



GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Vegetation Management at Outdoor Advertising 01 -03 -07

Before You Begin



What is Vegetation Management At Outdoor Advertising Signs?

A program that allows limited vegetation removal on state right of way to create a Sign Viewing Zone. This Sign Viewing Zone is an area measured 500' (maximum) parallel to the right of way in the direction from which the sign face is viewed.

Does Your Sign Qualify for a Permit?

Limited Vegetation Management (VM) is allowed for legally erected conforming and non-conforming outdoor advertising signs that have been *permitted* through the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) for a period of five (5) years or more. You should become familiar with the GDOT Vegetation Management Policy prior to submitting an application.

Your Vegetation Management Permit Application must be complete in order to be accepted for review. Take the time to resolve whatever might cause delay or failure of the process *before* submitting any non-refundable fees. Applications will not be approved for:

- ⊗ Incomplete Applications
- ⊗ Signs with overdue renewal fees and tags missing from the structures
- ⊗ Outdoor Advertising Signs/Sign faces permitted through the GDOT for less than 5 years
- ⊗ Outdoor Advertising Signs with no existing trees screening the Sign face
- ⊗ Applicants with pending violations or outstanding issues with any of their signs along state right of way
- ⊗ Work proposed in medians and islands
- ⊗ Work proposed within an interchange area except along the outside shoulders of the outermost ramps and parallel to a state right of way
- ⊗ Work proposed in areas that have been planted, are planned for planting, or are in the process of being planted as part of a beautification project, Encroachment Permit, or other GDOT agreement
- ⊗ Sign permits that are in the process of being transferred

Vegetation Management permits are available *only* for *legally* permitted outdoor advertising signs. They are not available for on-premise signs. They are not available for “daylighting” businesses. Applications for vegetation management may only be submitted by the outdoor advertising structure permit holder.

Where Can You Find the Policy, Application and Other Guidelines?



Contact your local District Outdoor Advertising Agent (see Page 7) for a Policy and Application Package or download the forms you need online. You can find links to these documents at:

<http://www.dot.state.ga.us/dot/operations/maintenance/vegetation/>

or by following the Main Menu navigation link for **PERMITTING** on the left side of the **GDOT HOME PAGE** (www.dot.state.ga.us) There you can find links to:

- The Law (O.C.G.A. sections 32-6-75.1—32-6-75.3)
- The Rules (Chapter 672-14)
- The GDOT Policy for Vegetation Management at Outdoor Advertising Signs
- The Application
- The Annual Work Schedule Form (Attachment #9 for renewals)
- MPO's (Metropolitan Planning Organizations)
- The Federal Highway Administration Temporary Traffic Control Manual (MUTCD)
- Sources for traffic control signs and devices
- A list of Registered Foresters and Certified Arborists in Georgia
- A list of Licensed Pesticide Applicators with Category 27 training
- The Legal Services Division (Laws, Rules, and Administrative Hearing Process for Outdoor Advertising)

What does a Sign Viewing Zone look like?

To have a better understanding of what a Sign Viewing Zone might resemble, look at the example plans in Appendices A-1, A-2, A-3, and A-4, in the Application for Vegetation Management. They show typical Sign configurations and their Sign Viewing Zones.

The Vegetation Management Package

The Vegetation Management permit is called FORM # 0402. It is more than just one form. It is a package that includes nine attachments. The entire package, including attachments must be completed before you can submit your application. A separate permit is required for each Sign Viewing Zone requested. In the case where a sign has two sides, as in V-type signs, each side is considered a separate Sign Viewing Zone.



Forty-eight hours prior to any site visits, notify your local GDOT Area Office (see Page 6) so they will be aware of your planned activities on the right of way.

The Attachments



- ✓ **Attachment #1** is an **affidavit** stating your sign had advertising messages on it for some period during the preceding six months.
- ✓ **Attachment # 2** is a set of time/date stamped, **color photographs** of your entire Sign View Zone (minimum of 6 photos with different vantage points) and your sign (minimum of 2 photos with different vantage points) taken within 6 weeks prior to the application submittal.
- ✓ **Attachment # 3** is the **Sign Viewing Inventory Sheet** used to collect data for the other attachments. A step-by-step instruction page is included for the Inventory Sheet. It must be completed and signed by a Certified Arborist or Registered Forester in the State of Georgia.
- ✓ **Attachment # 4** is a copy of the **Arborist's/Forester's certification**.
- ✓ **Attachment #5** is a copy of the **Pesticide Applicator's certification in Category 27 (right of way)**. Herbicides may be used for stump treatment applications only. Herbicide treatments are allowed for eradication of invasive exotics like Kudzu, Privet, and Mimosa.
- ✓ **Attachment # 6** is the **Summary of Tree Values Worksheet**. It provides a method for quantifying the Contribution Fee required as a result of tree removal from public land.

MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organizations) Counties, i.e. Counties inside MPO's, have highly urban areas within them. These MPO Counties are considered when determining the value of the trees proposed for removal. MPO Counties are highlighted on Page 6 and 7 of this guide.

Vegetation management pruning is based on ANSI A300 Part 1 pruning standards and is restricted to certain techniques defined in the GDOT Vegetation Management Policy.

A non-hardwood is a conifer, such as Pine, Cypress, Spruce, Hemlock, or Cedar. Hardwoods are trees usually with deciduous leaves, including examples such as Maple, Oak, Cherry, Plum, Hickory, Ash, Beech, Willow, Poplar, and Sweetgum, with notable evergreen exceptions such as Magnolia and Live Oak.

- ✓ **Attachment # 7** is the **Stocking Points Chart**. Stocking refers to forest density. The Georgia statutes require that stocking be a part of the permit process. It applies only if you plan to remove large pine trees ≥ 12 inches in diameter from your site in special circumstances. It is best to read the Vegetation Management Policy for a detailed explanation of the stocking process.
- ✓ **Attachment # 8** is the **Environmental Impact Checklist**. It indicates the potential environmental impact on GDOT marked Environmental Sensitive Areas (ESA's), wetlands, and bodies of water. If one of these categories is in or found to be in your sign viewing zone, additional environmental submittals or requirements may be needed from the applicant.
- ✓ **Attachment # 9** is the **Annual Work Schedule**. It is your way of explaining to the GDOT the details of how, when and where you propose to do vegetation management activities. The initial work, including grassing if required, shall be completed within 10 working days. The annual work schedule will also be used for renewals each subsequent year.

FEES

SEE APPENDIX C
of the Vegetation
Management Policy
for a detailed
description of fees.



You are required to submit all fee payments in the form of **certified checks, money orders or company checks**. When you submit your initial application, it must include a **\$400 administrative, non-refundable fee** for the GDOT review. The GDOT will review your application for completeness and to ensure it complies with GDOT policies. If a permit is rejected, the applicant will be notified as to why. If your permit is provisionally accepted, the GDOT will return your Form # 0402 package to you, with any changes noted, for your final signature.

Study the form carefully before signing!

Upon your final signature, return the original, signed application package along with two additional copies to your District Outdoor Advertising Agent. Include your **contribution fee check, performance bond, and insurance requirements**. Any **contribution fee** paid by you is non-refundable and cannot be reduced or returned once you submit it.

You are not required to remove the maximum number of trees allowable by law, but you cannot remove more than the maximum number.

Once the GDOT receives your application with final signature and attachments, you will be provided with the GDOT Area Permit Inspector's name and information you need to proceed. You may then call your Area Permit Inspector and schedule a pre-construction meeting. Your designated foreman and you are required to be present for the field review.

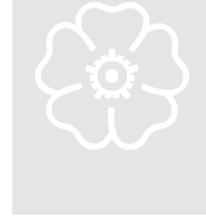
RENEWALS

It is your responsibility to keep track of renewal dates and submit an updated Annual Work Schedule (Attachment #9 of the original permit application form) each year before the anniversary of your initial permit activation date. Renewing your Vegetation Management permit each year allows you to re-visit the site and maintain it by removing only vegetation less than 4 inches in diameter. Please note that your only opportunity to remove vegetation greater than or equal to 4 inches in diameter is during the initial permit.

A **\$50 annual renewal fee** is due by the expiration date of your permit.

If you have any questions about the VM process, read the supporting documents for more detailed explanations. If, after reading them you still have questions, contact your District Outdoor Advertising Agent so they can find answers for you.

EROSION CONTROL



Vegetation Management activity must comply with erosion control standards as directed by the GDOT or per National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES Phase 2) standards and Best Management Practices (BMPs) consistent with the State Soil and Water Conservation Commission's Manual for Erosion and Sediment Control in Georgia, current edition.

To access erosion control regulations and information, locate the URL below and follow the link to the Water Protection Branch and Storm Water.

<http://www.dnr.state.ga.us/dnr/environ>

To access the GA Environmental Protection division of the GA Department of Natural Resources technical documents for Erosion and Sedimentation Control online:

http://www.state.ga.us/dnr/environ/techguide_files/techguide.htm

TRAFFIC CONTROL

ANY access to GDOT right of way for vegetation management purposes requires advance notification.



