pays the required fee(s) and submits TWO complete sets of plans to support the application. The plans shall specify:
 - a. the dimensions and weight of the sign and, where applicable, the dimensions of the wall surface and the height of the building to which it is attached (wall dimensions will be critical if the sign area is close to the maximum allowable size);
 - b. the means by which the sign will be attached to the building;
 - c. the dimensions and weight of the supporting members of the sign;
 - d. the maximum and minimum height and clearance of the sign;
 - e. the proposed location of the sign in relation to the boundaries of the parcel upon which it is to be located;
 - f. off-street parking areas, parking lot aisles and driveways;
 - g. dimensions and areas of any proposed landscaped areas, if applicable to the sign type;
 - h. a colour rendering of what the sign will look like; and
 - i. for an illuminated sign, information on the technical means by which the illumination shall be accomplished.
3. Plans submitted for signs may need to be sealed or stamped by a member of the Association of Professional Engineers of B.C.
4. The plans are reviewed by the Planning Division for *Sign Bylaw* compliance and by the Building Division for *Building Code* compliance.
5. When all requirements have been met and approvals received the permit is issued and the applicant may commence work.
6. When the sign installation is completed, a letter from the engineer or associated firm must be deposited with the Building Division stating that the sign has been installed and inspected under the engineer's supervision, and the work is in accordance with the submitted plans.
7. The Building Division does the final inspection.

Note: if the sign installation does not commence within 90 days of issuance of the initial sign permit, the permit lapses and a new sign permit application must be filed.

Questions?

Do I require a sign permit to put up a sign to advertise my business?

- Yes. The *Sign Bylaw* requires that a person shall obtain a sign permit from the City if they are proposing to construct, erect, alter, rebuild, reconstruct, move, demolish or remove a sign.

There's a sign already in place in the location I'm moving into. I will only be changing the face of the sign to the name of my business. Do I need a sign permit?

- Yes. A face change or re-skinning of a sign requires a permit.

The business across the street from me has a projecting sign but according to the *Sign Bylaw* I can't have one. This doesn't seem fair.

- Most likely that sign across the street was put up several years ago when the bylaw did allow that type of sign. It is now considered "legally non-conforming" to the bylaw today. If that sign were to come off the wall in a storm or be damaged in some way that necessitated its removal, a replacement sign would not be allowed, as any new signage must conform with the bylaw of today.

What if I don't get a sign permit for my new or changed sign?

- You could receive a Municipal Ticket from the City that will carry a fine of \$100. Should you elect to pay the fine as a cost of doing business and still not get a permit you will be repeatedly ticketed until you do obtain a sign permit.

I would like to make the sign permit application myself rather than hiring a sign company to do it. Is this allowed?

- It is preferable that a professional sign company make the application, as the company will have the expertise to properly install a sign. Professional sign companies also have insurance that covers liability in the event that one of their signs falls off a building and injures a pedestrian. If a business owner wishes to make an application himself he should be prepared to submit complete application.

Schedule of Fees

Basic Sign Application Permit
\$50.00

Where more than one field inspection is required to complete the final installation the fee charged for each additional inspection shall be:

Fee per hour: \$50.00

Minimum charge: \$50.00

The Basic Sign Application Permit Fee will be waived where a Building Permit is required.

Building Permit Fees are based on value of construction.



Columbia Street HARP Sign Guidelines

Types and placement of appropriate signs



The City disclaims any liability arising from reliance on information contained in this guide. For complete regulations consult the Sign Bylaw.

For more information, please contact the Development Services Departments:

Planning Division

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Building Division

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