

On 2/7/2013 10:57 AM, Thorne, Lee J wrote:

in reply to the question :

“When the state/county maintains and snow plows how do they choose which roads?”

Dear Ms. Briscoe,

Thank you for your email concerning the selection of the roads that are maintained by the West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) and the signing of roads in the state highway system as well as private roads. Ben Hark has forwarded it to me for a response.

We are one of only four states in the nation that maintains all of the U.S., state and county routes within its jurisdiction. In addition, we have the sixth largest state-maintained highway network in the entire country. I know of no other state that has taken on the responsibility of roadways down to the level that we currently maintain. We currently lead the country in the percentage of roads that are state maintained.

Most of the county roads in the system became the responsibility of the state in 1937 by act of the WV State Legislature. Up until that time each county court was responsible for the maintenance of those roads. Most were farm to market roads that were traversed by horse and wagon. Since that time, many roads have been upgraded as traffic demands increased and funds have allowed. Since that time, any road being added to the system must be done so by Commissioner's Order. It is not the discretion of the county as to which roads are maintained and the WVDOH is not allowed to perform maintenance on roads not in the state highway system.

In 1998 the WV State Legislature adopted the Home Access Road Program (HARP) and most of the roads taken into the state highway system under this program are still referred to as HARP roads. This allowed the inclusion of additional roads to the state highway system that would not have previously met the standards in place at the time. Attached you will find a copy of the West Virginia State Code pertaining to these roads. These roads were to be taken into the system by Commissioner's Order and were included for maintenance only. This legislation ended and in October of 2005 notification was sent out by the State Highway Engineer that due to limited funding capabilities the West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) would not be adding roads to the highway system.

In general road name signs for roads in the state highway system include a route number. The symbol in which the number is located

indicates the type of road. A square is for WV state routes, county routes are designated by a circle and HARP route numbers are enclosed in a five sided figure that looks like a house.

The Jefferson County 911 director, pursued through the former Traffic Engineering Director an exception and there are no route numbers on street signs in Jefferson County. As you stated, generally a green sign with white letters indicates a road in the WV State Highway System and brown signs are for private roads. However, we are aware that there are a few cases where the wrong color sign has been installed and we are working to have them corrected. As part of this exception, Jefferson County government maintains all of the street signs in that county.

As far as I know, there is no rule that dictates the color of the signs for private roads in the remaining counties in District Five. Some are green and some are blue. However, if there is no route number then they would be considered a private road and the WVDOH would not perform maintenance on them.

I hope this information is of benefit to you. Thank you again for your email.

Lee Thorne
District Five Engineer/ Manager
(304) 289-3521

-----Original Message-----

From: Hark, Ben L
Sent: Tuesday, January 29, 2013 8:06 AM
To: Thorne, Lee J
Subject: FW: Eastern Panhandle Street Signs - Green vs Brown
Importance: High

Lee,

You probably are the best person to answer the questions below. Please copy me on your response.

Thanks,

Ben

-----Original Message-----

From: Nance Briscoe [mailto:briscoen@frontiernet.net]
Sent: Tuesday, January 29, 2013 7:50 AM

To: Hark, Ben L
Subject: Eastern Panhandle Street Signs - Green vs Brown
Importance: High

Hi Ben,

We met over discussions last fall and you encouraged me to contact you for any road related question(s) I might have. Here's the issue:

The Eastern Panhandle Organization of Homeowners Associations (EPOHOA) has several subdivisions across the eight counties: representing Berkeley, Grant, Hampshire, Hardy, Jefferson, Mineral, Morgan, and Pendelton counties of West Virginia.

In Jefferson County the rule of thumb is:
Green street signs = state/county road maintenance including snow plowing
Brown street signs = no road maintenance and no snow plowing

I simply cannot locate the "rule of thumb" for the other counties. Specifically Berkeley County since they have a variety of signs. While I know the Orphan Road project ended (I think) in 2001 and several HOA subdivisions were included - I do not know which ones qualify for state/county maintenance & snow plowing.

I contacted the Berkeley County Council and have not heard back yet.

When the state/county maintains and snow plows how do they choose which roads?

I really appreciate your response - I must be able to answer this important question to our EPOHOA Members and we currently include more than 7,000 home owners and growing.

I did read the WV Data Specification Guide for County Coordinators you have online - but there's no "rule of thumb" that I could find. page 42 has a defined table but all signs are green. Also, I find it a real shocker that the maintenance crews look for a single inch difference in county or private street/road signs to know which road to choose. Perhaps I'm reading that table incorrectly.

I sure could use your help on this,
Thank You so much!
Nance

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New EPOHOA website live 2/9/2013 <http://epohoa.org>