



Calvert County NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Review and Enforcement of Calvert County's New Sign Regulations Gets Underway

PRINCE FREDERICK, Md. – Feb. 28, 2018 – The Calvert County Department of Planning & Zoning announced its code enforcement staff will soon be visiting with business owners to explain and enforce the county's recently updated sign regulations. The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners adopted updated sign regulations Jan. 31, 2018, to Section 6-8 of the Calvert County Zoning Ordinance.

The following is a list of the major changes made to the sign regulations:

- The adopted regulations are content neutral in order to comply with the [U.S. Supreme Court's Reed v. Town of Gilbert](#) case opinion.
- The sign regulations purpose statement was expanded to incorporate language specific to the promotion of businesses.
- Sign regulations are now more user-friendly:
 - The regulations are now located in one document instead of multiple documents.
 - Information regarding sign dimensions, sign types and the location of a sign now appears in charts for easier reference.
 - Maximum sign areas and sign heights for freestanding signs both in and out of the town centers appear in charts for ease of use.
 - All permanent sign regulations are consolidated in one section and all temporary sign regulations are consolidated in another for ease of use.

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- A temporary sign is now defined by the construction and material make-up of the sign, not a time limit. Temporary sign categories now include air-activated, balloon, flags, banners, blades and yard signs.
- The regulations permit electronic message center signs in the Prince Frederick Town Center and Employment Center zoning districts along MD Route 2/4, West Dares Beach Road and MD Route 231 west of MD Route 2/4.

The county's code enforcement staff will begin enforcing these new regulations by assisting business owners through the transition as follows:

- Enforcement staff will soon begin speaking with businesses and advising what is and is not permissible under the new regulations. Staff will provide businesses that are out of compliance with a zoning inspection report including a correction date (30 days from date of issuance) along with an online link to the new regulations.
- After the initial visit, staff will continue to monitor the signs and work with the businesses to bring them into compliance.
- After the 30-day correction period, staff will re-inspect each location. If the re-inspection results in a violation, a zoning enforcement case will be opened and the business will be issued a notice of violation with a new corrective action date.
- A third site inspection will occur after the corrective action date on the notice of violation. If still in violation, the business owner will be advised again, in an effort to gain compliance through communication. If not resolved by an agreed date, the business owner will receive a citation and \$500 fine.
- If no compliance occurs after the citation deadline, staff will file the matter with the County Attorney's Office to schedule for court.

Business owners are encouraged to review the new sign regulations online at www.co.cal.md.us/SignRegulations, under Ordinance 04-18.1, Exhibit B.

For additional information, please feel free to contact the Department of Planning & Zoning at 410-535-2348 or pz@calvertcountymd.gov.

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