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Woodbury County Secondary Roads Department

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PPM #2, 2011
Rev. 1/2012

WOODBURY COUNTY SECONDARY ROAD DEPARTMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE MEMORANDUM

Sign Installation, Inspection, and Maintenance Program and Policy

Background:

The 2009 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) is the official sign manual for the State of Iowa as defined in Section 321.252. Woodbury County adopts and follows the appropriate provisions of the MUTCD as required in Section 321.255.

Sign Facing:

The County will use only high intensity or higher grade prismatic sheeting for all traffic signs on county highways. This shall not preclude the County Engineer from utilizing current stock of engineer grade signs that were purchased or installed prior to the adoption of this policy until their usefulness is exhausted. The County Engineer, in his professional judgment, will determine locations where higher grade sheeting is required for additional warning or visibility.

Street Signs:

Street signs shall conform to the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. Existing signs not in compliance with the current MUTCD standards will be replaced with compliant signs at the end of the current sign's useful life.

Retroreflectivity and nighttime visibility:

Woodbury County will comply with standards for maintaining nighttime sign visibility as required in section 2A.08 of the MUTCD by a program of nighttime visual inspection of county road signs. The retroreflectivity of existing signs will be assessed by a trained sign inspector conducting a visual inspection from a moving vehicle during nighttime conditions. Complete system inspection will be done in compliance with MUTCD recommendations on a bi-annual basis beginning in 2014. Signs that are visually identified by the inspector to have retroreflectivity below the minimum levels will be replaced as soon as budget and staff time allow after being identified by the inspection.

Secondary Road employees will also be encourage to note and turn in reports of damaged signs or signs screened by vegetation as part of their normal duties while performing work on county roads to supplement this inspection program.

Sign Repair and Replacement:

Damaged signs will be repaired or replaced based on the following guidelines:

Stop and Yield Signs: Stop and yield signs will be repaired on a 24 hour per day, 7 day per week basis. Upon receiving a report of the loss or damage to a stop or yield sign from

emergency responders, county emergency dispatchers, secondary road department staff or other reports, county secondary road staff will respond as soon as an employee can be called in to work and travel to the location with a replacement sign. Emergency replacement will normally be accomplished by installing a temporary sign on a support, stand or barricade until a permanent replacement can be installed to replace the damaged sign. If time, conditions at the site, and equipment allow, the damaged sign may be replaced on a permanent post immediately at the discretion of the employee or his immediate supervisor. If not placed on a permanent support as part of the emergency repair, the sign will be permanently replaced after a utility locate is performed, usually within two business days.

Warning and other regulatory signs: Warning and other regulatory signs will be repaired the next business day after being reported to the road department if the sign can be replaced within its existing mounting or post hole. Signs which cannot be replaced in their existing mounting or posthole will be replaced as soon as utility locates can be completed.

Rural intersection signs: Rural intersection signs will be replaced as soon as new signs are available during the sign technician's normal working day. Since rural intersection signs are not always kept in stock, a period of days or weeks may pass before replacement signs can be ordered and manufactured.

Supplemental signs:

This policy serves direction for the placement of certain signs either not contained in the manual or not required by the manual. Examples of signs in this category include: Children at Play, Farm Machinery, Trucks Entering Highway, and historic and park signs as requested by other departments, public agencies, and members of the public. This document outlines Woodbury County's policy for placement of the signs as well as defines who will pay for the signs, posts, and installation of each type of sign.

School related signs: There are two types of school signs, school bus related signs and school warning signs. The installation of both types of signs is not required by the MUTCD and it is not the policy of the Secondary Road Department to place these signs in every location requested by the public. Signs of these types are placed only at the request of the schools under the terms of this policy.

Two types of signs fall into the category of school bus signs, the school bus stop ahead sign and the school bus turnaround sign. Both are designed as warning signs as designated by the MUTCD, but warn of conditions that are not present throughout the day or the year.

These signs may be placed at the request of the school district. Any requests for the placement of these signs must come through the school bus superintendent or the superintendent of the school district. Requests from county residents will be directed to the school district.

