



Municipal Sign Bylaws: What you need to know

Eighteen local governments within the Real Estate Board area have sign bylaws. Many of these bylaws specifically address the size, use and placement of real estate signs.

	Burnaby City of	Coquitlam City of	Delta Corporation of	Gibsons Town of	Maple Ridge District of	New Westminster City of	North Vancouver City of	North Vancouver District of
Bylaw	Burnaby Sign Bylaw, 1972, No. 6163	City of Coquitlam Sign Bylaw, 2000, No. 3500	Delta Sign Bylaw, 2000, No. 5860	Town of Gibsons Sign Bylaw, 1985, No. 526	Sign Bylaw, 1992, No. 4653 (Under review)	Sign Bylaw, 2000, No. 6625	Sign Bylaw, 1992, No. 6363	Sign Bylaw, 2002, No. 3317
Real Estate Signs Defined (Term "Real Estate" or "Realty" Sign used)		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Size Limitations (Residential Only)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Construction / Development Signs Defined (Non-Residential)		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Directional Signs – Permitted? (with Restrictions)			✓					
Vehicle Signs – Permitted? (with Restrictions)								
Time Limitations			Open House Directional signs are permitted for the duration of the open house		Sign advertising a group of lots in a subdivision, or group of houses within a housing project - max 6 months, beyond which special approval shall be required Construction sign shall be limited to a period not exceeding the duration of said construction	Shall be removed within 15 days of the sale/lease/ rental	Shall be removed within 15 days of the sale/lease/ rental	Shall be removed within 7 days after it ceases to bear a useful message
Permit Required?	No	No	No	No			No	
Municipality will seize signs in contravention of bylaw *	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
How to retrieve a seized sign? *	City won't contact Realtor about seized sign. Realtor must contact City to see if they have their sign. No fine levied.	City will contact Realtor to retrieve their sign. No fine levied, unless Realtor is a repeat offender.	Corporation will contact Realtor to retrieve their sign. No fine levied. If don't retrieve sign after 30 days – it is scrapped.	Town will contact Realtor to retrieve their sign. \$100 fine could be levied.	District won't contact Realtor about seized sign. Realtor must contact District to see if they have their sign. A fine may be levied.	City will contact Realtor to retrieve their sign. \$100 fine could be levied.	City will contact Realtor to retrieve their sign. No fine levied.	District will contact Realtor to retrieve their sign. No fine levied.

* These are municipal policies, not in the sign bylaws.

Local governments that deal with signs within other bylaws:

- **Village of Anmore** – does not have a sign bylaw, nor are signs covered in any other bylaw.
- **Village of Belcarra** – signs are covered under the Zoning Bylaw, 1996, No. 253 [Section 304.6]
- **Municipality of Bowen Island** – signs are covered under the Land Use Bylaw, 2002, No. 57 [Section 3.45]
- **Sunshine Coast Regional District** – signs are covered under Zoning Bylaw, 1987, No. 310 and Zoning Bylaw, 1990, No. 337
- **Village of Lions Bay** – signs are covered under the Zoning Bylaw, 1985, No. 139 [Section 24]
- **District of Sechelt** – does not have a sign bylaw, nor are signs covered in any other bylaw.

For Reference Only

Please refer to actual bylaw for more detail.

It is up to each Realtor to know the sign bylaws in each community where they do business and abide by them, in order to maintain good working relationships with local governments. **Realtors who don't abide by the bylaws may have their signs seized and may face a fine in order to get them back.**

The matrix below gives a good overview of the sign bylaws in your area. A "check mark" indicates that the bylaw addresses the specific topic in the left column. No "check mark" means the bylaw does not contain a reference to that specific topic.

