



Guidelines Mowing in State Right of Way

Some localities and many homeowners associations require that property owners maintain the roadside in front of their properties. This may include shoveling snow off sidewalks or mowing grass. Due to reductions in VDOT's roadside mowing frequency, there are requests by localities and private citizens to mow grass in state right of way for aesthetic purposes.

Mowing permits are not approved in cases where residents are mowing grass in front of their homes or businesses on the right of way of two-lane low-speed, low-volume streets. Drivers on such facilities expect to encounter pedestrians and activities associated with the maintenance of residences and businesses, reducing or eliminating the utility of any traffic safety instruction. Private mowing along such streets has occurred across the state and has historically not constituted a traffic issue needing increased regulation.

If volunteers wish to mow along roadways, where the speed limit is less than 45 mph, especially in medians, such work may be approved by VDOT permit. A permit allowing private individuals, groups, and local governments needs to promote the safety of the volunteers involved and that of the traveling public.

Additionally, providing volunteers with some basic traffic safety instruction is important. Permit requests for mowing shall have the following stipulations:

1. **Traffic Signs:**
 - ❖ Proper signage in accordance with the attached Volunteer Mowing Operation instructions. (See Pages 4 and 5.)
 - ❖ Signs to be furnished by the volunteer.
 - ❖ Signs must be in accordance with Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices' approved signs.
 - ❖ Always place the "Mowing Ahead" sign(s) before beginning mowing in accordance with Typical Traffic Control "Mowing Operation," attached.
 - ❖ Signs are generally diamond shaped.
 - ❖ Standard size for advance warning signs is generally 48" x 48"; but in conditions where the right of way, or geometric conditions preclude use of 48" x 48" signs, 36" x 36" signs may be used.
 - ❖ Signs mounted on temporary supports shall not be less than one foot above the pavement elevation.
 - ❖ Signs shall be fluorescent orange prismatic lens sheeting for daytime or nighttime use.
 - ❖ Roll up type signs may be used.
 - ❖ No mesh signs allowed.
 - ❖ No signs shall be placed on sidewalks or bike trails.
 - ❖ Remove the signs immediately after completing the mowing.



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2. **Traffic Control**
 - ❖ No lane closures are allowed; no vehicular traffic to be impeded.
 - ❖ No pedestrian traffic to be impeded.
 - ❖ No storage of equipment shall be placed on sidewalks or bike paths.
 - ❖ Mower operator and mowing equipment shall not encroach into the travel way while in operation.
 - ❖ Mower shall not toss mower clippings into vehicular or pedestrian traffic.
 - ❖ Bagging grass clippings is preferred.

3. **Approved Days and Hours**
 - ❖ Mowing shall occur between 9:30 AM and 3:00 PM Monday through Friday, unless otherwise approved by VDOT at time of permit request.
 - ❖ No mowing on holidays.
 - ❖ Work only in fair weather.

4. **Permit Application**
 - ❖ Permit work description must define accurately the location of mowing operation, and include the following “permittee shall immediately notify the nearest VDOT official who approved the land use permit of involvement in any personal or vehicular accident at the work site”.
 - ❖ The maximum mowing segment length is 2 miles. Do not mow or remove signs beyond that approved by VDOT. Stay within the area marked by your safety signs.
 - ❖ A copy of the land use permit shall be kept at mowing site.
 - ❖ The permit fee and surety is waived.
 - ❖ The applicant shall complete and sign the LUP-A (Land Use Permit Application).
 - ❖ Participants must be at least 18 years old.
 - ❖ Permit may be issued to local governments, businesses, informal groups, formal organizations, and individuals.
 - ❖ The permit is approved on an annual basis.

5. **Litter**
 - ❖ Permittee is required to pick up litter on the approved section of road immediately prior to mowing to prevent debris from being discharged from the mower.
 - ❖ Litter to be bagged and removed from site.
 - ❖ Do not pick up materials that appear to be hazardous; contact the Virginia State Police.



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6. **Safety Equipment**
 - ❖ Always wear a Class II reflective safety vest for visibility.
 - ❖ Reflective safety vest must be worn before entering the work site.
 - ❖ In addition to the reflective safety vest, wear brightly colored clothing that protects your arms and legs.
 - ❖ Must wear hard-soled shoes, safety glasses, ear protection, and work/gardening gloves.
 - ❖ Wear heavy gloves when removing temporary signs in case there are sharp edges. If you remove signs attached to poles within the right of way, wear safety glasses and use an appropriate tool to do it safely.
7. Permittee is required to view the AAH safety video (for all participants) on the following link <http://www.virginiadot.org/programs/prog-aah-fags.asp>
8. If traveling to the site, carpool to keep roadside parking to a minimum. Park as far from the road's edge as possible. No parking allowed in traveled lane.
9. Never participate in a mowing operation while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
10. No signs advertising mowing are allowed.

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Typical Traffic Control
Mowing Operation with Encroachment on Non-Limited Access Roadways
(Figure TTC-9.0)

NOTES

Standard:

1. Each vehicle involved in the operation shall be equipped with at least one rotating amber light or high intensity amber strobe or oscillating light, visible from 360°.
2. On divided highways having a median wider than 8', right and left sign assemblies shall be required.
3. Connecting roads entering into the work area shall be signed as shown.
4. All vehicles traveling at speeds below 25 mph shall display a slow moving vehicle emblem per OSHA regulation 1910.145(d)(10).

Guidance:

5. Sign spacing distance should be 350'-500' where the posted speed limit is 45 mph or less, and 500'-800' where the posted speed limit is greater than 45 mph.
6. No more than 2 complete setups (2 miles each) should be exposed to motorist at any one time.
7. To prevent multiple lane changing by motorists and constriction of traffic flow, mowing operations should be limited to one side of the roadway at a time, or separated by a minimum of 1000 feet between right and left side operations.
8. For high volume, high speed multi-lane highways, if the mower encroaches into the roadway for extended periods of time, or prevents vehicles from passing, TTC 15.0, Short Duration Operation on a Multi-Lane Roadway should be considered.

Mowing Operation with Encroachment on Non-Limited Access Roadways (Figure TTC-9.0)

