

## ROAD SIGNAGE

Installing road signs is one of the final, and more important tasks in addressing. To assist both emergency service personnel and the general public, signs must be visible and maintained. A frequent complaint about road signs is that snow banks or vegetation often hide them. Annual trimming or minor maintenance can eliminate this problem.

1. **Color.** Signs should be reflectorized. The letters and background should be of contrasting colors and should have white letters and border on green background. **Letters should be at least 3" upper case.** It is important to insure that letters are tall enough and thick enough to be easily seen day or night.
2. **Grade.** High Intensity Reflective Sheeting (250 candle power silver high intensity) is recommended when nighttime high visibility is necessary from long distances or at high accident intersections where quick identification of markings is important. High intensity sheeting is available in packaged letters or can be cut on a machine as with the engineer grade sheeting. High intensity sheeting meets the Federal Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) specifications and carries a ten-year warranty.
3. **Lettering.** Letters should conform to the standard alphabets for highways signs printed by the Federal Highway Administration. Suffix abbreviations should follow those listed in these standards, such as ALY, RD, LN, CIR, AVE, etc. Road names should not be abbreviated.
4. **Materials.** The most commonly used material for blades is either extruded aluminum with a 0.25" inch flange thickness and a 0.090" inch web (min.) or flat sheet aluminum with a minimum thickness of 0.08 inches. 6061T6 aluminum alloy is a hard, strong alloy manufactured from flat sheet. This has been replaced, to some extent, by 5052H38 series alloy, which is softer and comes in a roll. 5052H38 is flattened on a press, but retains a memory and may warp slightly over time. Both alloys must be anodized or the sheeting may delaminate to the surface of the blank over a period of time. Thickness can range from 0.080" to 0.125", but 0.080" are recommended.
5. **Posts.** Posts for elevated signs vary from round to "U" channel. Both types of post are made of aluminum or galvanized steel. The type of post chosen may depend on the environment, soil type, cost, or preference of the installing and maintaining agency. Sign mounting hardware is available for both types of post. When installing posts, it is recommended to install anchor posts, such as "lok-set" post anchors. These anchors will help keep the sign from leaning and will also keep vandals from twisting the sign around, a very popular pastime among juveniles. Any new obstacles have to be a break away device approved by the Federal Highway Administration.

6. **Heights.** The height of the sign is very important. Posts come in lengths of 8 feet to 14 feet. In most cases, the taller the better. As a general rule, signs should be 7 feet or more off the ground when mounted on the post. This keeps the signs visible and can reduce some types of vandalism.
7. **Placement.** Sign placement is generally prescribed by state and federal rules. As a general guide, signs are placed on two sides of each four-way intersection and on the right hand side of a "T" intersection. It is generally recommended that a four-way sign be used, one that displays the name of both roads using a sign-to-sign bracket. If not economically possible to place the four-way sign at every intersection, an attempt should be made to place one at every other intersection.
8. **Installation.** Before installing any road signs, a municipality or county must call Miss Utility Of West Virginia, Inc. at least 48 hours before digging. Miss Utility can be contacted 24 hours a day, seven days a week by calling toll-free 1-800-245-4848. Routine 48 hour notifications can be made via fax or email. Notifications must not be made more than 10 business working days in advance of the beginning of any such work due to the possible deterioration of the locate markings. The time requirements are exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays.

For additional information on the design and installation of road name signing, please refer to the following standards of the West Virginia Division of Highways.

**Sensel Sign's**  
**1411 New York Avenue**  
**Martinsburg, WV 25401**  
**304-267-7807**

Proposed Location of Sign at Jct. Of:      And:		Posted Speed	Letter Height	Border	Arrow	County Rte. No.	Bkgd. Color	Legend Color
US or WV Rte.	Local Ser. Rte.	ALL	3"	Yes	Yes	Yes	Green	White
US or WV Rte.	Private Drive	ALL	3"	Yes	Yes	Yes	Green	White
Local Ser. Rte.	Local Ser. Rte.	35 and Above	3"	Yes	Yes	Yes	Green	White
Local Ser. Rte.	Local Ser. Rte.	Less than 35	2" or 3"	Yes	Yes	2" No – 3" Yes	Green	White
Local Ser. Rte.	Private Drive	35 and Above	3"	Yes	Yes	No	Green	White
Local Ser. Rte.	Private Drive	Less Than 35	2"	Yes	No	No	Green	White

In addition to the above noted design criteria, the following installation procedures should also be followed:

1. WV DOH approved supports to be used.
2. Supports to be standard depth in ground (normally 3')
3. Lateral clearance of 6' – 12' from edge of pavement should be strived for.
4. Vertical clearance of 7' from edge of pavement to bottom of sign should be maintained.
5. Existing supports for existing signs should not be used to mount road name signing except on stop and yield signs, with the positioning of these signs not affecting the purpose of the signs.