

OUTDOOR LIGHTING REGULATIONS

Section 6.500 Purpose

The purpose of these rules and regulations are to provide uniform outdoor lighting standards to assure public safety, promote efficient and cost effective lighting, and support practices that limit or minimize light trespass from night lighting fixtures in order to protect the beauty of the night skies and allow others the full benefit and use of their private property.

Section 6.5100 Outdoor Lighting and Nonconforming Existing Lighting

All outdoor lighting installed in any new construction, whether Commercial or Residential, after the effective date of this amendment shall comply with the standards, rules and regulations established by this chapter and such additional conditions as may be established by the Building Official. It is an offense for any person to install or permit the installation outdoor lighting that does not comply with the standards, rules and regulations of this chapter.

All existing outdoor lighting that was legally installed before the effective date of this chapter, and that does not comply with the standards, rules and regulations established herein shall be deemed nonconforming. Nonconforming existing Outdoor lighting shall be brought into compliance with this chapter as follows:

1. All existing outdoor lighting located on a Commercial property for which an application for a conditional use permit, subdivision approval, building permit for new construction or site plan permit shall be brought into compliance with this chapter before final inspection, issuance of a certificate of occupancy or final plat recording. All existing outdoor lighting located on a Commercial property this is part of an application for any other permits issued by the City shall be brought into compliance with this chapter within 120 days from the date such a permit is issued.
2. All nonconforming existing outdoor lighting located in a Commercial District of the City that becomes damaged, or inoperable and is subsequently repaired, replaced or improved shall be repaired, replaced or improved in a manner to comply with this chapter as if new lighting. It is recommended that all Residential outdoor lighting be brought into compliance when repaired, replaced or improved.

Section 6.520 Shielding, Full Cut-off and Total Outdoor Light Output Standards

All regulations in this section shall apply to outdoor light fixtures located within all Commercial districts of the City and all new construction within Residential districts of the city, so that all outdoor lighting that is installed, repaired or replaced after the effective date of this amendment to the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Mason shall comply.

1. All outdoor lighting fixtures shall be fully shielded so that no light shines above the horizon, and up lighting on or from any property is prohibited.
2. All outdoor lighting fixtures shall be full cut-off fixtures and shielded so that the luminous elements of the fixture, with the exception of street lights, are not visible from any other property, and all light shall remain on the property of origin.
3. All outdoor lighting shall utilize a maximum color temperature of 3500 K to provide for better night vision, less issues of glare and light scatter in the atmosphere. Color temperature value should be labeled on the fixture or bulb packaging.
4. Street lights and all security lights installed or replaced after the effective date shall be full cut-off fixtures and shall be shielded in order to limit light trespass.
5. All outdoor recreation facilities lighting installed or replaced after the effective date of this chapter shall be aimed directly at the playing surface, shall be shielded so that no light shows above the horizontal plane. Lighting for outdoor recreational facility is allowed only between one hour prior to sunset and 11:00 pm, unless such lighting is needed to complete a specific organized activity or event already in progress at 11:00 pm.
6. Outdoor externally illuminated signs shall conform to all provisions of this chapter and the Sign regulations as contained in this Ordinance.
7. Total outdoor light output (excluding governmental owned street lights used for illumination of public right-of-way and outdoor recreational facilities) on any Commercial property shall not exceed 100,000 lumens per net acre in any contiguous illuminated area. The lumen output value should be labeled on each fixture packaging, and the total shall be obtained by simply adding the lumen output for each outdoor lighting fixture. This lumen per net acre limitation is an upper limit and not a design goal; design goals should be the lowest levels that meet the requirement of the task.

8. All Commercial outdoor lighting fixtures located under canopies, building overhangs, or roof eaves shall conform to all provisions of this chapter.

Section 6.530 Prohibitions and Lighting Curfews

1. The installation of any mercury vapor fixture or lamp for use as outdoor lighting is prohibited.
2. The installation of any wall pack style fixture for use as outdoor lighting is prohibited unless the fixture is rated by the manufacturer as full cut-off and otherwise complies with the shielding requirements of this chapter.
3. The installation of any barn-light style fixture for use as outdoor lighting is prohibited unless the fixture includes a full opaque reflector instead of the standard translucent lens, and otherwise complies with the shielding requirements of this chapter.
4. The operation of searchlights for advertising purposes is prohibited.
5. All outdoor lighting is encouraged to be turned off when no one is present to use the light.

Section 6.540 Exemptions

The following lighting is exempt from this Chapter:

1. Outdoor light fixtures with a maximum output of 300 lumens per fixture (equals approximately one 25 watt incandescent light) may be left unshielded provided the fixture has an opaque top to prevent light from shining directly up, and the source of the light is not visible from any other property.
2. Outdoor lighting for which light is produced directly by the combustion of fossil fuels.
3. Holiday lighting.
4. Lighting required by law to be installed on motor vehicles.
5. Lighting needed during activities of law enforcement, fire and other emergency services, as well as lighting employed during the repair of roads and utilities.
6. Temporary lighting required to save life, limb or property from imminent peril.

Additions to “Definitions” section of Zoning Ordinance:

Full cut-off Fixtures means fixtures, as installed, that are designed or shielded in such a manner that all light rays emitted by the fixture, either directly by luminaires or indirectly from the fixture, are not permitted to project above a horizontal plane running through the lowest point on the fixture where light is emitted.

Holiday lighting means temporary lighting used for a specific celebration and used to illuminate yard art, sidewalks, porches, patios, decks and as outline for buildings or structures.

Light Trespass means lighting emitted from fixtures designed or installed that causes light to fall on property other than the one where the fixture is installed, that impacts driver’s vision in passing motor vehicles, or upwards toward the sky.

Luminaire, or luminous elements of a light fixture, means individually or collectively, the lamp of light bulb or any diffusing elements and surfaces intended to reflect or refract light emitted from the lamp.

Outdoor lighting means lighting that is installed or located outside or on the exterior of any building or part thereof, structure, sign or other improvement, stand or pole, or lighting which is installed to project outdoors for the purpose of illuminating outdoor areas. Lighting located under canopies, under building overhangs or under roof eaves are included in the definition of outdoor lighting.

Temporary Lighting means lighting intended for uses which by their nature are of limited duration, such as for emergencies, holiday decorations, festivals, civic events, construction areas, or performance areas. Temporary lights should be positioned so they do not shine in the eyes of passing drivers or so that no light source (bulb) is directly visible from adjacent properties.