Pemberton Village of	Pitt Meadows District of	Port Coquitlam City of	Port Moody City of	Richmond City of	Squamish District of	Squamish-Lillooet Regional District of	Vancouver City of	West Vancouver District of	Whistler Resort Municipality of
Sign Bylaw, 1995, No. 380	The District of Pitt Meadows Sign Bylaw, 2000, No. 1673	Sign Bylaw, 1992, No. 2638	City of Port Moody Sign Bylaw, 1998, No. 2403	City of Richmond Sign Bylaw, 1990, No. 5560	District of Squamish Sign Bylaw, 2000, No. 1582	Sign Bylaw, 1998, No. 681	Sign Bylaw, 2004, No. 6510	Sign Bylaw, 1992, No. 3775	Sign Bylaw, 1987, No. 558
✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
✓	✓	✓			✓			✓	✓
			Not Permitted		Not Permitted			✓	
Shall be removed within 2 weeks of the sale/lease/ rental Directional and Open House signs permitted only during the time the property is open for inspection	Directional signs are limited to a period not exceeding 30 days	Shall be removed within 7 days of the sale/ lease/rental	Shall be removed within 7 days of the subject property being sold	Development Signs - max 12 months or after a building on the site is occupied for use, which ever is shorter.	Shall be removed within 4 weeks of the sale/ lease/rental Directional sign posted no more than 8 hours in a 24 hour period	Shall be removed within 2 weeks of the sale/ lease/rental		Shall be removed within 2 weeks of sale/ lease/rental Directional and Open House sign – posted only during time the house is open to public	Shall be removed within 2 weeks of the sale/lease/ rental Directional and Open house sign permitted only during the time the property is open for inspection
No	No	No	No	No			No	No	No
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Village will contact Realtor to retrieve their sign. \$100 fine is levied.	District won't contact Realtor about seized sign. Realtor must contact District to see if they have their sign. First offense – no fine. Second offense – \$100 fine levied.	City won't contact Realtor about seized sign. Realtor must contact City to see if they have their sign. \$100 fine is levied.	City will contact Realtor to retrieve their sign. First offense – no fine. Second offense – \$50 fine levied.	City won't contact Realtor about seized sign. Realtor must contact City to see if they have their sign. First offense – no fine. Second offense there is a fine levied.	District won't contact Realtor about seized sign. Realtor must contact District to see if they have their sign. A fine may be levied.	Regional District will contact Realtor with a written notice to retrieve their sign. No fine levied. If don't retrieve sign after 30 days – it is scrapped.	City will contact Realtor to retrieve their sign. \$100 min. fine is levied. If don't retrieve sign after 30 days – it is scrapped.	District will not return seized signs.	Municipality will contact Realtor to retrieve their sign. A fine may be levied.

- Southern Gulf Islands (Islands Trust):
 - **Gabriola Island** – signs are covered under the Land Use Bylaw, 1999, No. 177 [Section 84]
 - **Galiano Island** – signs are covered under the Land Use Bylaw, 1999, No. 127 [Section 16]
 - **Mayne Island** – signs are covered under the Land Use Bylaw, 1996 No. 94 [Section 6]
 - **Salt Spring Island** – signs are covered under the Land Use Bylaw, 2001, No. 355 [Section 6]
 - **Saturna Island** – signs are covered under the Land Use Bylaw, 2002, No. 78 [Section 13]
 - **South Pender Island** – signs are covered under the Land Use Bylaw, 2003, No. 92 [Section 6]
 - **North Pender Island** – signs are covered under the Land Use Bylaw, 1996, No. 103 [Section 5]

For further information about sign bylaws please contact Jamee Justason in the Government Relations Department at (604) 730-3097 or jjustason@rebgv.org

Tracking property tax rates

Local governments in BC passed their property tax bylaws in mid-May, with tax bills following shortly thereafter. Taxes were due just after Canada Day in most locations. How can you compare the level of taxation in one community versus another? Generally, the actual amount of taxes due on a property is determined by multiplying the assessed value of the property as given on the assessment notice by the tax rate set by the municipality (see the chart below).

For example, the owner of a \$500,000 house in Vancouver would pay \$2,847 (\$500,000 x 5.69409 per \$1,000 of taxable value) in gross municipal property taxes. In contrast, the owner of a \$500,000 house in Maple Ridge would pay \$3,796 (\$500,000 x 7.59120 per \$1,000 of taxable value). Of course, homes in each community are very different. The gross tax figures will be reduced by the appropriate amount of the Home Owner Grant for eligible residential property owners.

