



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
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To Whom It May Concern:

It is campaign season again, and the Maine Department of Transportation would like to take this opportunity to offer some information regarding the placement of temporary signs in the right of way on state and state aid highways.

The law that will be in effect at the time of the primary elections in June allows noncommercial signage, which includes campaign signs, to be placed in the right of way for up to 6 weeks during any calendar year. The current law further states that individual signs bearing substantially the same message must be placed at least 30 feet from one another. The current law also requires the sign owner to place his or her name and address on the signs together with the designated time period that the sign will be in the right of way.

Maine's temporary sign law was discussed and amended during this current legislative session. The new law, which will go into effect 90 days after the Legislature adjourns allows a person to place a temporary sign in the public ROW for a total of 12 weeks during the calendar year. The new law still requires that signs indicate the name and address of the individual, entity or organization that placed them within the ROW, but only the date of placement must be indicated once the amended law goes into effect, as opposed to the two dates the sign will be maintained in the ROW. We will send out a reminder of these revised requirements before the November elections.

Another reminder is that some areas within the state's roadway system continue to be off limits to noncommercial signage, including campaign signs. These areas include the Maine interstate system, the Maine Turnpike Authority system, and all connecting interchanges and ramps. Along with the interstate system some sections of state highways have been designated as "control of access" areas where ingress and egress to and from the highway is prohibited. No temporary signs of any kind can be placed along control of access areas on state and state aid highways.

Here are some questions that campaign personnel may ask regarding the placement of political signs:

How do I recognize a "control of access" section?

- *MaineDOT is continuing the process of installing signs at each of the control of access (C.O.A.) areas to indicate where the sections begin and end. The signs will provide information such as "C.O.A. Area-No Signs" with arrows indicating in which direction the C.O.A boundaries extend.*
- *Unsigned areas may be recognized by the limited access points into the highway and often a wildlife deterrent fence set 30 to 50 feet off the edge of pavement.*



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What will happen to my sign if it has been placed in within a C.O.A. section?

- *MaineDOT personnel have been advised to remove all types of signs from within the C.O.A. areas. Maintenance crews have also been instructed to safely store the signs until the owner of the sign (business, campaign) can be contacted and arrangements can be made for pickup.*

Does MaineDOT enforce these sign placement restrictions statewide?

- *MaineDOT is committed to providing the equitable enforcement of these sign restrictions upon notification of a violation.*

What do I need to know about placing my sign along the roadway?

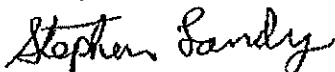
- *The first thing to consider in placement is the safety of the traveling public. Please do not install your signs where they will limit the sight line of anyone trying to pull out of a side road or driveway. Signs that block a driver's sight line will be removed for the safety of the travelling public and held at the closest MaineDOT maintenance lot to be picked up by the candidate.*

In summary, when placing political signs, the important areas to avoid are the interstate system with the connecting interchanges, including the MTA system, and the control of access areas. Also, individual signs can be no closer together than 30 feet and must contain appropriate contact information and the date on which the sign was placed in the ROW. MaineDOT will continue to provide the necessary information to help Maine's candidates.

For more information regarding the appropriate placement of political signs, please contact the Department's Legislative Liaison, Meghan Russo at Meghan.russo@maine.gov or 624-3558.

MaineDOT appreciates your cooperation in this effort.

Sincerely,



Steve Landry
State Traffic Engineer
MaineDOT