



# Bloomfield Township

Dave Payne, Supervisor • Janet Roncelli, Clerk • Dan Devine, Treasurer  
David Buckley, Trustee • Neal J. Barnett, Trustee • Leo C. Savoie, Trustee • Brian E. Kepes, Trustee

January 27, 2011

Home Owners Association,

The roads in the Township are the jurisdiction of the Road Commission for Oakland County, RCOC. By contract with the RCOC the Township maintains the surface of the local roads only. All signing, guardrails, drainage and so on are the responsibility of RCOC. All major roads in the Township are maintained completely by the RCOC.

Last spring the Township received a letter from the RCOC in reference to street name signs within the Township. More specifically RCOC has noted decorative street name signs on public streets within our subdivisions.

Attached is the letter from RCOC and the guidelines required to install and maintain street signs within your subdivision. Also included is an article from the January 9, 2011 Oakland Press in reference to the new Federal requirements for street signs.

Township staff has reviewed the subdivisions where decorative signs exist within the Township and are notifying those associations, by this letter, that have the special decorative signs of the new requirements.

The most important part of these guidelines is to make sure each subdivision obtains a permit from RCOC for anything they do within the public right of way of a street or roadway.

If there are questions in reference to any of the information contained in this correspondence please contact Chuck Keller, RCOC, at 248-858-4802.

Very truly yours,

Thomas W. Trice,  
Director of Public Works



May 12, 2010

Mr. David Payne  
Supervisor  
Charter Township of Bloomfield  
4200 Telegraph Road, P.O. Box 489  
Bloomfield Hills, MI. 48303-0489

15-17-11-2010 11:03 AM

**Re: RCOC Decorative Street Name Sign Requirements**

Dear Supervisor Payne:

I'm writing to inform you about the Road Commission for Oakland County's (RCOC) Decorative Street Name Sign Requirements. Over the past several years two items have occurred that affect street name signs. First, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has implemented sign retro-reflectivity standards that will make it easier to read signs at night. Secondly, the national Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) has been updated and now requires larger more visible lettering. Both of these changes have been implemented to help improve safety by making it easier for motorists, especially older drivers, to read signs.

In an effort to bring our street signs into compliance with these requirements, RCOC has developed the attached document for residents or homeowner associations to follow when applying for a permit to install decorative street name signs in their subdivision. We are highly encouraging you to share these with homeowner associations, place them on your website, in your community newsletter, and/or use any other method you have to share information with your residents.

Please note that regulatory (Stop, Yield, or Parking Prohibitions) or warning (Yellow Series) signs posted in the subdivisions are not allowed to be decorative. These regulatory and warning signs must remain as an RCOC standard installation for liability and maintenance reasons.

RCOC understands there are many subdivisions that currently have decorative signs installed, some by RCOC permit or approval, and many others installed without our knowledge. This includes regulatory and warning signs that we do not permit to be installed as a decorative type of installation. As RCOC proceeds forward in the future with upgrades to these signs to meet current standards and new minimum retro-reflectivity requirements, we will be making an attempt to contact the homeowner associations about our plans. We will give them the opportunity to replace the street name signs with new ones meeting the requirements per the attachment, however, the regulatory and warning signs will be replaced with the standard RCOC installation.

If you have any questions concerning these requirements or need further information, please contact our Traffic Engineer, Chuck Keller, at (248) 858-4802.

Sincerely,

Gary Piotrowicz, P.E., P.T.O.E.  
Director, Traffic-Safety Department  
Enclosure (1)

*Board of Road Commissioners*

*Gregory C. Jamian  
Commissioner*

*Richard G. Skarritt  
Commissioner*

*Eric S. Wilson  
Commissioner*

*Brent O. Bair  
Managing Director*

*Dennis G. Kolar, P.E.  
Deputy Managing Director  
County Highway Engineer*

Traffic Safety Department

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## ROAD COMISSION FOR OAKLAND COUNTY

### DECORATIVE STREET NAME SIGN REQUIREMENTS

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1. All work requires a permit from the Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC).
2. All regulatory (Stop, Yield, or Parking Prohibitions) or warning (Yellow Series) signs are not permitted to be a decorative type installation. These signs must remain a RCOC standard installation.
3. The permit application shall include detailed drawings of the street name sign(s) and the support (post), location of the street name sign(s) to be installed, and street name(s) with suffix (Rd., St., Ave., Dr., Ct., Ln., Blvd., etc.) shown (without use of a period).
4. All street name signs shall be fabricated and installed in accordance with the current edition of the Michigan Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MMUTCD).
5. Public road street name signs shall be white letters on a green background with a white border. Private road street name signs shall be black letters on a white background.
6. The green (public) and white (private) background shall be retroreflective (ASTM Type IV prismatic sheeting or better).
7. The white legend (letters and border) shall be retroreflective (ASTM Type IV prismatic sheeting or better).
8. The black legend (letters) shall be non-retroreflective sign sheeting film.
9. Where a sub-local street intersects a local or primary road, the minimum letter height shall be 8 inches, the suffix shall be 4 inches and superscripted.
10. Where a sub-local street intersects another sub local street, the minimum letter height shall be 5 inches, suffix shall be 3 inches and superscripted.

