

Advertising Signage Requirements for Retail Motor Fuel Service Stations

I. General Information.

Business Regulation Article § 10-315, Annotated Code of Maryland, specifies the requirements for all retail service stations selling motor fuel and supersedes all inconsistent provisions of local law. The Comptroller's Field Enforcement Bureau is responsible for ensuring motor fuel service station signage complies with Maryland law.

II. Required Signage.

A. Dispensing equipment

All dispensing equipment for motor fuel must be marked to show the price, including taxes, of a gallon of the motor fuel offered for sale. The price must be displayed in numerals of equal size. If numerals that show a fractional cent are used, the combined height and width of the numerator and denominator must equal the height and width of the other numerals used.

B. Signs on the premises and approaches that advertise the retail price of motor fuel

Signs must list the total price and all taxes using the same size numerals for each price. Signs may list the price and each tax separately, as long as the listing of the total price and all taxes is the same size as the separate listing of the price. The sign may indicate a part of a cent, either by a fraction or by extending the decimal to three places (for example, "\$3.454"). If a fraction is used, the numerator and denominator combined must be the same size as the numeral that indicates the whole number. If an additional digits after the decimal are used, the additional digits after the decimal must be the same size as the numeral that indicates the whole number.

The grade designation for any motor fuel in the advertisement must be the same as the grade designation that is required on the retail dispensing pump under [Code of Maryland Regulations \(COMAR\) 03.03.05.05](#).

C. Differing price for cash, credit, or debit¹

The retail service station dealer must keep a sign on the premises that prominently, clearly, and visibly displays the prices for a whole measurement unit of regular gasoline.² The sign must be readable by passing motorists.

If the credit and debit price for regular gasoline is higher than the cash price, the sign must always display the higher credit and debit price. The sign may also display the lower cash price. If the price is the same no matter the payment method, the sign must display the credit and debit price and the cash price.

A retail service station dealer selling diesel and other motor fuel products may include on the sign prices for diesel or motor fuel products other than regular gasoline, but it is not required. If the sign includes prices for diesel or motor fuel products other than regular gasoline, the

¹ The requirements of Section C of this publication were enacted by 2024 House Bill 882, and are effective October 1, 2024.

² "Regular gasoline" is gasoline with a certified octane level of 87 or 88.

same signage rules apply for all grades of gasoline displayed: the sign must always display the higher credit and debit price, and may also display the lower cash price. If the price is the same no matter the payment method, the sign must display the credit and debit price and the cash price.

All numerals on the sign must be uniform, the same size, at least 8 inches high and 3.5 inches wide, and have a brush stroke of at least 1 inch. A numeral in a fraction or letter must be at least one-third the height of a numeral that indicates a whole number.

III. How to Report a Violation.

You can report an advertising signage violation to the Field Enforcement Bureau by email at FEB@marylandtaxes.gov or by phone at 410-260-7388.

Please include the following information:

- 1) Your name and contact information (phone number or e-mail address).
- 2) The name and address of the business you are reporting.
- 3) A description of incident/violation, including any pictures.

<p>FEB P. O. Box 1829, Annapolis, Maryland 21404-1829 Telephone: 410-260-7326 www.marylandtaxes.gov For the deaf or hard of hearing: call via Maryland Relay at 711 in Maryland or 1-800-735-2258 If you need reasonable accommodation for a disability, please contact us before you visit. If you need the information in this publication in an alternate format, contact the Comptroller's Office.</p>
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