



## Department of Community Engagement and Public Information

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Personal Signs Are Not Allowed on Utilities Poles, Other Property

There have been a growing number of signs placed on utilities poles throughout the County. According to Virginia State Code, placing signs and advertisements within the limits of the highway is prohibited. The Virginia Department of Transportation is authorized to remove any sign that is in violation of state code, especially if it interferes with roadside maintenance or presents a safety hazard to motorists. VDOT can also levy a \$100 civil penalty for each sign violation. VDOT works with localities and the Adopt-A-Highway program to enforce this law. For more information on VDOT regulations, visit [https://www.virginiadot.org/info/outdoor\\_advertising\\_control.asp#](https://www.virginiadot.org/info/outdoor_advertising_control.asp#).

Although most permanent signs require a zoning permit from the County, there are many signs, especially temporary signs, that are exempt from a permit provided they meet certain criteria. For a list of exempt and prohibited signs, please refer to Article 12 – Signs - Sections 12-8 and 12-9 of the County’s Zoning Ordinance: [https://library.municode.com/va/gloucester\\_county/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodet=APXBZO\\_ART12SI\\_S12-8EXSI](https://library.municode.com/va/gloucester_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodet=APXBZO_ART12SI_S12-8EXSI).

According to Dominion Energy, nothing is permitted to be placed on its property, including utilities poles. It all boils down to safety, according to Dominion Energy spokesperson Crystal Bright.

“Signage going up becomes a safety issue,” Bright said. “Every nail and staple degrades the poles, and they can become unsafe for our line workers to climb.”

According to Bright, if a Dominion Energy employee is in the area and sees a sign, they will take it down. Also, if an issue regarding a sign is brought to their attention, or a team member sees it while working, they will remove the sign.

Certain signs that have been placed on utilities poles recently have been made with wood and attached with lag screws, which creates an access issue if one of Dominion Energy’s line workers needs to climb the pole, Bright added. It also creates a safety hazard should the line worker cutout and fall onto the

sign. “Even while working from an aerial lift, the sign creates an unnecessary obstacle for our employees to work around,” she said.

There are occasionally exceptions, though, when Dominion Energy makes special permission for localities to place informational banners between poles or similar instances. However, any of these requests must be placed well in advance.

If you have a question about whether a sign needs a permit, please feel free to contact the Planning and Zoning office at 804-693-1224 or email [zoningstaff@gloucesterva.info](mailto:zoningstaff@gloucesterva.info).