

## **Chatham County Lighting Ordinance**

### **Internally Illuminated Sign & Vehicle Canopy Lighting Amendments**

#### **SECTION 17 PERMANENT SIGN AND BILLBOARD LIGHTING**

~~External lighting~~Lighting fixtures illuminating signs and billboards shall be aimed and shielded so that direct illumination is focused exclusively on the sign. Externally lighted signs shall be lighted from the top of the sign downward. The Lighting Administrator can waive this requirement in rare and unusual cases if it is demonstrated that the physical location of light fixtures for top down aiming is not possible. –The maximum watts permitted to illuminate a sign are determined by multiplying the sign face area by 2 watts per square foot. Internally illuminated signs are permitted, provided that the message or letters of such sign consist of nonreflective material.

Exception: Signs less than 7 feet (2 meters) in height above grade may be illuminated by ground mounted uplighting not exceeding 100 lamp watts per sign face.

*NOTE: Refer to Section 9.4(c) regarding portable internally illuminated signs.*

#### **SECTION 22 NONCONFORMITIES**

1. Any lighting fixture lawfully in place or approved by the county prior to the adoption of this ordinance shall be exempt from these requirements. At the time that a non-conforming fixture is replaced, moved, upgraded, or otherwise changed, the fixture must be brought into compliance with the requirements of this ordinance. Any expansion of, or addition to, an existing lighting system must conform to the requirements of this ordinance.
2. Routine maintenance, including changing the lamp, ballast, starter, photo control, lens, and other required components, is permitted for all existing fixtures. When the fixture housing is changed, the fixture must come into compliance.
3. ~~Vehicular Canopies do not qualify for this exemption and have five years from the adoption date of this ordinance to bring the outdoor lighting into compliance. If a~~ Major renovation(s) of ~~the vehicular canopies~~ (50% or more of the existing light fixtures) will require compliance with this Ordinance.~~occurs at this facility prior to the expiration of the five-year term, the earlier date will apply regarding compliance.~~
4. Property owners that install lighting fixtures after the effective date of this ordinance and are found to be in non-compliance shall receive written notification according to this ordinance.