



SHIAWASSEE COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION SIGN REMOVAL POLICY



WHY THE PLACEMENT OF SIGNS IN THE ROAD-RIGHT-OF WAY IS PROHIBITED...

In keeping with the past practices of the Road Commission, and in the interest of public safety and uniformity, On September 25th, 2007, the Shiawassee County Board of Road Commissioners adopted a formal "Sign Removal Policy" that authorizes Road Commission staff to remove any and all signs that are judged to be a distraction or traffic hazard and are illegally placed within the road right-of-way.

Adopted Per Resolution : "...signs that are placed within the rights-of-way on the Shiawassee County Primary and Local Road systems, which are under the direct jurisdiction and authority of the Shiawassee County Board of Road Commissioners, and/or within the rights-of-way on the State Trunkline Systems, which are under the direct jurisdiction and control of the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), are subject to removal by the Shiawassee County Road Commission, without notice, as provided by MCL 257.615. The removed signs shall be disposed of immediately by the Shiawassee County Road Commission."

Michigan Vehicle Code

The Michigan Vehicle Code, Public Act 300 of 1949, Section 257.615, prohibits the placement of any signs in the road-right-of way that may distract or obstruct the view of the public to see traffic enforcement signs, that blink or resemble traffic control devices and/or that may create a hazard. The Michigan Vehicle Code further provides that the public authority having jurisdiction over the highway, (a road commission), is empowered to remove from the right-of-way any such sign as a public nuisance.

Purpose of Enforcement

Large collections of signs in one area are typically of little benefit to the hopeful business advertiser, real estate agent, political candidate and/or citizen having a garage sale and can often create a distraction to the traveling public or cause dangerous sight distance problems at intersections and driveway approaches. Additionally, signs can obscure directional and regulatory highway signage (also causing a potential hazard to motorists). These signs also make it very difficult and hazardous for road crews to mow and maintain rights-of-way, as well as quickly creating an added expense to the Road Commission when crews must be dispatched to remove them. By avoiding the placement of signs where they can obscure the vision of motorists or cause confusion with traffic signs that are pertinent to traffic control, you will be adhering to the Road Commission's policy, as well as to the Michigan Vehicle Code, MCL 257.615, (see below), which regulates the placement of signs within the road rights-of-way.

A Rule of Thumb...

When in doubt, the safest assumption is to place your signs... Behind sidewalks or utility poles, as these are typically located near the edge of the road right-of-way.

If no utility poles or sidewalks are present, then place your signs a minimum of 33 feet from the center of a two-lane road, and /or 60 feet from the center of a three-or-more-lane highway. This is typically considered to be a reasonably safe and adequate distance from the road and legally out of rights-of-way areas.

Other Jurisdictions

Out of concern that roadside signs may become a hazard in obstructing motorists' views or make it difficult to pull off the road in an emergency situation, many townships, cities and villages have adopted their own ordinances that prohibit the placement of signs within right-of-way or along sidewalks and/or non-motorized paths. Therefore, it is wise to consult your local governmental agency to verify if such an ordinance or regulation exists and what type of restrictions it contains. Additionally, per the State Highway Advertising Act, Public Act 106 of 1972, (see below) the Road Commission, by authority of the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), may remove signs that are placed in the rights-of-way along the State Trunkline Systems, which, in Shiawassee County includes: I-69, M-21, M-52, M-71 and Lansing Road.

Highway Advertising Act

The State of Michigan Highway Advertising Act, Public Act 106 of 1972, also prohibits the placement of signs along state roads and major highways, without the issuance of a permit from the Michigan Department of Transportation. Per Section 252.318, this Act prohibits the placement of signs or sign structures that prevent the driver of a motor vehicle from having a clear and unobstructed view of approaching, intersecting or merging traffic. It also prohibits signs that are abandoned, in poor repair and/or that interfere with or resemble any official traffic sign, signal or device.

A Message from the County Board of Road Commissioners

The Shiawassee County Board of Road Commissioners, Richard D. Miller, Stephen A. Zemcik and Mike Constine would like to remind citizens of the most important reason why the placement of any sign within the right-of-way is prohibited. "Our foremost concern is always the safety of the traveling public," states Chair of the Board, Commissioner Richard Miller. "That is why we have directed our road crews to remove any and all signs that are judged to be a distraction or traffic hazard and are illegally placed within the road rights-of-way. It is not the desire of the Road Commission staff to confiscate your signs, but we will do so in order to maintain the safety of the roadways." "However, with the distribution of this publication we also take this opportunity to call upon the cooperation of local citizens, business owners, political candidates, church and civic groups, associations and others, to help us with this safety enforcement by not placing your signs in inappropriate, unsafe, locations. It is our sincere hope, that with our combined efforts, the Road Commission will continue to provide a road system that is reasonably safe and convenient to the traveling public."

Removed Signs will be disposed of immediately

Signs removed from the road rights-of way will be disposed of immediately by the Shiawassee County Road Commission. Please be advised that signs will no longer be taken to the Road Commission and retained for retrieval by the owner.

MDOT Rules for Placement of Signs on State Highways (I, M and US routes)

These regulations apply to most temporary signs, including those for political campaigns, real estate, yard and garage sales, open houses and other special events:

- People placing the signs are responsible for obtaining approval from the adjacent property owner to place the signs.
- Signs must be removed within 10 days following an event or election.
- Signs must be more than 30 feet from the edge of the roadway (white line) for highways that do not have barrier-type curbs. For highways with barrier curbs, the signs must be more than 3 feet from the back of the curb.
- Signs are not permitted within areas used for clear vision at intersections or commercial driveways so they will not interfere with the sight distance of a driver. No signs may be placed within the limited access rights of way (freeways, including ramps).
- Any signs with either steel or wooden posts that do not meet MDOT safety standards are not allowed in the right-of-way.
- Any illegally placed signs will be removed. Signs removed by MDOT crews will be kept for seven days at a local MDOT office or maintenance garage, then discarded.