When working on your site within the right of way, you must comply with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, current edition, or use the traffic control plan shown in Appendix D of the Permit Application. After discussing safety procedures, you may be asked to submit a traffic control plan.

Any signs must be of rigid, one-piece construction covered with suitable sheeting and legend (engineering grade). Roll-up type signs may be used if they meet MUTCD Standards. Equip all signs with flags.

Access to the site shall only be from the edge of travel way.

GDOT CONTACT INFORMATION (MPO Counties are highlighted)

District 1 P.O. Box 1057, Gainesville, GA 30503-1057 District OA Agent 770-718-5058
 Area 1 (Dawson, **Forsyth**, and **Hall** Counties)770-535-5759
 Area 2 (Banks, Habersham, Rabun, and Stephens Counties) 706-754-9559
 Area 3 (Elbert, Franklin, Hart, and **Madison** Counties)706-384-7269
 Area 4 (Lumpkin, Union, Towns, and White Counties)706-348-4848
 Area 5 (**Barrow** and **Gwinnett** Counties)770-339-2308
 Area 6 (**Clarke**, Jackson, **Oconee**, and **Walton** Counties)706-369-5627

District 2 P.O. Box 8, Tennesse, GA 31089 District OA Agent 478-552-4623
 Area 1 (Glascock, Hancock, Washington, and Johnson Counties)478-552-2464
 Area 2 (Emanuel, Jenkins, and Screven Counties)478-289-2614
 Area 3 (Burke, Jefferson, McDuffe, and Warren Counties).....478-625-3681
 Area 4 (**Columbia**, Lincoln, **Richmond**, and Wilkes Counties) ...706-855-3466
 Area 5 (Greene, Morgan, **Newton**, Oglethorpe, Taliaferro Co.)...706-343-5836
 Area 6 (Baldwin, Jasper, Putnam, and Wilkinson Counties)489-445-5130
 Area 7 (Bleckley, Dodge, Laurens, and Treutlen Counties)478-275-6596

District 3 715 Andrews Drive, Thomaston, GA 30286 District OA Agent 706-646-6626
 Area 1 (Crawford, Upson, Pike, Lamar, and Taylor Counties)706-646-6630
 Area 2 (Marion, Schley, Stewart, Sumter, and Webster Counties) .229-931-2434
 Area 3 (Dooley, **Houston**, Macon, **Peach**, and Pulaski Co.).....478-988-7151
 Area 4 (**Bibb**, **Jones**, Monroe, and Twiggs Counties)478-757-2601
 Area 5 (Butts, **Fayette**, **Henry**, and **Spalding** Counties)770-228-7205
 Area 6 (**Coweta**, Heard, Meriwether, and Troup Counties)706-845-4115
 Area 7 (Chattahoochee, Harris, **Muscogee**, and Talbot Co.)706-568-2165

District 4 P.O. Box 7510, Tifton, GA 31793-7510 District OA Agent 229-386-3024
 Area 1 (Clinch, Echols, **Lanier**, and **Lowndes** Counties).....229-333-5287
 Area 2 (Atkinson, Coffee, **Berrien**, and Irwin Counties)912-389-4201
 Area 3 (Ben Hill, Crisp, Turner, Wilcox, and Worth Counties)229-426-5244
 Area 4 (Brooks, Colquitt, Tift, Thomas, and Cook Counties)229-891-7130
 Area 5 (Baker, **Dougherty**, **Lee**, Mitchell, and Worth Counties) ..229-430-4198
 Area 6 (Calhoun, Clay, Early, Quitman, Randolph, Terrell Co.)...229-732-3066
 Area 7 (Decatur, Grady, Miller, and Seminole Counties)229-524-5760

District 5 P.O. Box 610, Jesup, GA 31598 District OA Agent 912-427-5737
 Area 1 (Appling, Jeff Davis, Telfair, Wheeler, Montgomery Co.)..912-366-1090
 Area 2 (Charlton, Brantley, Pierce, Ware, and Bacon Counties)912-285-6009
 Area 3 (Camden, **Glynn**, and McIntosh Counties)912-264-7247
 Area 4 (**Long**, Tattnall, Toombs, Wayne, and **Liberty** Counties) .912-654-2940
 Area 5 (**Chatham** and Bryan Counties)912-651-2144
 Area 6 (Bulloch, Candler, Effingham, and Evans Counties)912-871-1108

