

	SMOKE AHEAD SIGN		<i>Issued: APR 2013</i>
			<i>Revised:</i>
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RECOMMENDED PRACTICES	PART	HIGHWAY SIGNS	
	SECTION	TEMPORARY CONDITIONS SIGNS	
	SUB-SECTION		

General

When highway visibility conditions are severely reduced as a result of heavy smoke, either from a wildfire or controlled burns by landowners or forestry conservation officers nearby, the safety of highway traffic can be compromised.

Pursuant to the Forest and Prairie Protection Act, the management and issuance of fire permits is administered by Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development for Forest Protection Areas. Outside of Forest Protection Areas, the appropriate municipal authority has jurisdiction to regulate burning activities within their area through the Municipal Government Act.

In situations where heavy smoke is or is expected to be present on a provincial highway, drivers should be given adequate warning of the hazard so they can adjust their travel speed if necessary to proceed safely through the area of reduced visibility.

Standard

A standard Smoke Ahead (WD-175) sign consists of a black message on a fluorescent orange background.



WD-175	750 mm x 750 mm 900 mm x 900 mm	
Colour	Symbol and border Background	Black Fl. Orange
Sheeting	ASTM Type VIII	

Guidelines for Use

The Smoke Ahead sign is used to warn motorists of severely reduced visibility due to heavy smoke on the highway.

The Smoke Ahead sign is installed on a temporary basis when smoke conditions are bad or are expected to be bad (sight distance reduced to less than 200 metres).

The conditions under which a fire permit is issued to a landowner vary between municipalities. If burning will occur near a provincial highway and smoke on the highway is expected to be a concern, the landowner must coordinate with the Highway Maintenance Contractor at their cost to have Smoke Ahead signs installed.

Smoke Ahead sign should only be installed where they are necessary to warn the travelling public.

If the department or Highway Maintenance Contractor receives notification or complaints from the public or RCMP about safety concerns due to poor highway visibility, the Highway Maintenance Contractor will take immediate action to install Smoke Ahead signs and then bill the responsible landowner accordingly.

Guidelines for Placement

When used, the Smoke Ahead sign should be placed on a temporary assembly 500 to 750 metres in advance of the hazard area in both directions to allow motorists sufficient time to react to the sign message.

Signs are installed on the right-hand side of the highway. On divided highways, an additional sign should be installed on the left-hand side of the roadway. Installation of Smoke Ahead signs must be through the Highway Maintenance Contractor.

Smoke conditions must be monitored by the Highway Maintenance Contractor (and signs moved as needed if the location of the hazard shifts) and the signs removed when conditions improve to the extent where the signs are no longer needed. The removal of the signs shall be by the Highway Maintenance Contractor.

Highway Closure Due to Smoke Conditions

As described in Section 2.0.2 – Emergency Road Closure of the *Contract Administration Manual – Highway and Bridge Maintenance, 2010* roads are generally not closed for naturally occurring or manmade concerns such as smoke, although severely reduced visibility conditions (where significant hazards to motorists can exist) from any source may warrant closure. The district Operations Manager may use his discretion to close the road to minimize the potential for collisions, or, if collisions have already occurred, to minimize the potential for additional collisions to occur.

References to Standards

<i>Traffic Safety Act</i>	Use of Highway and Rules of the Road Regulation, Section 2(1) - Driving at Appropriate Speed
<i>Recommended Practices</i> , Section: General	Placement of Signs
<i>Contract Administration Manual – Highway and Bridge Maintenance, 2010</i>	Section 2.0.2 – Emergency Road Closure