

CAUTION ON POLITICAL SIGNS

Political campaign committees, and candidates are being reminded again about restrictions on where their signs can be placed. Signs on highway fences, utility poles, and otherwise on state right of way are not allowed, and are being removed by Department of Transportation crews.

With landowner's consent, political signs may be placed alongside the highway on privately owned land. Many signs are being placed in ditches or on the highway side of fences. State crews must remove them, and store them until the owners can pick them up. Candidates, and their supporters should make sure their signs are placed on private property.

Federal law requires that any sign intended to be read from the highway must be regulated by the state. In Montana, as in other states, controlling signs is the responsibility of the Department of Transportation. Failure to control signs brings the threat of federal sanctions, and can disrupt highway improvement projects.

It is unsafe, and illegal to drive or park in a ditch along a highway to install a sign on private property.

Within 30 days following the applicable election the signs should be removed.

The candidates' cooperation in adhering to the regulations, and statutes will benefit the Department of Highways, and the taxpayers of Montana.

If you have any questions, I can be reached in Helena at (406) 444-6068.

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File

POLITICAL SIGNS

CAUTION

18.6.246 POLITICAL SIGNS (1) Signs promoting political candidates or issues shall be placed on private property only and cannot be placed without the permission of the property owner

(2) Political signs shall not:

(a) be placed in the public right-of-way or on public property;

(b) be attached on public right-of-way fences and utility poles;

(c) obstruct the view of motor vehicle operators or create a traffic hazard;

(d) be located within 500 feet of an intersection at grade along a primary highway, or within 500 feet of an interchange or rest area on the interstate highway system as measured from the beginning of the pavement widening for the interchange;

(e) be erected or maintained prior to 90 days before the applicable election.

(3) Political signs must be removed within 30 days following the applicable election. The department shall notify the landowner of illegal signs which are not removed within 30 days. The signs shall be removed by the department 24 hours after notification to the landowner. The department shall retain removed political signs for 30- days after notification of removal before their destruction. The sign owner may retrieve the signs during this period.

(4) Political signs do not require permits and are not subject to permit fees.