

# WRIGHT COUNTY SIGN MAINTENANCE POLICY

As Adopted by the Wright County Board of Commissioners on September 13, 2011



# WRIGHT COUNTY SIGN MAINTENANCE POLICY

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section I	Purpose	1
Section II	Procedure	1
Section III	General Practices	1-3
Section IV	Updates to Policy	4
Section V	Administration	4
	Table 1	5

## **SECTION I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Sign Maintenance Policy is to establish and maintain uniform procedures and practices concerning sign maintenance and traffic operations on Wright County Highways. The County will provide such control in a safe and cost-effective manner, balancing the needs of safety for highway users and county personnel, budget, social and environmental concerns. It is in the county's best interest to have traffic operation maintenance procedures. Because of variables in the weather, traffic issues, changing driver demographics, road design, standards, budget and other factors, these procedures and practices must remain flexible. The County may use county employees or other entities under contract to provide this service.

## **SECTION II. PROCEDURE**

The supervisor of sign maintenance or designated lead worker will make decisions concerning scheduling and the procedures to be followed for daily traffic sign maintenance needs and subsequent yearly detailed condition inspections. Scheduling and the procedures to be followed will be based upon consideration of the following factors: significance of the traffic device to driver safety; condition and effectiveness of the devices; standards compliance; and whether damage or condition of device creates an immediate safety hazard.

In every instance, the onsite Traffic Technician must assess the conditions of the traffic control device and rely on judgment and experience to determine the appropriate action to correct or maintain the device. Factors that may delay completion of traffic sign maintenance include but are not limited to other repair needs; utility locates; fabrication of necessary material; weather conditions, including severe cold, snow/sleet, significant high winds, limited visibility; and other staff and field condition issues.

## **SECTION III. GENERAL PRACTICES**

Subject to the factors set forth in Section II, Procedures, the county will maintain traffic control devices to ensure a safe and efficient operation.

### **Sign Maintenance**

- A. Sign Installation: Signs will be installed to meet federal standards set forth in the most recent edition of the Minnesota Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MMUTCD) in accordance with Wright County Highway Department traffic signing guidelines and practices. Sign technicians may deviate from typical lateral

installations, at their discretion, due to conflicts with underground utilities and narrow rights-of-way.

- B. Maintain Signing, Overall Responsibility: County sign maintenance practices are established to meet all requirements defined earlier and to ensure appropriate signing for the traveling public.
  
- C. Sign Retroreflectivity: Wright County has maintained a field sign inventory database in the form of a computerized sign management system since 1989. With the use of this system and an initial visual nighttime inspection in 2008, the county will use the “Expected Sign Life” management method to meet federal retroreflectivity requirements. The County has developed a sign replacement schedule (see Table 1, on page 5), to meet this requirement for all County Highways. The expected sign life is based on a 15 year cycle, using 3M DG3 sign sheeting material. The sign replacement schedule is retroactive to 2008. This schedule may be modified, as needed, to comply with budgetary constraints.
  
- D. Sign Maintenance Responsibility: Maintain traffic control devices on all Wright County highways with the exception of:
  - 1) Stop signs at intersections with State Trunk Highways and Interstate Freeway ramps. These intersections are controlled by the Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) and as such are their responsibility.
  - 2) Street Name signs within the corporate limits of a city
  - 3) Specific signs installed by others (Mn/DOT, Cities, etc.), allowed to place signs on County Highways by permit or policy.
  - 4) Signs installed along County Highways within Mn/DOT right of way, unless specific agreement with Mn/DOT stipulates a county maintenance responsibility for signing.
  - 5) Bike path and other pedestrian control signs not pertaining to vehicle traffic, unless specified in other policies.
  
- E. Visual Sign Inspection: Is an ongoing process, whereby, 45 Highway Department maintenance and engineering staff, 100 Sheriff Department personnel, and 8 Parks Department maintenance staff, travel county highways each work day. These employees report down, damaged or missing signs to the Traffic Operations Division for repairs and/or replacement.
  
