



Roadside Memorials on Vermont's State Highways



Finding the balance ...

The Agency of Transportation recognizes there is no delicate way to handle the removal of roadside memorials from Vermont's highways. Crashes have a devastating impact on families and friends who have suffered sudden loss of life, and the Agency understands the need for folks to have time to grieve.

Often, families and friends feel the need to memorialize their loss at the site of the crash. However, the Agency is required by federal and state law to protect the traveling public and must carry out its responsibilities even in times of deep personal loss for the families and friends of crash victims.

Placement of non-regulated signs and structures within the state right-of-way is not allowed under state law. Roadside memorials are considered non-regulated signs and can pose danger to all highway users because they impede a driver's sight distance, cause traffic congestion, pose the threat of contact hazards, hinder roadway maintenance activities, and interrupt pedestrian activity.

Working in and around highways with high traffic volumes and speeds is risky for maintenance workers, law

enforcement officers and other emergency personnel, all folks who are trained in traffic control and situational awareness. Family members and friends who install and maintain roadside memorials are often distraught, mourning their loss, and focused on finding a little glimpse of relief, lacking full awareness of their surroundings. This not only places them in danger, but also places other highway users at risk, especially during storm events and night hours.

Because of safety concerns, the Agency of Transportation must remove all roadside memorials from the state's right-of-way as soon as reasonably possible. Affected parties may contact their local state highway garage for retrieval of personal property removed by VTrans staff from state highways for a period of 30 days.

The Agency's policy on the Removal of Roadside Memorials may be viewed at:

<http://www.aot.state.vt.us/policies/default.htm>

The Agency' of Transportation's first priority is

safety

for all highway users.