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*Southwest Georgia...*

### **GDOT Reminds Public: Don't Post Signs on the State Right of Way**

TIFTON, Ga. – Some Georgia Department of Transportation area offices are seeing an increase in the number of campaign signs on state rights of way and want to remind the public that the practice is illegal.

“We don’t allow any kind of illegal encroachment on our right of way,” Southwest District Maintenance Engineer Stacy Aultman said.

Signs on the state highway system – interstates and state routes – must be approved and permitted to be placed on the right of way. The number of political signs typically increases during an election year, but they are not the only problem. Signs that advertise yard sales, real estate or goods and services for sale are often found in the right of way. Unauthorized signs can distract drivers or obstruct their view, which creates a safety hazard.

Georgia Code 32-6-51 states that “it shall be unlawful for any person to erect, place or maintain within the right of way of any public road any sign, signal or other device except as authorized by subsection (d) of this Code section.” Violation is a misdemeanor and is punishable by a fine up to \$1,000 and/or 12 months in jail.

It’s not unusual for GDOT maintenance employees to uproot several hundred signs during an election year, said Thomas Avery, assistant area engineer for maintenance in Donalsonville.

“We take them back to our headquarters and give the owners an opportunity to reclaim them,” he said.

The width of the right of way depends on the route. If there are power poles on the right of way, the edge is usually behind the poles, Avery said. However, check with your local DOT office for guidance if you aren’t sure where signs are allowed on a particular route. To reclaim signs that have been removed by Department maintenance, contact your local GDOT office.

***DriveAlert ArriveAlive** calls attention to an alarming increase in roadway fatalities across Georgia, many resulting from preventable crashes and distracted driving. **DriveAlert ArriveAlive** implores motorists to buckle up; stay off the phone and don’t text; and drive alert. Visit [www.dot.ga.gov/DS/SafetyOperation/DAAA](http://www.dot.ga.gov/DS/SafetyOperation/DAAA). #ArriveAliveGA. For information on the Department of Transportation, visit <http://www.dot.ga.gov>. You also may follow us on ([www.facebook.com/GDOTSW](http://www.facebook.com/GDOTSW)) and [Twitter](https://twitter.com/GDOTSW) (<https://twitter.com/GDOTSW>).*

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