- F. Response to Incident Report for Sign Repair Needs: Sign maintenance staff will respond after receiving notice of a repair and will determine the appropriate action. Notification of down or damaged signs will come from but not be limited to,

Highway Department employees (maintenance, engineering staff); Sheriff Department deputies; other governmental agencies; and the general public. Repair of signs shall be made using the following priorities:

- 1) Stop or Yield Signs: As soon as practical, no later than 24 hours from time of notification. A temporary stop sign may be placed in this time period, prior to permanent repairs being made.
- 2) Warning Signs (e.g. Stop ahead, Curve): Within one scheduled work day, after utility locates, if needed, have been obtained.
- 3) All other signs: When time and manpower allow.

G. Miscellaneous Sign Practices:

- 1) Sign staff is not directly on-call after normal working hours. An after hours telephone call list, for traffic operations staff, is provided to the Sheriff's dispatch communications center (911) so staff can be contacted in case of an emergency. Should sign staff not be available, highway maintenance staff would be called to provide temporary sign maintenance.
- 2) Training is provided to ensure traffic operations staff can perform sign maintenance duties in an efficient, effective and responsive manner. Such training shall consist of, at a minimum, appropriate signing and traffic control seminars when available (provided there are sufficient funds in the training budget).
- 3) Unauthorized signs will be removed from the County Highway right-of-way, consistent with the MMUTCD and county sign placement standards.
- 4) Signs requested to be placed within the right-of-way, along the County Roadway, must meet the requirement of the MMUTCD and have the County Highway Engineer's approval.
- 5) The County will furnish and install City Name Signs on County Highways as you enter a city (at or as near as possible to the city limits), at the County's expense, for those cities that want the County to do so. These signs will be installed every 10 years, after a new census is conducted. These signs will use HIP sheeting.
- 6) If the "Look For Traffic" signs with LED arrows, at the Intersection Warning Systems, become disabled and repairs will take more than one day to complete, the Sign maintenance personnel shall cover or remove the signs until repairs are made.
- 7) Sign maintenance personnel may park a sign maintenance vehicle(s) against the traffic flow in order to perform necessary emergency and routine maintenance duties.

- 8) Sign maintenance personnel may drive or park sign maintenance vehicle(s) on center medians, boulevards and sidewalk/paths to perform necessary emergency and routine maintenance duties. The County will be liable to make repairs for any damages that may occur to the center median, boulevards and sidewalk/paths due to these maintenance activities.
- 9) Sign maintenance personnel will use the necessary equipment and traffic controls, as directed by proper county sign maintenance practices and the Field Manual of Temporary Traffic Control Zone Layouts, when performing sign maintenance activities along County Highways.

#### **SECTION IV. UPDATES TO POLICY**

Due to the ever-changing technologies; innovations; and signing installation practices in the traffic control industry, this policy in part or whole may be changed and/or updated by means of technical memorandums issued by the Wright County Traffic, Access Management and Signing Committee (TAMS Committee).

#### **SECTION V. ADMINISTRATION**

The Traffic Engineering Division of the Wright County Highway Department will be responsible for administering this policy.

Policy adopted this 13<sup>th</sup> day of September 2011 by the Wright County Board of Commissioners.

**TABLE 1**

**WRIGHT COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT  
15 YEAR REPLACEMENT SCHEDULE BASED ON  
“EXPECTED SIGN LIFE METHOD”**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>COUNTY HIGHWAYS</b>
2008	CSAH 1, CSAH 10, CSAH 13, CSAH 16, CSAH 21, CSAH 30, CR 110, CR 112, CR 124
2009	CSAH 37
2010	CSAH 35
2011	CSAH 17, CSAH 22, CSAH 41, CR 101, CR 109, CR 123, CR 131, CR 134, CR 136
2012	CSAH 39, CR 119, CR 133
2013	CSAH 40, CSAH 75, CR 104
2014	CSAH 7, CR 113, CR 128, CR 135, CR 145, CR 147
2015	CSAH 5, CSAH 11, CSAH 19
2016	CSAH 2, CSAH 34, CR 117, CR 132
2017	CSAH 3, CSAH 4, CR 100, CR 105, CR 107, CR 125
2018	CSAH 8
2019	CSAH 6, CSAH 31, CSAH 38, CR 141, CR 142
2020	CSAH 12, CSAH 36, CR 108, CR 111
2021	CSAH 9, CSAH 18, CR 106, CR 138
2022	CSAH 14, CSAH 20, CSAH 32, CSAH 33, CSAH 44, CR 116, CR 120