

Road Signing Requirements for Townships

by dale c heglund - ndltap director

Home Safe Every Day. This simple message is a good reminder of the need to provide and maintain roadway signing that adequately guides roadway users in their travels. Since friends and family are key users of our township roadway network it really hits home that our signing efforts protect those that we care about most. Expanding upon this focus, we need to provide a reasonable roadway for the general public. Mark Verke, a North Dakota Insurance Reserve Fund (NDIRF) Loss Control Representative, is a strong advocate for signing programs and a powerful ally of the Township Officers. Mark's message is clear – Township Officers are charged with the responsibility to provide and maintain a signing program. Signing programs can reduce accidents and thereby reduce risks and losses. In other words, signing helps roadway users get home safely every day.

The North Dakota Local Technical Assistance Program (NDLTAP) team provides training and technology transfer that helps local leaders understand and adhere to signing requirements. Roadway signing is provided to notify drivers of roadway regulations and hazards. A minimalist approach to signing is recommended. By providing only the messages required for the driver to understand the roadway ahead, the number of signs is kept to a minimum and the drivers are not distracted. Fewer signs mean lower costs and more time for the driver to focus on the job of driving.



Let's review some signing basics:

- Back in June 2014 a Federal directive required all roadway owners to develop a plan to maintain sign retro reflectivity. Retro reflectivity is the amount of vehicle light that bounces off of a sign and is received by the driver's eye. The amount of light returned is a function of sign type and quality and is a key factor in a driver receiving the necessary roadway information. A sign program is a system that inventories signs on the roadway, evaluates sign conditions and defines a sign replacement plan.

Do you have a signing program in place? Y/N

- It makes sense to tap into area signing experts to help you when you need signs or have questions about sign requirements. NDIRF, NDLTAP, North Dakota Department of Transportation, County sign leads, sign suppliers and signing contractors are great resources.

Do you have a signing expert to tap into? Y/N

- Signing requirements are spelled out in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). Since the 2" thick manual is a bit ominous, the 174 page **Local Roads Sign Book** was developed to help local leaders understand signing basics.

Do you have a copy of the MUTCD or the Local Roads Sign Book? Y/N

- Sign classes are a great way to understand signing rules and the Township's signing responsibilities. NDIRF and NDLTAP offer signing classes. Classes vary from 15 minutes to 4 hours, depending upon the target audience. Classes are often provided free of charge. A sign class can help you to understand how to provide a safe roadway that adequately warns the traveling public of regulations and hazards.

Have you attended a Sign Class? Y/N

- A sign policy is a written document that the Township has adopted a plan to maintain signing on their roadway network.

Has your Township adopted a sign policy? Y/N



Does your Township have a **Home Safe Every Day** focus? If you answered **yes** to all of the questions above then you are on track. If you answered **no** to any of the questions above, let's figure out how to get you back on track. NDLTAP has developed a web based **Road Signing Resources** page to help - <http://www.ndltap.org/resources/signing.php>.

The NDLTAP team wants to be your resource of choice. Let us know how we can help.

Ndltap.org – 701-318-6893 – dale.heglund@ndsu.edu

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