

# CITY OF MILPITAS

Office of Building Safety  
455 E. Calaveras Blvd.  
Milpitas, CA 95035  
408-586-3240  
[www.milpitas.gov](http://www.milpitas.gov)



# INTERIOR SIGN SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

## 1. PERMIT INFORMATION:

- This permit includes the installation of interior tenant identification signs only. Permits for all other signs including exterior and exit signs must be obtained in person at the Permit Center, Office of Building Safety, 455 E. Calaveras Blvd.
- A Building Permit may be issued only to the Building Owner or their Authorized Agent [CBC 105.1].
  - See also [Authorized Agent Sample Letter](#).
  - Where the Contractor is acting as the Owner's Authorized Agent, they must be a State of California Licensed Contractor with the proper license classification.
- If the work is performed by the Building Owner personally or by his/her workers and an inspection indicates the work cannot be completed satisfactorily, then a licensed contractor must perform the work.
- If the Building Owner hires workers, State Law requires the Owner to obtain Worker's Compensation Insurance. Proof of this insurance is required prior to inspection.

## 2. INSTALLATION REQUIREMENTS:

- All work must comply with the 2022 California Building Code (CBC), 2022 California Plumbing Code (CPC), 2022 California Mechanical Code (CMC), 2022 California Electrical Code (CEC), 2022 California Energy Code (CEnC), and 2023 Milpitas Municipal Code (MMC).
- All signs installed inside a Mall shall comply with CBC Section 402.
  - See the attached drawing, *Interior Mall Signs*, for detailed information.
- Light-transmitting plastic interior wall signs shall be limited to the following: [CBC Section 2611]
  - The aggregate area of all light-transmitting plastics shall not exceed 24 square feet.
    - Exception: In buildings that are fully sprinklered where all plastics are Class CC1, this limit is increased to 100 square feet.
    - Signs exceeding the aggregate area limits must be separated from each other by not less than 4 feet horizontally and 8 feet vertically.
  - Backs of wall-mounted signs and nonilluminated portions of all signs shall be fully encased in metal.
    - Malls only: Edges and backs of any plastic sign must be fully encased in metal [CBC 402.6.4.4.1].

## 3. ENERGY REQUIREMENTS:

- Indoor illuminated signs must meet the following requirements as applicable.
  - Sign lighting, other than exit sign lighting, must be controlled with an automatic-time switch control, or an astronomical time-switch control [CEnC 130.3(a)1]. Either type of time-switch control must meet the additional requirements of CEnC 110.9.b.1.
  - Electronic message centers (EMCs) with a new connected lighting greater than 15 kW must have a control capable of reducing the lighting power by at least 30 percent upon receiving demand response signal sent by the local utility [CEnC 110.12(e)].
  - Signs shall comply with either of the following energy efficiency requirements [CEnC 140.8]:
    - Have a maximum lighting power less than the following:
      - Internally illuminated signs – 12 watts per square foot of sign area.

- Note: For double-faced signs, only measure one side.
  - Externally illuminated signs – 2.3 watts per square foot of sign area.
- Alternate Lighting Source requires that the sign be illuminated only with one or more of the following:
  1. High pressure sodium lamps.
  2. Pulse start or ceramic metal halide lamps served by ballast that has a minimum efficiency of 88 percent.
  3. Pulse start metal halide lamps that are 320 watts or smaller, are not 250 W or 175 W lamps, and are served by a ballast that has a minimum efficiency of 80 percent.
  4. Neon or cold cathode lamps with transformer or power supply efficiency greater than or equal to the following:
    - a. A minimum efficiency of 75 percent when the transformer or power supply rated output current is less than 50 mA, or
    - b. A minimum efficiency of 68 percent when the transformer or power supply rated output current is 50 mA or greater.
  5. Fluorescent lamps with a minimum color rendering index (CRI) of 80 or which use only electronic ballasts with a fundamental output frequency not less than 20 kHz.
  6. Light emitting diodes (LEDs) with a power supply having an efficiency of 80 percent or greater.
    - a. Exception: Single voltage external power supplies that are designed to convert 120-volt AC input into lower voltage DC or AC output and have a nameplate output power less than or equal to 250 watts, shall comply with the applicable requirements of the Appliance Efficiency Regulations (Title 20).
  7. Compact fluorescent lamps that do not contain a medium base socket.
- Exceptions to the above:
  1. Unfiltered incandescent lamps that are not part of an electronic message center (EMC), an internally illuminated sign, or an externally illuminated sign.
  2. Exit signs. Exit signs shall meet the requirements of the Appliance Efficiency Regulations.
  3. Traffic signs. Traffic signs shall meet the requirements of the Appliance Efficiency Regulations.
- All mandatory measures must be listed on the plans.

