

## SC DOT

### Outdoor Advertising Guidelines

#### **Signs Requiring Permits**

The official definition of a sign that requires a permit covers a lot of structures:

Any sign structure or combination of structure and message in the form of outdoor sign, display, device, figure, painting, drawing, message, plaque, poster, billboard, advertising structure, advertisement, logo, symbol or other form which is designed, intended or used to advertise or inform, any part of the message or informative contents of which is visible from the main-traveled way.

One look at this definition and you can see why the best approach is to contact the Outdoor Advertising Coordinator as soon as you begin to think about advertising. It is the coordinators job to help you balance your need to advertise against the need to meet regulations and preserve the beauty of our highways.

#### **Signs that do not require permits**

There are three types of signs which do not require SCDOT permits;

Official traffic control signs, markers, or information panels erected or approved by SCDOT.

Real estate signs (for sale or lease) located on the property they advertise.

**"On Premise" signs (that is, signs located on the premise of the business they advertise).**

Important: An "on premise" sign may still be subject to local regulations, even if you don't have to obtain a SCDOT permit. It is important, also, to be sure your sign qualifies as an "on premise" sign. You should check with the Outdoor Advertising Coordinator to be sure. Otherwise, the sign might be deemed unlawful, and you will have to pay the expense of having it removed.

#### **Federal and State Requirements**

The sign face may not be larger than 672 square feet. Regardless of how large it is in square feet, it's facing cannot be over 48 feet in height or longer than 60 feet.

Signs must be placed in areas that are zoned for commercial or industrial use. If the area is unzoned, it should be where commercial or industrial activities are located. It is the responsibility of SCDOT to determine what areas qualify for placement of signs. If it is along an interstate highway or freeway (or a controlled access federal-aid primary highway), your sign must be located 500 feet away from any other sign, any interchange and any rest areas.

If your sign is located along a federal aid primary highway with no controlled access in rural unincorporated areas, it must be 300 feet away from other signs. Check with SCDOT to see if your proposed location meets these requirements.

**A permitted sign must have a permit plate attached to it.**