



### 1.0 Authority

Wis. Stats., s. 84.30 gives the department the power to control the erection and maintenance of billboards and other forms of outdoor advertising adjacent to the interstate system, federal-aid primary highways and the Great River Road. Wis. Stats., section 84.30(3)(a) gives the department the power to promulgate rules for official signs relative to lighting, size, number, spacing and other such requirements. As such, additional standards for signs can be found in s. Trans. 201 Wis. Adm. Code.

### 2.0 Criteria for Erection

1. A sign is considered an official sign if the sign is erected: (all four must apply)
  - a. and maintained by a public officer or agency;
  - b. within an area where the public officer or agency exercises some governmental authority to enact or administer the law;
  - c. within an area where the officer or agency has the authority, as directed or given by statute, to erect and maintain signs and notices; and,
  - d. for the purpose of carrying out an official duty or responsibility.
2. Fees
  - a. No fee is required for signs meeting the criteria for erection.
3. Whenever a permitted sign is removed by the owner without notice and approval from the department, it loses all rights to the location and any grandfathered status it may have enjoyed. The erection of a new sign requires a new application and must conform to all current criteria and requirements.

### 3.0 Acceptable Configurations

1. Message Content
  - a. The message, as determined by the department, must publicize or announce an official duty or responsibility or an activity furthering an official duty or activity.
  - b. Signs advertising activities illegal under federal or state laws or regulations in effect at the location of the sign or at the location of the advertised activities are prohibited.
  - c. Signs including clusters of service club plaques are generally acceptable as long as the service clubs reside within the area of jurisdiction of the agency or officer erecting the sign and are valid and recognized service clubs.
2. Placement
  - a. *For interstate system:* signs must be placed at least 500 feet from any intersection at grade, any interchange, or another sign. *For non-freeway federal-aid primary highways:* outside of an incorporated city or village, signs must be placed at least 300 feet from any intersection at grade, any interchange, or another sign. Within an incorporated city or village, signs must be placed at least 100 feet from any other sign.
    1. For interchanges, the measurements shall be taken from the beginning or ending of pavement widening at the exit from or entrance to the main-traveled way.

- b. Signs must not obstruct any signs or markers used for traffic control, any state installed official signs or markers, or any other lawfully erected sign.
- c. Signs must not obstruct or interfere with a driver's view of approaching, merging or intersecting traffic.
- d. Signs must not be erected or maintained on trees or painted or drawn on rocks or other natural features.
- e. Signs must not be located in rest areas, parklands, or scenic areas.

### 3. Size

No sign shall exceed a maximum area of 150 square feet, or a maximum height or length of 20 feet. The measurements shall include the border and trim but exclude the supports.

### 4. Design

- a. No sign shall resemble any traffic sign or signal or any state installed official signs or markers.
- b. No sign shall have any moving or animated parts.

### 5. Lighting

- a. No sign shall contain, include or be illuminated by any moving, flashing or intermittent lights.
- b. No sign shall emit or reflect beams or rays of light on any portion of the traveled way or shall emit or reflect light of such intensity or brilliance as to cause glare or to impair or otherwise interfere with a driver's vision.
- c. No sign shall be so lighted as to obstruct or interfere with an official traffic sign, device or signal.

## **4.0 Management Guidance**

### 1. Application

The application includes specific directions and should be filled out completely with all specified documents attached. The documents include an illustration of the proposed sign depicting a full sense of what the sign will announce along with the height, length and area of the sign, as well as a map indicating the proposed site.

### 2. Site Investigation

Each proposed site should be investigated prior to a sign's erection. The person doing the investigation should measure the distance between the sign site and the nearest intersection, interchange and other signs to ensure spacing requirements are met. The person should also verify the proposed sign will not obstruct a driver's view of traffic or block another lawfully erected sign.