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New Signage Rules to Take Effect Next Year

By Lena Smirnova

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Advertising covering entire buildings will soon become a thing of the past. **Vladimir Filonov**

If a bright advertising sign outside your window does not let you sleep or you find the oversized letters on store signs you pass on the way to work are an eyesore, take heart because they are about to be scrapped.

Moscow's City Hall has approved new rules on how to format and display advertisements or other information platforms, the city's chief architect, Sergei Kuznetsov, said at a meeting on Tuesday.

Signs can't be placed higher than the second floor, over windows or canopies, columns or store windows. There are also limits set on the size of the signs, the number of signs that can be placed on one roof and what kind of signs can be placed on historic buildings.

The regulations will be even stricter on the city's central thoroughfares.

"It's become almost the norm to put up signs on rooftops, cover up windows and disturb residents with their brightness," Mayor Sergei Sobyanin said at the meeting, Vedomosti reported.

Companies will have until May 1 to make their signs located within the Garden Ring fit the parameters of the new rules. That deadline is extended until Jan. 1, 2015 for signs inside the Third Transportation Ring, and until July 1, 2016 for those within the boundary of the Moscow Ring Road.

Though the new measures might be a welcome change for city residents, some companies are perturbed by the additional bureaucracy. Many of their advertisements — including the letters that display the store name — will have to be reduced in size, and some managers are worried that the smaller text will make the stores harder to find, thus reducing revenues.

On the plus side, companies previously had to get the approval of the city's department for press and advertising, but this step will be omitted once the new rules are in place.

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