

2015 Educational Series

# Specialized Highway Signs



FIRST ADOPT A HIGHWAY  
IN THE WORLD

ADOPT A HIGHWAY  
LITTER CONTROL  
NEXT 2 MILES  
TYLER CIVITAN CLUB



# Specialized Highway Signs

## OVERVIEW

Over the years, the Texas Legislature established several memorial sign programs to honor certain individuals, places, or organizations in the state. Examples include designating a highway in honor of a public safety officer killed in the line of duty, memorializing a loved one killed by a drunk driver, or recognizing volunteers who help keep our roadways clean and beautiful.

Signs like these are common in Texas and most of us have seen them along the highway during our travels. Knowing that the Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT) top priorities are focusing limited taxpayer dollars on highway safety and maintenance, reducing congestion, and connecting Texas communities, the Legislature requires outside resources to cover the costs of constructing and installing these signs.

Each program is unique, and the costs for signs vary. Listed below are the instructions, forms, and applications needed to begin each sign program process.

## MEMORIAL SIGNS FOR VICTIMS OF IMPAIRED DRIVING

Impaired driving continues to be a serious problem in Texas and one that results in hundreds of traffic deaths each year. In 2007, the Legislature created the Memorial Sign Program for Victims of Impaired Driving. This program allows family or friends the opportunity to purchase a sign to commemorate a victim or victims of drunk or drugged driving. These signs also help raise awareness about the

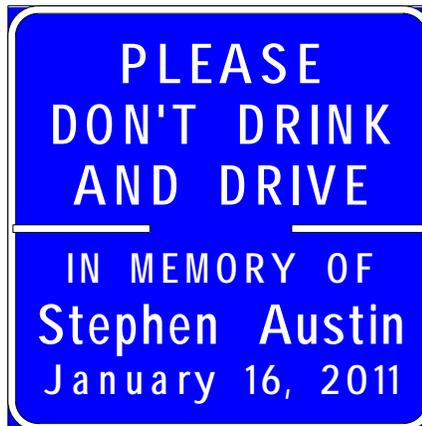
serious and tragic consequences of driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

### Eligibility Requirements

- A police officer's crash report or another government document indicating that drugs or alcohol were factors in the fatal crash.
- The crash must have occurred on the state highway system.
- The victim must not have been impaired by drugs or alcohol while operating a vehicle.

### Sign Location and Display

TxDOT will install a memorial sign as close as practical to the location of the crash. Final placement will be based



on traffic safety and space availability along the right of way. Each memorial sign will have a blue background and a white legend.

Per the Texas Transportation Code, an installed sign may remain in place for two years. At the end of this time, it will be removed and offered to the applicant. The applicant will have 30 days from the time contacted to make arrangements to pick up the sign. If the applicant chooses not to keep the

sign after the two-year period, the sign will be recycled.

### Application

Once an applicant has determined eligibility, they must apply to purchase the sign through TxDOT. The application can be found on TxDOT's website and must contain the following information:

- Applicant name and contact information
- Victim(s) name(s)
- Crash date and location
- Name of one of the vehicle operators involved in the crash
- A copy of the crash report attached to your application, if you wish to expedite processing (optional)

In addition, a completed form may be faxed to (512) 416-3214 or mailed to:

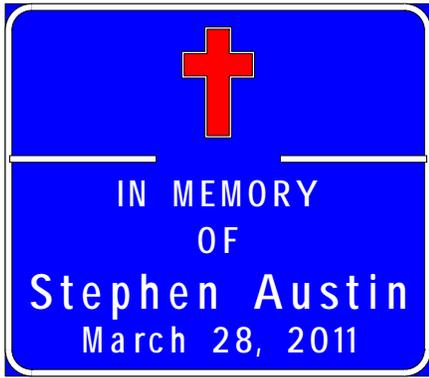
Texas Department of Transportation  
Traffic Operations Division  
125 E. 11th Street  
Austin, TX 78701-2483

### Sign Cost

The cost to the applicant is \$350, payable to TxDOT after the application has been approved. The sign will be installed only after payment of the fee, which defrays the cost of the personalized sign panel. If the sign is damaged or vandalized, the applicant will have to pay an additional \$350 fee to have the sign reinstalled.

## MEMORIAL SIGNS FOR VICTIMS OF MOTORCYCLE CRASHES

Motorcycle safety is another serious issue in Texas. In 2013, there were 494 motorcyclists (operators and passengers) killed. The Memorial Sign



Program for Victims of Motorcycle Crashes, which was created in 2011, allows family or friends of persons killed while riding or operating a motorcycle the opportunity to purchase a memorial sign.

### Eligibility Requirements

- A police officer's crash report or another government document indicating that the person was killed while operating or riding on a motorcycle.
- The crash must have occurred on the state highway system.

### Sign Location and Display

TxDOT will install the sign as close as practical to the location of the crash. Final placement will be based on traffic safety and space availability along the right of way. Each sign will have a blue background and a white legend displaying a red cross, the victim's name and the date of the crash.

Per the Texas Transportation Code, an installed motorcycle memorial sign will remain in place for one year. At the end of this time, it will be removed and offered to the applicant. The applicant will have 30 days from the time contacted to make arrangements to pick up the sign. If the applicant chooses to not keep the sign after the one-year period, the sign will be recycled.

### Application

Once an applicant has determined eligibility, they must apply for the sign through TxDOT. The application can be found on TxDOT's website and must contain the following information:

- Applicant name and contact information
- Victim(s)' name(s)
- Crash date and location
- Name of one of the vehicle operators involved in the crash
- A copy of the crash report attached to your application, if you wish to expedite processing (optional)

In addition, a completed form may be faxed to (512) 416-3214 or mailed to:

Texas Department of Transportation  
Traffic Operations Division  
125 E. 11th Street  
Austin, TX 78701-2483

### Sign Cost

The cost to the applicant for a Memorial Sign for Victims of Motorcycle Crashes is \$350, payable to TxDOT after the application has been approved. The sign will be installed only after payment of the fee, which defrays the cost of the personalized sign panel. If the sign is damaged or vandalized, the applicant will have to pay an additional \$350 fee to have the sign reinstalled.

