

Georgia Department of Transportation Office of Materials and Research

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) 35 Inspection of Highway Signs

I. General

This Standard Operating Procedure provides a means whereby qualified highway sign fabricators can utilize certified personnel to fulfill supplier's responsibility for furnishing highway signs conforming in every detail to the [Georgia Department of Transportation Specifications](#) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) [Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices \(MUTCD\)](#).

Each highway sign fabricator must qualify under the acceptance requirements set forth herein. Qualified highway sign fabricators are defined as those with a Georgia Department of Transportation approved quality control program, a certified sign technician, and an acceptable record of production of quality highway signs. The [Office of Materials and Research](#) publishes a list of all highway sign fabricators which have qualified under the program set forth in detail in this Standard Operating Procedure. This list is identified as [Qualified Products List \(QPL\) 80, "Highway Sign Manufacturers"](#).

II. Acceptance Requirements

A. Application for Approval

A highway sign fabricator who wishes to furnish signs to Georgia Department of Transportation projects must submit written application for approval to the Inspection Services Branch of the [Office of Materials and Research](#). This application must be submitted each year and include at least the following information.

1. Completed [QPL Information Form](#).
2. An outline of the fabricating company's Quality Control Assurance Program. This should include a brief description of the equipment and materials that will be used in the fabrication of highway signs, principal officers of the company, names of production managers.

B. Annual Guarantee

In addition, the fabricator will submit a notarized [Annual Certification and Guarantee](#) stating that all highway signs furnished for use on Georgia Department of Transportation projects are warranted to meet all requirements of the governing Specifications and approved plans. The Guarantee must carry the notarized signature of a responsible officer of the fabricating company with the authority to bind the company to contract.

The certified sign technician must submit a notarized [Certified Technician Annual Certification and Guarantee](#) as well. Both formats are attached for your completion and submittal to the Department.

Applicants for approval as a highway sign fabricator must schedule an initial inspection with the Inspection Services Branch of the [Office of Materials and Research](#). This inspection will include a review of the quality control techniques, quality control records and equipment. Provided the results of the initial inspection indicate an ability to consistently furnish highway signs which conform to the governing Specifications and approved plan drawings and the fabricator has a certified highway sign technician approved by the Georgia Department of Transportation, the fabricating company and location will then be designated as a qualified highway sign fabricator.

III. Fabricator's Responsibilities--General

A. Quality Control

Each fabricator listed on [Qualified Products List 80](#) shall have an approved materials control program that insures that all materials used in the fabrication of highway signs for Georgia Department of Transportation usage are from sources appearing on the Department's published list of approved materials where applicable, and that all materials used in fabrication have certified test reports meeting all requirements of the Department's governing Specifications, and are maintained on file at the fabricator's facility. All fabricators will have the necessary equipment for securing samples of these materials as requested by the Department.

B. Certification of Sign Technician

Personnel selected by fabricators to be certified highway sign technicians shall establish their qualifications and proficiency by successfully completing written, oral, and/or on-the-job examinations prescribed by the [Office of Materials and Research](#). Application for examination shall be in writing and directed to the following address:

Office of Materials and Research
Inspection Services Branch
15 Kennedy Drive
Forest Park, Georgia 30297

C. Technician Responsibilities

The technician's responsibilities shall include supervising the fabrication facility quality control program. The technician will take appropriate action to insure that all highway signs are fabricated to meet the governing Specifications. In addition, to insure the Department that each highway sign fabricated for Georgia Department of Transportation usage meets all governing Specifications, the technician shall personally inspect each finished highway sign and reject any sign which fails to meet the requirements. The technician shall personally place on each finished sign that is found to meet requirements of the governing Specifications, and/or approved plans a fabricator's decal which the State Materials and Research Engineer has approved for use. This decal shall not be placed on any highway sign prior to completion of the fabrication and inspection process.

IV. Office of Materials and Research Responsibilities

The [Office of Materials and Research](#) will monitor each fabricator's quality control procedures. This will include a review of the records of production, shipment, material control, certification, and inspection. In addition, the Department shall randomly perform tests, visually inspect, sample materials used in fabrication and/or finished highway signs that have been approved by the fabricator's certified highway sign technician by evidence of the approved decal. The [Office of Materials and Research](#) shall provide the fabricators with a copy of all test reports for any samples secured at that location and these reports shall also become part of the fabricator's records.