**ROAD COMISSION FOR OAKLAND COUNTY**  
**DECORATIVE STREET NAME SIGN REQUIREMENTS**

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11. The font used for the lettering shall be either the "Highway Clear View" or "Highway C Series" with use of upper and lower case letters.
12. The street name sign(s) shall be installed on a breakaway design type post with a minimum bottom sign height of 10 feet. A Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) letter of approval that the post design is in compliance with NCHRP350 requirements must be included with the permit application.
13. The street name sign(s) shall be installed on the opposite corner from the location of the regulatory sign installation (Stop or Yield).
14. The cost for removal of existing RCOC street name signs will be included in the permit fees.
15. The decorative street name signs will not be maintained by the RCOC. The RCOC, when notified of a damaged or missing street name sign will grant a reasonable time frame for the replacement to be completed before installing a new street name sign meeting the current RCOC signing standards. The removal of the RCOC replacement street name sign will not be done unless paid for by the homeowners association or local residents.
16. If the RCOC has a construction project in an area that removes or disturbs the installation of a decorative street name sign, it will not be reinstalled or replaced by the RCOC. The removal and replacement will be the responsibility of the homeowners association or local residents.

The Daily Tribune (dailytribune.com), Serving Southeastern Oakland County

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News

## The signs they are a changin'

Saturday, January 8, 2011

By Joette Kunse  
For the Daily Tribune

Drivers will soon see a different color, letter size and lettering on street signs as they commute through Oakland County.

The county road commission and most cities' departments of public works are working to change the lettering and reflectivity on street signs to conform to the Federal Highway Administration mandates coming within the next eight years.

While other states and cities have complained about the added costs to update street signs, Craig Bryson, spokesman for the road commission said the county switched to the reflectivity standard years ago. The former signs were black lettering on white, and the new mandate is for green signs with white reflective letters, he said.

"Oakland County is responsible for 160,000 signs on township and state roads," Bryson said.

The new signage requirement is based on research regarding recognition and visibility, said Paul Shumejko, transportation engineer for Rochester Hills.

"Rochester Hills began replacing street signs in the mid-1990s with the retroreflectivity signs and replaces all signs on a 12-year cycle, with about 500 street signs replaced each year," he said.

Shumejko says street signs are located 10 feet above the ground and larger letters increase the sign size and make it easier to recognize. In addition, "Various research says using a beginning upper case letter with lower case letters on the signs helps with recognition," he said.

Troy Deputy City Engineer Bill Huotari said his city has been replacing street signs for a year or longer.

"The money has been budgeted for the project and the city has been broken into quadrants to change signage systematically," Huotari said. "We are very well aware of the requirements and have a plan to meet the dates and will be compliant."

Royal Oak City Engineer Elden Danielson said Royal Oak makes its own signs and has the new reflectivity sheeting materials from 3M.

"We're aware of what's proposed and the timelines," he said. "Royal Oak will be replacing signs in the normal changeover of about 10 years. We don't have the people to make and install signs with our personnel numbers down."

Danielson said a street sign costs somewhere between \$30 and \$40 to make and install.

Federal regulations call for municipalities or agencies with jurisdiction over roads to develop a plan to implement sign



replacement with the minimum retroreflectivity levels by 2012. The compliance date for replacing regulatory, warning and post-mounted signs other than street signs is Jan. 22, 2015, with replacement of street signs completed on Jan. 22, 2018.

The Federal Register of Nov. 30 states, "The minimum sign retroreflectivity requirements were intended to assure adequate nighttime visibility of traffic signs, especially for older drivers, but with significant safety benefits for all drivers, as clearly documented by research."

A spokesman for the Federal Highway Administration said the letter size recommendation is six inches in height, but that is not a regulation. The FHA also is recommending municipalities change the lettering on street signs to a capital first letter with the remaining letters lower case. The spokesperson said the FHA said the signs will be changed in 10 to 15 years from wear and tear, so the change will mean no additional cost to local governments.

"From an economic standpoint, the Federal Highway Administration rules have no effect," Rochester's Shumejko said, noting the city's 12-year replacement plan.

Bryson said the change is an example of an unfunded mandate.

Some of the smaller cities and villages seem unaware of the new signage requirement, but Bryson and Shumejko said the federal Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices put forth information in 2003 about future requirements for signage.

Ortonville City Manager Larry Brown, who is new to the position, said he was unaware of the requirements. Ortonville has a vendor who replaces signage on a cycle. After further research, Brown said, "The village streets have a speed limit of 25 miles per hour and are exempt from the requirements."

In Pontiac, Department of Public Works Director Allan Schneck said the city will replace the old black-and-white street signs with the retroreflective green and white signs during road repairs.

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URL: <http://www.dailytribune.com/articles/2011/01/10/news/doc4d2904e18d047517771671.prt>

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