

# CITY OF ATLANTA sign ordinance

what you need to know to be in compliance  
with Chapter 28A16-28A.001

*"Signs, signs, everywhere a sign, blockin' out the scenery, breakin' my mind..."*

So begins an old song from the 70s, but it's even more true today with the proliferation of quick sign printing shops and sign placement "bandits." The City of Atlanta, in cooperation with Keep Atlanta Beautiful, is working hard to educate the public about and enforce compliance with the City's Sign Ordinance. Below is a brief overview of what you need to know to be in compliance.

## **No signs in the public right of way or other public property. (16-28A.012 and 138-13. Article XI Litter Control)**

When it comes to our parks, streets, traffic intersections, and other public property, it's really very simple -- the placement of signs anywhere in the public right of way (a distance generally within 6 - 7 feet of the curb) or other public property, other than by a governmental entity, is illegal at all times. That applies to any signs and posters nailed to telephone poles and to any signs placed along the road, at highway off-ramps, at intersections, or on traffic islands, such as real estate "directional" signs, political campaign signs, civic campaign signs (such as church and charity fund-raiser and event signs), yard sale signs, etc.

## **Limits on signs on residential property.**

On residential property, the following signs are allowed with a setback out of the public right of way (generally at least 6-7 feet from the street):

- a) one "for sale" or "for rent" sign on the property that is itself for sale or rent. The sign cannot be larger than 6 square feet (2 x 3').
- b) one contractor sign while a house is under construction or renovation.
- c) civic campaign signs during a time-limited civic campaign.
- d) political campaign signs during a campaign.

## **Limits on signs on commercial property.**

Before any sign or banner can be placed outside of a building on commercial property, the owner of the property must obtain a sign permit from the City's

building on commercial property, the owner of the property must obtain a sign permit from the City's Bureau of Buildings.

In most cases, the only signs approved are durable permanent signs, with no more than 3 signs allowed per property. The biggest offenders are foam board advertising signs, such as cigarette, alcohol, and soft drink ads at gas stations, and advertising banners and foam board signs at fast food restaurants and strip shopping centers.

## **Sec. 74-607(d) Flyers on Autos.**

It is unlawful to place any handbill or unsolicited newspaper on any parked vehicle.

## **Penalties.**

Placement of an illegal sign is a criminal misdemeanor, punishable by fines up to \$1000 per sign per day and/or jail time up to 6 months. The city has significantly increased its Code Enforcement staffing, placing many of them under the direction of the Atlanta Police Department. This results in increased enforcement of the Sign Ordinance with increases in citations written and fines awarded until compliance improves.

## **How can you help?**

(1) If the sign is on public right of way or other public property, please call Keep Atlanta Beautiful, Inc. at 404.249.5853 to report it. Provide a description of the sign and its location, noting the nearest intersection.

(2) Help educate others about the sign ordinance and reporting illegal signs by distributing copies of this flyer.

**KEEP ATLANTA BEAUTIFUL INC.**

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