TOWN OF RHINE
SIGN APPLICATION

A copy of Chapter 18 of the Town of Rhine Municipal Code is provided. Initial upon receipt _____ Please read for all regulations.

Office Use Only
Date Received : ___/___/___
Received by: _____
Date of Town Board Meeting to be approved: ___/___/___
8/26

APPLICANT

Applicant: _____

Contractor, if different: _____

Mailing address: _____

Phone Number: (___)_____ Email: _____

SIGN INFORMATION

Parcel Number: _____ Zoning of Address: _____

Dimensions of Sign (total sq ft and height): _____

Are you the owner of the property where the sign will be placed? Yes ☐ No ☐

Will there be front lighting on the sign? Yes ☐ No ☐ Will it be a Digital/Electronic Sign? Yes ☐ No ☐

Description of location of sign: _____

A copy of the property/parcel with the location of the sign drawn on must be attached. Is it attached? Yes ☐

A Building Permit Application must be attached. Is it attached? Yes ☐

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT

I hereby submit an application for a sign. I understand that to obtain a sign I must get an approved Building Permit from the Town of Rhine Building Inspector and will need final approval from the Town Board after a Public Hearing. Each such sign shall require a separate hearing and each such request shall require a fee as designated in the Town's Fee Schedule (Table 21.04).

_____ _____
Applicant Signature Date

Town Board Decision: Approved ☐ Denied ☐

_____ _____
Town of Rhine Chairperson Signature Date

Building Permit Application/Number: _____ Received by: _____ Date: _____

Sign Application Payment: $_____ Received by: _____ Date: _____

920-876-3413 W5250 County Road FF, Elkhart Lake, WI 53020 clerk@tn.rhine.wi.gov

CHAPTER 18: SIGN AND BILLBOARD REGULATIONS (08/04/2026)

Section	Title	Page
	Table of Contents	1
18.01	Purpose	2
18.02	Definitions	2
18.03	Permitted Signs	2
18.04	Prohibited Signs	3
18.05	Building Permits/Town Board Approval/ Standards	4
18.06	Abandonment or Disrepair	4
18.07	Nonconforming Signs	4
18.08	Severability/Controlling Regulations	4
18.09	Penalties	5

18.01 PURPOSE

The purpose of this Chapter is to establish standards for signage to safeguard life and property and to promote public welfare and community aesthetics by regulating the appearance, construction, location, and maintenance of all signs and billboards. This Chapter provides for a method of enforcement and establishes penalties for its violation.

18.02 DEFINITIONS

(1) SIGN. Any advertising sign, display, device, notice, figure, painting, drawing, message, placard, poster, billboard, portable or permanent, illuminated directly or indirectly, attached to a building or free-standing, or other thing which is designed, intended, or used to advertise or inform in any part and which is visible from a traveled roadway, waterway, or the air.

(2) ON PROPERTY SIGN. A sign advertising activities, goods, or services available on the property on which it is located. This includes a sign which consists solely of the name of an establishment or which identifies an establishment(s) principal product or service offered.

(3) OFF PROPERTY SIGN. Any advertising sign, including a billboard, which directs attention to a business, commodity, service, or entertainment conducted, sold, or offered elsewhere than upon the property where the sign is located.

(4) BLANKETING. The unreasonable obstruction of view of other signs or features or the placement of a series of signs which could cause a safety hazard.

(5) TEMPORARY SIGN. Any sign intended to be displayed for no more than 30 days including special event signs, banners, and decorative-type displays or anything similar for events as described in Section 18.03(8).

(6) NONCONFORMING SIGN. Any sign which does not conform to the regulations of this Chapter.

(7) ILLUMINATED SIGN. Any sign lighted either by lights affixed to the sign or directed at the sign.

(8) ELECTRONIC OR DIGITAL SIGN. Any sign that produces a message or lighting that is an integral part of the sign.

18.03 PERMITTED SIGNS

All signs identified in this subsection are allowed. A building permit is required for illuminated, electronic and digital signs. *(Rev. 08/04/2026)*

(1) Unlighted political signs that are placed on private property with the owner(s) consent provided the sign does not exceed 32 square feet and the sign is erected no more than thirty (30) days before an election, except that a sign erected prior to a primary may stay in place until the general election. No such sign greater than 4 square feet may be placed in or facing a residential zoning district (R-1 and R-2). All such signs shall be removed no later than 7 days after the election.

(2) Governmental traffic signs, utility signs, or railroad signs.

(3) Residential identification signs placed by direction of the Town including fire call numbers and street or road identification signs.

(4) Unlighted "No Trespassing" signs not exceeding 3 square feet.

(5) Unlighted garage, yard, estate, or auction signs not exceeding 3 square feet. These signs can only be placed on property with the permission of the owner or occupant and shall not be placed more than 3 days prior to the sale and shall be removed no more than 1 day after the sale.