**Energy Forms:**

- Required forms may be found through the California Energy Commission's [Online Resource Center](#).

**4. ACCESSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:**

Signs shall be provided in accordance with CBC 11B-216 and shall comply with CBC 11B-703.

- Signs identifying permanent rooms and spaces shall comply with the following:
  - Where both visual and tactile characters are required, either one sign with both visual and tactile characters or two separate signs, one with visual, and one with tactile characters, shall be provided [CBC 11B-703.1].
  - **Raised characters** shall comply with the following requirements [CBC 11B-703.2]:
    - Be duplicated in Braille.
    - Be a minimum 1/32 inch above their background.
    - Be uppercase and in a sans serif font which may not be italic, oblique, script, highly decorative or of other unusual form.
    - Be selected from fonts where the width of the uppercase letter "O" is 60% minimum and 110% maximum of the height of the uppercase letter "I".
    - Have a height between 5/8 and 2 inches, based on the height of the uppercase letter "I".
    - Have a stroke thickness, measured on the uppercase letter "I", which is no more than 15% the height of the character.
    - Have a spacing between individual characters, measured from their closest points, which is at least 1/8 inch except that those with a non-rectangular cross section need only have a 1/16 inch spacing at their base. Characters must also have 3/8-inch minimum separation from raised borders and decorative elements.

- Have a spacing between the baselines of separate lines of characters within a message shall be between 135% and 170% of the character height.
- Be in a horizontal format.
- **Braille** shall comply with the following requirements [CBC 11B-703.3]:
  - Be contracted (Grade 2).
  - Have dots that are domed or rounded in shape, having base diameters measuring between 0.059 and 0.063 inches and heights of between 0.025 and 0.037 inches. Dots must have a center to center spacing of 0.100 inches for dots in the same cell, 0.300 inches between corresponding dots in adjacent cells, and from 0.395 to 0.400 inches between corresponding dots from one cell directly below.
  - Be positioned below the corresponding text in a horizontal format, flush left or centered. Where text is multilined, place Braille below the entire text.
  - Be separated between 3/8 and 1/2 inch from any other tactile characters, and 3/8 inch from raised borders and decorative elements.
    - Exception: Braille on elevator car controls shall be separated 3/16 inch minimum and shall be located directly below the corresponding raised characters or symbols.
- **Visual characters** shall comply with the following requirements [CBC 11B-703.5]:
  - Have a stroke thickness such that the uppercase letter “I” is between 10% and 20% of the height of the character.
  - Be in a horizontal format.
  - Comply with the following requirements or both comply with the requirements for **raised characters** and be accompanied by **Braille**:
    - Have, along with their background, a non-glare finish. They shall contrast with their background with either light characters on a dark background or dark characters on a light background.
    - Be uppercase or lowercase or a combination of both.
    - Be conventional in form and not italic, script, highly decorative or of other unusual forms.
    - Be selected from fonts where the width of the uppercase letter “O” is 60% minimum and 110% maximum of the height of the uppercase letter ‘I’.
    - Have a character height as follows:
      - For characters between 40 inches and 70 inches above the floor, 5/8 inch plus 1/8 inch per foot of viewing distance beyond 72 inches.
      - For characters between 70 inches and 120 inches above the floor, 2 inches plus 1/8 inch per foot of viewing distance beyond 180 inches.
      - For characters more than 120 inches above the floor, 3 inches plus 1/8 inch per foot of viewing distance beyond 21 feet.
      - Be a minimum of 40 inches above the finish floor.
    - Have a spacing between individual characters that is between 10% and 35% of the height of the character.
  - Signs that provide direction to or information about interior and exterior spaces and facilities of the site shall comply with the requirements as for **visual characters** above [CBC 11B-703.5].
  - Refer to CBC Section 11B-703.7.2.6 for additional requirements applicable to sanitary facility signage.

### 3. INSPECTION PROCEDURES

- One final inspection is required for signs, unless some of the work will be covered up and not accessible to the inspector in which case an additional inspection is required prior to any work being concealed. For each inspection, the Permit Card and the Approved Job Copy of the Drawings (if any) must be presented to the inspector. Permits expire 12 months after issuance or the last valid inspection, whichever is later.

### 4. QUESTIONS:

If you have any questions regarding your project, contact the Office of Building Safety at (408) 586-3240.