District 6 P.O. Box 10., Cartersville, GA 30120 District OA Agent 770-387-5437
 Area 1 (**Bartow**, **Cherokee**, and Gordon Counties)770-387-3680
 Area 2 (Fannin, Gilmer, and Pickens Counties)706-635-5551
 Area 3 (**Catoosa**, **Dade**, Murray, **Walker**, and **Whitfield** Co.)706-272-2211
 Area 4 (Chattooga, **Floyd**, and Polk Counties)706-295-6025
 Area 5 (Haralson, **Paulding**, and Carroll Counties)770-646-5522

District 7 5025 New Peachtree Road, Chamblee, GA 30341 District OA Agent 404-463-4931
 Area 1 (**Dekalb** and **Rockdale** Counties)404-299-4386
 Area 2 (**Cobb** and North **Fulton** Counties)770-528-3238
 Area 3 (**Clayton**, South **Fulton**, and **Douglas** Counties)404-559-6699
 Area 4 (**Atlanta**)404-624-2444

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

COUNTIES BY DISTRICT

	DISTRICT 1	DISTRICT 2	DISTRICT 3	DISTRICT 4	DISTRICT 5	DISTRICT 6	DISTRICT 7
Outdoor Adv. Agent	Tammi Mullen	Jan Ray	Mark Webb	Sharon Hampton	Larry Holloway	Brian Asherbranner	Nykita Hurt
MAILING ADDRESS	P.O. Box 1057 Gainesville, Georgia 30503-1057	P.O. Box 8 Tennille, Georgia 31089	715 Andrews Drive Thomaston, GA 30286-3409	P.O. Box 7510 Tifton, GA 31793-7510	P.O. Box 610 Jesup, Georgia 31598	P.O. Box 10 Cartersville, Georgia 30120	5025 Peachtree Rd. Chamblee, Georgia 30341
Agents Phone #	(770)-718-5058	(478)-552-4623	(706)-646-6626	(229)-386-3024	(912)-427-5737	(770)-387-5437	(404)-463-4931
COUNTIES IN DISTRICT [* Counties located inside a Metropolitan Planning Organization – (MPO)]	Banks	Baldwin	Bibb*	Atkinson	Appling	Bartow*	Clayton*
	Barrow*	Bleckley	Butts	Baker	Bacon	Carroll	Cobb*
	Clarke*	Burke	Chattahoochee	Ben Hill	Brantley	Catoosa*	Dekalb*
	Dawson	Columbia*	Coweta*	Berrien*	Bryan	Chattooga	Douglas*
	Elbert	Dodge	Crawford	Brooks	Bulloch	Cherokee*	Fulton*
	Forsyth*	Emanuel	Dooly	Calhoun	Camden	Dade*	Rockdale*
	Franklin	Glascok	Fayette*	Clay	Candler	Fannin	
	Gwinnett*	Greene	Harris	Clinch	Charlton	Floyd*	
	Habersham	Hancock	Heard	Coffee	Chatham*	Gilmer	
	Hall*	Jasper	Henry*	Colquitt	Effingham	Gordon	
	Hart	Jefferson	Houston*	Cook	Evans	Haralson	
	Jackson	Jenkins	Jones*	Crisp	Glynn*	Murray	
	Lumpkin	Johnson	Lamar	Decatur	Jeff Davis	Paulding*	
	Madison*	Laurens	Macon	Dougherty*	Liberty*	Pickens	
	Oconee*	Lincoln	Marion	Early	Long*	Polk	
	Rabun	McDuffie	Meriwether	Echols	McIntosh	Walker*	
	Stephens	Morgan	Monroe	Grady	Montgomery	Whitfield*	
	Towns	Newton*	Muscogee*	Irwin	Pierce		
	Union	Oglethorpe	Peach*	Lanier *	Tattnall		
	Walton*	Putnam	Pike	Lee*	Telfair		
	White	Richmond*	Pulaski	Lowndes*	Toombs		
		Screven	Schley	Miller	Ware		
		Taliaferro	Spalding*	Mitchell	Wayne		
		Treutlen	Stewart	Quitman	Wheeler		
		Warren	Sumter	Randolph			
		Washington	Talbot	Seminole			
		Wilkes	Taylor	Terrell			
		Wilkinson	Troup	Thomas			
		Twiggs	Tift				
		Upson	Turner				
		Webster	Wilcox				
			Worth				

Contact Your Outdoor Advertising Agent For Application Information
 Contact Your Area Office To Notify The GDOT Of Your Plans To Be On the right of way