



DATE: November 5, 2020

TO: Wisconsin Bridge Inspection Team Leaders and Program Managers, Wisconsin County Highway Commissioners

FROM: Richard Marz, P.E.
Chief Structures Maintenance Engineer
Bureau of Structures Richard Marz, P.E.

SUBJECT: Policy Memorandum
Local Bridge Posting and Closures

This Memorandum restates the requirements and procedures for local bridge owners to assist them in complying with the National Bridge Inspection Standards (NBIS).

WisDOT is responsible for compliance with the National Bridge Inspection Program (NBIP) 23 metrics, which is administered by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The NBIS allows the State of Wisconsin to delegate functions of the NBIS to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) Region Program Managers and County Program Managers for locally owned structures. Non-compliance in any individual metric by a delegated Program Manager warrants a non-compliance determination for the entire WisDOT Bridge Inspection Program. This may result in execution of penalty provisions by FHWA which requires WisDOT to allocate funds to correct the non-compliance determination in accordance with 23 U.S.C. 144(h)(5).

As a result of the FHWA's annual risk assessment of the NBIP, the processes for Local Bridge Posting and Closures were identified as an opportunity to strengthen the inspection program. When any bridge is not posted or closed as required, the travelling public may unknowingly overstress a structure with reduced load capacity or access an unsafe structure.

Part 1 of the WisDOT Structures Inspection Manual describes the roles and functions of delegated Program Managers. Under State Statute 84.17 and Administration Code Trans 212.10, WisDOT maintains the authority to post locally owned bridges in which load posting signs have not been installed within 30-days of owner notification. Trans 212.10 also grants WisDOT the authority to immediately close a local bridge when the owner has not closed the structure in a timely manner.

The success of the Inspection Program is dependent on timely communication throughout all levels of the inspection process. Your continued dedication and cooperation are appreciated.

QUESTIONS: For information on the contents of this memorandum, or questions, please contact Rick Marz at (608)-266-8195 or Travis McDaniel at (608)-266-5097