

ISLAND COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

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ROADS DIVISION

Connie Bowers, P.E., Director/Co. Engineer Fred Snoderly, Assist. Public Works Director Edward G. Sewester, P.E., Assist. Co. Engineer

January 1, 2022

Dear Political Candidate

Island County Code Chapter 12.24.020 prohibits the placement of unauthorized signs within the County road right-of-way, including campaign signs. All political signs placed in the road right-of-way will be considered unauthorized. County Public Works personnel will remove such signs. Utility poles normally lie within the road right-of-way, but near the edge. Signs should be placed beyond that distance, outside the right-of-way.

Signs removed from the right-of-way by County Personnel will be kept at the respective road shops (Oak Harbor, Coupeville, Bayview and Camano) for 30 days for retrieval. Unclaimed signs will be disposed of after 30 days.

Respectfully,

Connie Bowers, P.E.
Director/County Engineer
Island County Public Works

Cc: Kelli Short, Oak Harbor Road Shop
James Wiaczek, Coupeville Road Shop
Scott Endres, Bayview Road Shop
Michael Mellum, Camano Road Shop
Jeff Barkhausen, Sign Technician
Sheriff's Office



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Dear Candidate:

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) wishes to take this opportunity to advise political candidates about the placement of campaign signs and placards along state highways.

Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 47.42, the Highway Advertising Control Act, regulates signing on Interstate Highways, primary highways, and highways that are part of the Scenic and Recreational System. Signs erected on private property that are adjacent to these highways must comply with the Highway Advertising Control Act, rules contained in Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 468-66, and applicable local agency sign codes.

In accordance with WAC 468-66-050, *Sign Classification and Specific Provisions*, temporary political campaign signs are identified and regulated as a type of on-premise sign intended to express a property owner's endorsement of a political candidate or initiative. Prior to placing signs, WSDOT recommends checking with the property owner for approval and to determine property line locations. Campaign signs are allowed under the following regulations:

- 1) Temporary political campaign signs are limited to a maximum size of thirty-two square feet.
- 2) Temporary political campaign signs must be removed within ten days following the election.
- 3) Sign installers must have permission of the underlying property owner prior to placing signs.
- 4) Temporary political campaign signs are subject to all other applicable provisions of RCW 47.42 and WAC 468.66 that pertain to Type 3 on-premise signs.

In addition to the above restrictions, **the erection of temporary political campaign signs within the right-of-way of all state highways is prohibited. Accordingly, signs placed within the right-of-way of any state highway are subject to removal by the Washington State Department of Transportation.**

Also, RCW 47.36.180(1) states in part that it is unlawful to erect any structure, sign, or device visible from a city street, county road, or state highway that simulates any directional, warning, or danger sign likely to be mistaken for such a sign. Therefore, a campaign sign cannot be designated in a manner that resembles an official traffic control sign.

If you should have any questions about placement of campaign signs along state highways, please contact Trevor McCain at 360-705-7282 or email at mccaint@wsdot.wa.gov.

We sincerely hope that candidates for public office will observe the laws and regulations enacted to limit driver distraction, and protect and preserve the roadside beauty of our state. Thank you in advance for your courtesy in this matter.

Washington State Department of Transportation