### DESIGNATED MEMORIAL HIGHWAYS

TxDOT is prohibited from officially naming any portion of the state

highway system with anything other than the regular highway number.

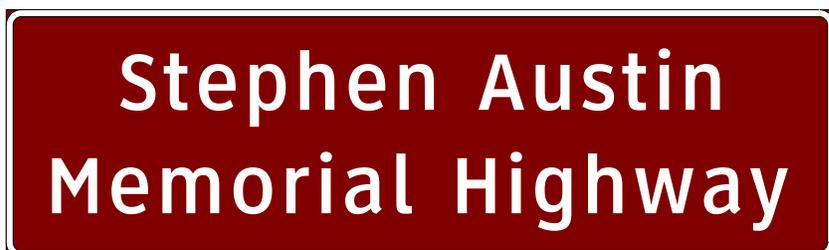
However, portions of the state highway system may be designated as a named or memorial highway by state legislation, local ordinance or resolution. When state or local law names or memorializes a portion of the state highway system, costs for the signs are paid by grant or donation to the state highway fund to help defray the costs of the signs.

### Legislative Process

A member of the state Senate or House of Representatives may designate a memorial highway through legislation. Once a bill is passed by the House and Senate and signed into law by the governor, the legislative sponsor should contact TxDOT's state legislative affairs office to begin the process of acquiring and installing the signs. The sign will be installed only after payment for the sign is received.

### Local Process

State law also grants local governments the authority to apply a memorial or other designation to the state highway system. Local governments must provide TxDOT an authorizing resolution or municipal ordinance and a proposed sign location. The size, type and location of the sign must be approved by the department. The sign will be installed only after payment for the sign is received. Local government is responsible for future maintenance of the sign.



In both instances, TxDOT is required to follow certain federal and state rules regarding where signs may be placed, what may be displayed on the sign and how many signs may be erected. Not following the guidelines outlined below puts the state at risk of losing federal transportation dollars.

## Eligibility Requirements

- To avoid distracting drivers or cluttering the highway with too many signs, legislators and local officials should first consider designating rest areas, scenic overlooks, recreational areas or other locations where parking is provided for travelers.
- The highway or structure to be named must be part of the state highway system and within TxDOT jurisdiction (unless named by local ordinance).
- The highway or structure should not have a prior designation.
- The highway or structure may be named only after a deceased person who was significant in the state's history or in the lives of Texans.

## Sign Location

- One sign is allowed on each end of the designated route.
- Intermediate signs must be spaced at least 75 miles apart.
- Signs may only be located on the designated route, not on cross streets or intersecting highways.

## Sign Display

- The sign will be rectangular in shape with a brown background and white legend and borders.

- The route number or officially mapped name should be displayed.
- The legend displayed on signs is limited to the person's name and a simple message following the name, such as "Memorial Parkway."
  - Biographical information is not allowed.
  - Decorative or graphical elements, pictographs, logos or symbols are not allowed.

## Sign Costs

- A donor is required to cover the cost to design, fabricate and install memorial designation signs.
- When a donor has committed to funding the project, TxDOT will enter into an agreement with them and install the signs.
- The cost of a sign will vary based on its size, the number of characters displayed on the sign and where the sign is located (larger highways require larger signs and more foundational support).
- Signs may cost anywhere between \$1,000 and \$20,000 per sign.

## ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY

As the population of the Texas continues to grow, the state can expect more vehicles, increased traffic, and more litter. The Adopt-a-Highway program was created to give citizens an opportunity to be active partners in keeping Texas beautiful. The program began in Texas in 1985 and continues to grow nationwide, saving taxpayer's money and keeping our highways free of litter. This Texas-born program has spread to 49 states, Canada, Great Britain, Japan, New Zealand, Australia, and Mexico.

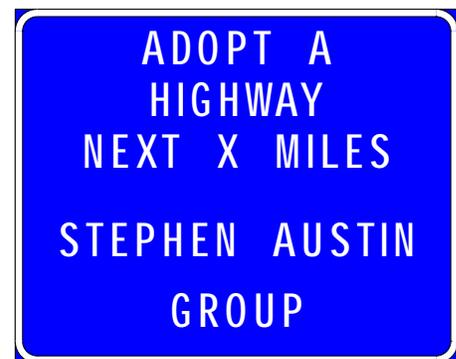
## Who Can Adopt

Individuals, families, youth organizations, businesses (large and small), governmental entities, civic and non-profit organizations, religious groups, fraternities, sororities, schools, and any other approved groups who want to keep our state litter-free may adopt a highway.

## Program Rules

The rules are simple:

- Adopt a two-mile stretch of highway for a minimum of two years.



- The applicant agrees to pick up litter four times per year (more in some areas due to high traffic volumes).
- Adopt-a-Highway signs will be posted with the individual's or group name at each end of the adopted section.
- TxDOT will provide volunteers with traffic control signs, safety vests, litterbags, and safety information.

Adopt-A-Highway is a free and easy way for citizens to make a visible impact on their community and show some well deserved Texas Pride.

# TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

## MISSION STATEMENT

Work with others to provide safe and reliable transportation solutions for Texas.

## GOALS

- Maintain a safe system
- Address congestion
- Connect Texas communities
- Become best-in-class state agency

## VALUES

- Trust
- Integrity
- Responsibility
- Excellence
- Service