2005 Municipal Tax Rates in REBGV Area

Municipality	Tax Office Phone #	Residential	Utilities	Major Industry	Light Industry	Business	Farm
Greater Vancouver Regional District							
Anmore, Village of	604-469-9877	4.82130	21.07290	18.54810	15.41020	14.20680	8.98780
Belcarra, Village of	604-937-4100	5.76920	22.15080	19.62080	16.48290	15.23010	9.93570
Bowen Island, Municipality of	604-947-4255	5.21377	29.78484	15.97190	12.83400	15.08232	8.85389
Burnaby, City of	604-294-7350	6.26780	58.78080	67.77830	26.11530	25.20170	18.44600
Coquitlam, City of	604-927-3050	6.69810	66.02800	72.11590	32.18360	31.13730	21.12940
Delta, District of	604-946-3235	7.58870	63.75060	48.37750	29.41520	26.69110	21.59900
Lions Bay, Village of	604-921-9333	4.20860	38.78050	25.78630	22.64840	21.73490	16.95850
Maple Ridge, District of	604-467-7336	7.59120	58.78070	73.35870	27.60870	26.47270	24.54440
New Westminster, City of	604-527-4550	8.06050	63.19140	47.52070	44.88470	29.99930	12.04890
North Vancouver, City of	604-983-7316	5.83290	58.78052	43.78627	32.96602	23.40610	7.36600
North Vancouver, District of	604-990-2488	5.83822	59.56214	59.83751	39.71424	23.78868	7.36600
Pitt Meadows, District of	604-465-2424	7.40960	64.04620	50.90040	37.07690	26.16470	29.26740
Port Coquitlam, City of	604-927-5425	7.31080	58.76120	16.26750	36.79900	29.01320	23.89290
Port Moody, City of	604-469-4503	6.90460	57.47770	71.05030	41.35590	25.84860	7.36600
Richmond, City of	604-276-4145	6.36933	58.47309	27.27464	26.76567	23.27598	15.50994
Vancouver, City of	604-873-7633	5.69409	52.27359	44.63033	28.70295	28.69577	9.99044
West Vancouver, District of	604-925-7032	5.40880	32.05560	27.85910	24.72120	18.59510	7.36600
Squamish-Lillooet Regional District							
Pemberton, Village of	604-894-6135	4.69076	29.98605	13.02440	18.29628	15.94608	9.36566
Squamish, District of	604-815-5035	6.14391	57.19760	69.87176	26.01216	20.58843	77.58462
Whistler, Resort Municipality of	604-935-8130	4.15030	29.64990	20.54910	17.82660	16.99710	10.13840
Sunshine Coast Regional District							
Gibsons, Town of	604-886-2274	6.44850	35.42430	13.02440	9.88650	22.04490	11.39240
Sechelt, District of	604-885-1986	7.37902	41.08423	28.61065	24.69268	21.32690	12.81716
Sechelt Indian Government District	604-885-2273	6.69480	82.33410	27.98410	34.83420	26.71990	11.29200

Source: Ministry of Community Services. The REBGV assumes no responsibility for the accuracy of this data.

Notes:

- The tax rates shown in the table are for the most common of the nine property classes. Tax rates for the other property classes can be obtained from the tax office of the local municipality in question.
- The tax rates shown are the total rate for all purposes for each class. That is, the total of the rates for general municipal, regional district, Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority, hospital (outside the GVRD), school, Municipal Finance Authority and BC Assessment Authority purposes.
- Property taxes for rural (unincorporated) areas are levied by the provincial government (Surveyor of Taxes) on behalf of regional districts and school boards. More detailed information on rural property taxes can be obtained from the Ministry of Small Business and Revenue, Property Taxation Branch at www.rev.gov.bc.ca/rpt/.
- In most municipalities, user fees for municipal utilities such as sewer, water, garbage collection and recycling, are charged by separate levies and are not included in the general tax rate.

For further information
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