V. Reporting

All fabricators shall comply with the approved system of reporting each shipment of highway signs to a Department of Transportation, State of Georgia project. Each shipment shall be reported on Form [OMR-72](#). These reports shall be submitted to the [Office of Materials and Research](#) within one week of inspection. Authorized fabricator personnel shall complete this form and certify the inspection date to be correct. In addition, all reports must be accompanied by certifications for all materials used in the fabrication of the highway signs.

The [Office of Materials and Research](#) will review each report for accuracy and maintain these reports on file in the Inspection Services Branch.

VI. Removal of Fabricators from Qualified Products List (QPL) 80

The State Materials and Research Engineer will remove any fabricator from the approved list due to failure to comply with any of the requirements of the governing Specifications, approved plan drawings as well as failure to comply with any of the requirements in SOP 35.

VII. Project Acceptance of Highway Signs

The field engineer may accept highway signs from fabricators listed on [QPL 80](#), providing there is no evidence of damage due to shipping and handling. Inspection reports and material certifications are to be provided with each shipment and each sign is clearly marked with the fabricator's decal as approved by the State Materials and Research Engineer.

VIII. Refurbished Aluminum Sign Blanks and Panels

As part of the Department's "Green" Sign Initiative, refurbished aluminum sign blanks and panels may be used in the fabrication of highway and extruded panel signs on Georgia Department of Transportation projects in accordance with the following requirements.

A. Application for Approval

Prospective aluminum sign refurbishing companies must have their process pre-approved by submitting a written application for approval to the Inspection Services Branch of the [Office of Materials and Research](#). Upon receipt of the application information, the Department may schedule an inspection of the facilities prior to approval to witness the operation of the equipment and verify the process. The following application information must be submitted for review.

1. The company name, address, names of the principal officers of the company, names of production managers.
2. An outline of the company's Quality Control Program that includes a detailed description of the refurbishing equipment and process and a detailed plan to ensure the materials to be refurbished meet current GDOT specifications.
3. Written proof that the refurbishing company and process is pre-approved by the reflective sheeting manufacturers currently listed on [QPL 29](#).
4. Written proof that an independent third party has conducted accelerated weathering testing on refurbished aluminum blanks and panels that have gone through the company's reclamation process. This testing must verify that there is no measurable difference in adhesion of reflective sheeting to the company's refurbished aluminum blanks, versus that of virgin aluminum blanks.

Georgene M. Geary, P.E.
State Materials and Research Engineer

Thomas B. Howell, P.E.
Director of Construction

ANNUAL CERTIFICATION AND GUARANTEE

_____ guarantees that all
(Company Name)

_____ furnished to State
(Type of Material)

of Georgia projects in the forthcoming twelve (12) months will be in accordance with and will conform fully to the requirements of the governing specifications and will be replaced without cost to the purchaser and State of Georgia when found not in conformity with any of the specified requirements. We certify that we accept full responsibility for determining the governing specifications for each order and further certify that all materials furnished will meet the specifications and details which apply to each order.

Very truly yours,

(Company Name)

(Plant Location)

_____ (Signature) _____ (Date)

(Typed Name)

_____ (Notary Public) _____ (Date)

CERTIFIED TECHNICIAN ANNUAL CERTIFICATION AND GUARANTEE

_____ guarantees that all
(Certified Technician Name)

_____ stamped and
(Type of Material)

furnished to State of Georgia projects in the forthcoming twelve (12) months will be in accordance with and will conform fully to the requirements of the governing specifications. I certify that I accept full responsibility for determining the governing specifications for each order and further certify that all materials stamped and furnished will meet the specifications and details which apply to each other (see note below).

Very truly yours,

(Company Name)

(Plant Location)

(Certified Technician Signature) (Date)

(Notary Public) (Date)

NOTE: Failure to comply will result in loss of company certification and the right to supply materials for use on Georgia Department of Transportation projects.

