

Kilgore tweaks rules for banners, temporary signs

Kilgore City Council early this month amended its ordinance governing banners and temporary signs with a goal of providing clarity on how and where they can be used. In general, the changes provide new opportunities for the use of banners and temporary signs, but with the goal of providing a neat and clean appearance for the roadways that these signs and banners typically tend to appear on.

Temporary signs advertising softball sign-ups or church bazaars? Those are still ok. But off premise temporary signs for businesses are still not permitted.

The ordinance defines a banner as a soft, flexible sign -- similar to a flag -- made of cloth, plastic or other similarly flexible material. One banner will be allowed for each building housing a single business but the rule allows one banner for each business in multi-tenant structures like a shopping center. Banners will be limited in size to 32 square feet; they have to be attached to the front wall or canopy of the building but cannot cover windows or doors.

Banners which promote vendors or brand names associated with a business can be no larger than 12 square feet, must be attached to a wall of the building associated with that vendor and may number no more than three at any given time.

All banners must be kept "in good condition and neat in appearance" and must be securely fastened at all corners. No banner may be used for permanent signage.

The new rule allows temporary signs, but only according to new guidelines. Temporary signs are signs displayed for a limited and specific period of time and are usually made of paper or cardboard. The ordinance also identifies "feather flags" as a temporary sign.

Those temporary signs can be no larger than 12 square feet and only three temporary signs are allowed per year for any business; they will be allowed for up to 30 days and are allowed only on the property where the business is located. At no time will temporary signs be allowed on public right-of-way.

Except for signs promoting community festivals, conventions, major events and other non-profit activities, no banners or temporary signs will be allowed in residential or agricultural zones or in the downtown core.

Carol Windham, Kilgore's director of planning, says the city will begin enforcing the new regulations June 1.

"We want people to have time to adjust to the rules," Windham said. "Some local business rely on banners and temporary signs as their exclusive means of promotion, so we'll give everyone a month or so to adapt."

The new ordinance requires a permit -- no fee required -- for both banners and for temporary signs. For a permit, call Windham at 904-984-4113 or email permits@cityofkilgore.com

