

**MAYOR
ITEM # XI.C.**

Office of the Mayor



City of Hudson

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TO: COMMON COUNCIL, DEVIN WILLI, DENNY DARNOLD and DAVID GRAY

FROM: MAYOR DEAN KNUDSON

DATE: NOVEMBER 13, 2009

RE: SIGN ORDINANCE

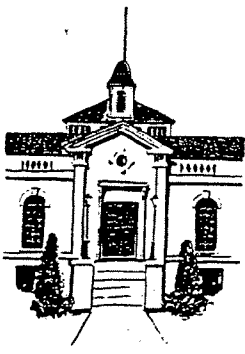
In the summer of 2008 I received many complaints regarding violations of our sign ordinance. Some complaints were from citizens concerned about community aesthetics, while others were from business owners concerned about blatant violations of the Code by their colleagues and competitors. In response I took photographs of 85 obvious violations within the City. City staff then notified the violators and requested compliance with the code. In the following months many of the signs in violation of the Code were voluntarily removed.

In recent months many sign violations have again become apparent. As a result, I asked Inspector David Gray to draft an enforcement policy that could be used to UNIFORMLY enforce our sign ordinance. The process that was developed involves a three-step process, with violators receiving two written warnings in every instance, before a citation is written.

Written warnings have been issued in the last week, and you can expect to hear requests for amendments to the Municipal Code regarding signage. Many of those receiving warnings this month were also advised about the Sign Code in 2008. There are three main areas that may need improvement in our current Code:

1. Vinyl Banner signs have become very inexpensive and very common. Our Code severely limits the use of these signs. We may want to relax the rules. Currently these are allowed by permit up to 4 times per year for up to 21 days. My recommendation is to restrict vinyl banners to those affixed to buildings, and limit the surface area that is allowed for total wall signage.
2. Sandwich board signage is allowed in Downtown but not in other districts. Some clarification of when and where these signs are allowed would be helpful.
3. Recent advances in LED technology have made our current restriction on illuminated signs an ineffective method of regulating these signs. Our current Code allows electronic message boards up to 30 sq. ft. in area in Business Districts with a restriction of maximum light intensity of each individual bulb of 33 watts. My recommendation is that the Common Council should enact a moratorium on the erection of electronic message board signs until the Code is amended in this area.





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David Gray
Building Inspector/Zoning
dgray@ci.hudson.wi.us

Elizabeth A. Moline
Administrative Assistant

Municipal Code Violation

To: Hudson Business
From: David Gray – Building Inspector / Zoning
Re: Non-Compliant Signage on Public Property

1st Offense

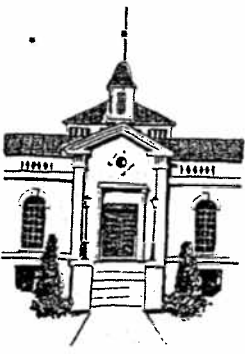
This is written notification that the signage you have displayed is not in compliance with the City of Hudson Municipal Code Chapter 202 – Signs. This non-compliant signage is located on public property and you are required to take down the signage permanently within 24 hours.

2nd Offense

Businesses failing to comply with the first warning will have their signage removed from public property by the City after the 24 hour period. Removed signage can be retrieved from the City of Hudson Public Works East Garage located at 1520 2nd Street.

Future Offenses

Businesses continuing to display signage on public property will have their signage removed from public property by the City without notification. Businesses repeatedly violating the sign ordinance will be issued a \$150 citation, plus administration costs, for continued violations.



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Municipal Code Violation

To: Hudson Business
From: David Gray – Building Inspector / Zoning
Re: Non-Compliant Signage

1st Offense

This is written notification that the sign(s) you have displayed is not in compliance with the City of Hudson Municipal Code Chapter 202 – Signs. This non-compliant signage shall be taken down permanently within five business days.

2nd Offense - Written Notification

Businesses failing to comply with the first warning will receive written notification that failure to remove the sign within 24 hours will result in \$150 daily citation. (According to 202-10.B(2) each day the sign is left up constitutes another violation with maximum of \$300 daily forfeiture.)

3rd Offense – Citation

Businesses failing to comply with the above two notifications shall be given daily citations until the violation is remedied. Any future placement of a same or similar non-conforming signage will automatically result in future citations.