

ENGINEERING DIRECTIVES AND STANDARDS

Volume	Chapter	Section	Directive Number	Effective Date
IV	2	1	6	8/29/2003

SUBJECT: OUTDOOR ADVERTISING VISIBILITY MAINTENANCE

- 1. GENERAL:** DOTD recognizes the presence of vegetation on highway rights-of-way has a positive value for Louisiana. Trees benefit the state by mitigating the impact of our highway system, increasing soil stabilization; provide wildlife habitat, and moderating microclimate extremes. DOTD endorses the preservation of existing vegetation along transportation corridors. It may be necessary to remove vegetation when maintenance and safety concerns warrant such action. DOTD may consider trimming and the removal of vegetation that visually impacts legally permitted outdoor advertising displays and adjacent businesses. This does not mean that all permit requests will be granted. Factors such as adjacent land use visual screening of & from the roadway, tree species types & conditions, and public opinion will be considered before a final determination is made. All permits granted for vegetation removal will require mitigation in the form of replacement plantings. Maintenance of these planting areas will become the responsibility of the permittee. Permits will only be issued between October 15 and April 15 to promote optimum survival of replacement vegetation.
- 2. PROCEDURE:** Requests for an off-premise or on-premise advertising displays will be made using application for Project Permit Form Nos. DOTD 03-41-3035 or DOTD 03-41-0593, copies of which will be maintained in each district office. The application for a permit shall include the following:
 - A. State or Federal Highway Number
 - B. Location or distance from nearest state highway intersection to the proposed sign location.
 - C. Number, name of species, approximate diameter and height of existing trees, which are projected for removal.
 - D. Where trees are in groups, the diameters and heights may be shown for each group as a whole; i.e., 10 oaks and pines 8" to 12" diameter, 30' to 50' high.
 - E. Approximate number and names of shrubs and vines or, if the number cannot be estimated, the distance and location along the highway from point to point must be shown.
 - F. Kind of work to be done - trimming, removal and replacement (replacement will be required in all instances where removal of vegetation is requested). No topping of trees will be allowed.
 - G. 8' x 10' color photographs taken from required locations (see Diagrams 1 & 2) clearly marked to show limits of work.

As part of his review, the traffic operations engineer will verify the location of the display and will forward the request to the Headquarters Permits Unit with information about the displays legal status.

Legal status will include available and pertinent information that should be considered, including but not limited to the following:

- (1) Is this display under active citation?
- (2) Is this display subject to imminent removal?
- (3) Is this display illegally placed?
- (4) Is this display nonconforming to state beautification criteria?

Where replacement of trees is required, a plan (designed by a licensed Landscape Architect, at no cost to the Department) will be submitted to the Department for review, comments and/or approval.

Trimming and removal of trees must be performed by a bona fide bonded tree care service at no cost to the Department. A licensed landscape contractor shall perform replacement to trees at no cost to the Department. The permit shall contain a warranty clause wherein the permittee agrees to replace any trimmed or replacement tree or vegetation not living or seriously damaged one year after work is completed.

Visibility improvement will not be undertaken in any of the following instances:

- (1) The display has been in place less than five (5) calendar years.
- (2) The display is illegally placed.
- (3) The display is currently under contract with the state to be removed or it will be removed within one year.
- (4) The display is on state property.
- (5) A right-of-way take is imminent within one year.
- (6) The trees or other vegetation to be trimmed, selectively removed, or removed and replaced are a distance greater than 500' measured along the highway from the display.

Access to the work area shall be from private property or frontage road side and not from the main roadway or ramps. Where this is not practical the permittee shall conduct his operation in accordance with DOTD Maintenance Standards including appropriate traffic control devices. The area shall be restored to original condition upon completion of the work.

Drainage shall not be impeded.

Work will be performed only during regular daylight department hours, Monday through Friday excluding legal holidays.

Vegetation which has been cut will not be left overnight within 30 feet of the travel lane or within highway right-of-way, whichever is less. No more vegetation will be cut down than can be cleaned up and removed by the end of work the following day. No debris will be left over a weekend or holiday. No burning will be permitted on the highway right-of- right. Stumps shall be cut or ground flush with the ground and treated with an EPA approved herbicide immediately after the stump is cut.

Work shall not interfere with traffic on the roadway or shoulder at any time. Parking of vehicles on roadway or shoulder shall not be permitted. All loading, hauling or other work associated with the permit will be conducted across adjacent property. Appropriate warning signs shall be placed by the permittee in advance of the work area in accordance with the current edition of Part VI of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) – Standards and Guides for Traffic Controls for Streets and Highway Construction, Maintenance, Utility and Incidental Maintenance Operations.

The vegetation control area will not extend more than 500' along the highway from the viewable face(s) of the advertising device and cleared to and along the line of sight.

Where operations are conducted in an unsatisfactory manner or for any other cause, the Department may revoke the permit and any future permitting will be withheld until the unsatisfactory condition has been corrected.

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