



MEMORANDUM

To: Zoning Board of Appeals

From: Ray Johnson, Planner/GIS Analyst

Date: March 16, 2026

Subject: Freestanding Signs in the Agricultural Zoning District

Section 5.12 (A) of the Isabella County Zoning Ordinance permits the following signs in the Agricultural Zoning districts.

1. One (1) externally illuminated entranceway monument sign up to eighteen (18) square feet is permitted for residential developments. One sign for each major public road frontage may be provided. Sign(s) shall be placed no closer than ten (10) feet to any lot line and shall not exceed eight (8) feet in height. **(17-01 Eff. March 20, 2017)**
2. One (1) non-illuminated wall sign of up to twelve (12) square feet for family and group child care homes and home occupations. For homes setback more than fifty (50) feet from the road, one (1) non-illuminated freestanding sign of up to twelve (12) square feet and not exceeding six (6) feet in height may be substituted for wall sign provided the sign is placed no closer than ten (10) feet to any lot line. **(17-01 Eff. March 20, 2017)**
3. One (1) freestanding sign or electronic message board of up to twenty-four (24) square feet may be permitted for all other authorized uses, unless otherwise regulated in this ordinance. Sign shall be placed no closer than ten (10) feet to any lot line and shall not exceed eight (8) feet in height. One (1) externally illuminated wall sign of up to twenty-four (24) square feet may also be permitted. **(17-01 Eff. March 20, 2017)**
4. One (1) non-illuminated off premise sign of up to twenty-four (24) square feet may be permitted. Sign(s) shall be placed no closer than ten (10) feet to any lot line and shall not exceed eight (8) feet in height.
5. One (1) billboard structure is permitted and regulated as follows:
 - i. Billboards adjacent to a State Highway may be illuminated meeting the requirements of the Highway Advertising Act, PA 106 of 1972 as amended. All other billboards shall not be illuminated.

[all other billboard requirements removed for length conservation]

All signs which may be permitted, with one exception, specifically state the sign may be illuminated (internally or externally) or non-illuminated. The exception is Section 5.12 (3) above which allows for a freestanding sign without a notation on illumination. While electronic message boards (permitted in the same section) are internally illuminated by their nature, the ordinance is silent if a freestanding sign may be illuminated or non-illuminated.

Is a freestanding sign under Section 5.12 (3) above permitted to be illuminated given an electronic message board, which is internally illuminated, may be permitted pursuant to the same section?

If the answer to the previous question is yes, is the freestanding sign permitted to be internally illuminated or externally illuminated?