

Letter to Schools (Sample)

To: Superintendent of Schools

From: County Engineer

Subject: School Bus Routes and Signs

Date:

This memo is intended to update and inform you and your personnel about county snow removal policies, county operating procedures, and School Bus Stop Ahead signs and to request routing and bus stop information from each school district serving county residents. I hope you will share this information with your school bus drivers and bus superintendents.

I also recommend at this time that you develop emergency routes for impassable conditions due to snow or spring thaw. While the roads are in good shape in the fall, spring may bring about very different conditions and may lead to temporary embargoes on the gravel road system. These spring embargoes include school buses. Please try to be prepared and work out a notification procedure through radio or television stations to allow overnight alteration of your routes.

Snow Removal Procedures

County snow removal procedures are based on County Ordinance Number _____. This ordinance establishes county policy for level of snow and ice removal and maintenance under these conditions. A copy of this policy is enclosed.

As stated in the policy, paved roads will be opened first. If conditions require road graders to assist in snow removal on paved roads, the opening of unpaved roads will be delayed. When work begins on unpaved roads, we will initially open one lane on all unpaved roads that are above level B service, improving them as time and weather allow. Level B roads may not be plowed at all during the winter. If you are using any level B roads as school bus routes, I recommend you have alternate routes prepared since these are last priority roads for snow removal.

Please remember that county staff does not open private roads. These roads are maintained by individual homeowner associations, and the condition of these roads may vary greatly from county roads.

If weather conditions create hazardous working conditions, as may be the case during heavy falling or blowing snow, county snow removal units may be pulled off the roads. If this occurs while school is in session, our department or the sheriff's office will notify you as early as circumstances allow. You may also call our office (555-555-5555) or shop (555-555-1234) with questions on our daily operations.

Operating Procedures

Our winter operating procedure calls for our maintenance foremen to check road conditions early in the morning to determine the severity of the storm and the level of snow removal response necessary. Secondary road forces will generally not operate before sunrise or after sunset on paved or gravel roads, except in emergencies. We do not have adequate staff to operate more than one snow removal shift, and we do not operate 24-hours-a-day. We will respond as quickly as possible to any and all genuine emergencies 24-hours-a-day, but we ask you and your personnel to use good judgment to prevent putting lives and property at risk.

I suggest purchasing and using tire chains on your school buses when operating in slippery and snowy conditions. The traction gained by using chains may help to prevent buses from getting stuck.

School Bus Stop Ahead Signs

The county will place School Bus Stop Ahead signs in concurrence with standards in the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)*. School Bus Stop Ahead signs are placed at locations where hills or curves may obscure a stopped school bus from approaching traffic and where sight distance is less than 500 feet in advance of the stop. It is not possible or necessary to sign every school bus stop location. Our reviews will be prompt and consistent, as we study your requests for new school related signs on county roads.

When we receive future requests for these signs, we will request that residents route these requests first through your district. Your drivers, who likely have the best knowledge of whether a traffic hazard genuinely exists at any bus stop location, should concur with a request to review a new location for a sign. This procedure assures that my staff time will be used efficiently by eliminating reviews of locations where adequate sight distance exists. However, driver concurrence will not replace the county's review of sign requests and final determination of the need for a sign.

If you have any School Bus Stop Ahead signs at locations that no longer have students, please notify us so the signs can be removed for later use or moved to a location where they are needed. We will remove or relocate any unneeded signs, as their continued presence tends to promote general disrespect for school bus stop signs.

Request for Bus Route Maps

I would like to compile an updated map of all roads that are school bus routes in this county. These maps will be used for aiding us in the snow removal effort this winter. Enclosed are two county maps. Please mark all roads that your school buses will be utilizing in red. Please return one completed map to this office at your earliest convenience. Your cooperation in this matter will be most appreciated.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call me at (555-555-5555). We will do everything within our power to ensure good roads and prompt snow and ice removal, and we ask your cooperation in providing safe travel for our school children.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

John Doe, _____ County Engineer