Upon receipt of a request from the school bus superintendent or the superintendent of schools for a school bus stop ahead or a school bus turnaround sign, the engineer or designated maintenance staff will review the location for the adequacy of available sight distance according to the MUTCD. The determination of adequate sight distance will be based on whether or not sight distance in advance of the location in question exceeds the values shown in Table 2C-4, Guidelines for Advance Placement of Warning Signs, for the Condition A column of the table. The speed will based upon the legal speed limit of the road, unless there are circumstances present that lead the engineer or maintenance staff to believe that the speed is significantly higher or lower than posted. If the location has less than optimum sight distance, the county will install a sign at the appropriate distance ahead of the school bus stop or turnaround. The county will provide the post, labor and equipment to erect the sign at no cost to the school. Signs no longer needed will be removed upon request of the school

district and stored in the sign shed for the future use of the district. Each school district will be reminded annually to review the need for these signs.

If the location has adequate sight distance for the speed limit of the road, the engineer will recommend to the school official making the request that a sign not be placed. If the school insists that a sign be placed at the location against the recommendation of the engineer, the school will be responsible for all cost associated with the installation including sign, post, labor, and equipment costs.

Children at Play and Related Signs: Children at play, horses on the highway, and other similar warning signs requested by county residents will be installed by the county sign crew when warranted. Upon receipt of a request from a county resident for a sign in this classification, the engineer or designated maintenance staff will review the location for the adequacy of available sight distance according to the MUTCD. The determination of adequate sight distance will be based on whether or not sight distance in advance of the location in question exceeds the values shown in Table 2C-4, Guidelines for Advance Placement of Warning Signs, for Condition A column of the table. The speed will based upon the legal speed limit of the road, unless there are circumstances present that lead the engineer or maintenance staff to believe that the speed is significantly higher or lower than posted. If the location has less than optimum sight distance, the county will install a sign at the appropriate distance ahead of the condition for which the sign is requested. Where signs exceed the minimum requirements of the Condition A distance, signs shall not be installed.

The county will provide the post, labor and equipment to erect the sign. The cost of the sign, post, and labor, including equipment expense, shall be paid by the resident or other party making the request for the sign. The county will install the sign at its staff's earliest convenience.

Signs may not be installed on county right of ways by private property owners. All sign installations will be done by county crews. Signs installed by others will be removed.

Farm Machinery and Trucks Entering Highway signs: Farm machinery, truck entering highway, and other similar warning signs requested by county residents will be installed by the county sign crew when warranted. Upon receipt of a request from a county resident for a sign in this classification, the engineer or designated maintenance staff will review the location for the adequacy of available sight distance according to the MUTCD. The determination of adequate sight distance will be based on whether or not sight distance in advance of the location in question exceeds the values shown in Table 2C-4, Guidelines for Advance Placement of Warning Signs, for the High Judgment Conditions column of the table. Where signs exceed the minimum requirements of the High Judgment Condition distance, signs shall not be installed.

When signs are installed, the cost of the sign and post shall be paid by the resident or other party making the request for the sign. The county will provide the equipment and labor to install the sign at no cost to the party making the request. The county will install the sign at its earliest convenience. If the resident so requests, an advisory speed plate may also be installed with the warning sign. The appropriate advisory speed will be established based on a survey of the location by engineering staff and a determination of stopping sight distance by the county engineer.

Signs may not be installed on county right of ways by private property owners. All sign installations will be done by county crews. Signs installed by others will be removed.

Historic Markers, Park Signs, and other Recreational/Cultural Interest Signs: When requested by IDOT, county or state conservation and park employees or organizations, or the

Woodbury County Historical Society, the County Secondary Road department will install signs of this type on county rights of way. The sponsoring organization will provide funding for purchase and continuing maintenance of signs. The sponsoring organization will also pay for posts and hardware needed to install the signs. The secondary road department will provide equipment and labor for installing the signs, unless a written agreement or other instrument approved and signed by the Board of Supervisors related to such signs provides differently.

If the signs become faded, damaged, lose their reflectivity or are otherwise in poor condition, the secondary road department will contact the sign sponsor and see if they want to replace or repair the sign. If the sponsoring agency is no longer interested in maintaining the sign, the secondary road department will remove the sign at no cost to the sponsoring organization.

APPROVED:

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Chair, Woodbury County Board of Supervisors

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Mark J. Nahra, Woodbury County Engineer