(6) Unlighted real estate signs. No such sign shall exceed 32 square feet and only one sign is allowed per tax parcel. No such sign greater than 4 square feet, nor more than one sign per residential property shall be placed in a residential zoning district (R-1 and R-2). All such signs shall be removed upon closing date or length of listing.

(7) Flags of the United States of America or the State of Wisconsin.

(8) Unlighted temporary signs for special events including sales or seasonal events, non-profit or charity events provided that no such sign shall be more than 32 square feet and is placed with the permission of the owner or occupant of the property. No such sign shall be placed more than 30 days prior to an event and shall be removed no more than 1 day after the event.

(9) Agricultural related signs provided that all such signs are erected with owner or occupant permission and do not exceed 32 square feet. This includes farm identification, crop identification and dairy factory signs.

(10) Unlighted signs no more than 4 square feet identifying families of residence. Unlighted signs no more than 10 square feet identifying home occupations (limited to 4 square feet in the R-1 and R-2 zoning districts).

(11) Unlighted signs no more than 4 square feet indicating a personal item for sale provided the item and/or sign are not visible for more than thirty (30) consecutive days.

(12) Directional and point of sale signs located on or in buildings.

(13) Construction site signs provided they are no more than 4 square feet and are displayed only during the duration of the construction project.

(14) Illuminated and/or Electronic Signs are subject to Application Fee (See Fee Schedule, Table 21.04), Public Hearing, and Town Board approval or denial. *(Rev. 08/04//2026)*

18.04 PROHIBITED SIGNS

The following signs are prohibited in the Town:

(1) Signs found to be unsafe, in disrepair, or abandoned.

(2) Signs attached to trees, other vegetation, or natural objects except "No Trespassing" signs.

(3) Signs placed on unlicensed temporarily parked vehicles, trailers, or other such objects.

(4) Signs that move, swing, protrude from buildings, or are animated.

(5) Signs placed on public land or located on roads or in the right-of-way except as permitted by the Town.

(6) Off Property Signs except as provided in Section 18.05.

(7) Signs that advertise adult activities or products of a sexually explicit nature or are considered a nuisance to individuals or the community.

(8) Signs that are illuminated in a fashion which is a distraction to traffic or a nuisance to neighbors.

18.05 BUILDING PERMITS/TOWN BOARD APPROVAL/STANDARDS

(1) All signs in excess of 10 square feet shall require a building permit . No such sign shall exceed 32 square feet. Signs shall be considered for approval by the Town Board after a Public Hearing following a Class II notice. There shall be no more than one sign per building side parallel to roads. Any allowed illumination shall be by front lighting only and shall be the minimum necessary to allow the sign to be visible. *(Rev. 08/04/2026)*

(2) All signs hereafter erected shall be located on land zoned B-1 or B-2 and shall be considered for approval by the Town Board after a Public Hearing following a Class II notice. Each such sign shall require a separate hearing and each such request shall require a fee (See Fee Schedule, Table 21.04). In no case shall a sign be permitted under this Section which exceeds 64 square feet and 15 feet in height. All such signs shall also require a building permit and sign application and shall meet the requirements of applicable building codes. *(Rev. 08/04/2026)*

(3) All permanent signs require a setback of 4 feet beyond the right-of-way and no less than 300 feet between signs on all roads within the Town. There shall be only one sign per property, V-type signs shall not exceed 60 degrees of angle or it will be considered two signs, and double sided signs with the same message on each side shall be acceptable without combining the square footage of each side.

18.06 ABANDONMENT OR DISREPAIR

No sign in the Town shall be abandoned or allowed to come to disrepair. Any sign abandoned or unreasonably maintained as determined by the Building Inspector shall be removed by the owner within thirty (30) days of receipt of a written notice from the Town Board. Failure to comply with this order shall cause the Town to initiate removal with all costs assessed to the proper

18.07 NONCONFORMING SIGNS

All signs not in compliance with this Chapter at the time it was originally adopted shall be considered nonconforming. If a nonconforming sign is to be repaired, replaced, or the message changed or updated the new sign shall be in complete compliance with the provisions of this Chapter.

18.08 SEVERABILITY/CONTROLLING REGULATIONS

Should any section, clause, or provision of this Chapter be declared invalid by a court, the same shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of the Chapter. Should any section, clause, or provision of this Chapter conflict with other portions of Town Codes, the latest adoption shall govern.

18.09 PENALTIES

The Building Inspector is responsible for inspection and issuance of permits that meet the requirements set forth herein. The Town Board is responsible for initiating legal action to ensure adherence to the provisions of this Chapter. Anyone in violation of the provisions of this Chapter shall be subject to a forfeiture of not less than 10 dollars and not more than 100 dollars per violation, together with the costs of prosecution. Each day of violation of any provision of this Chapter shall be deemed to constitute a separate offense.