



OCRC residential driveway policy refresher

EXAMPLES



Our goal here at the Ottawa County Road Commission is to make sure residents are aware of all policies in place regarding roads and their right of ways, and why these policies are needed.

One policy we get asked about quite frequently is our driveway surface policy.

This policy covers the installation of all new driveways or any work on existing driveways within the road right of way. It was developed to provide the most efficient and cost-effective process for road improvement projects.

Road improvement projects that occur on roads without an asphalt or concrete curb:

These road projects result in the restoration of the adjacent driveways in order to match the

new road elevation. Therefore, the policy **does not** permit the placement of a concrete driveway approach for any new or existing driveways being replaced or restored.

Roads that have an asphalt or concrete curb:

These roads typically do not see any change in elevation during road improvement projects. As a result, concrete driveways are permitted on curbed roads because restoration on adjacent driveways is not necessary.

The OCRC's driveway surface policy was developed based on the following:

- It takes much longer to saw cut, excavate, and remove concrete driveways that need adjusting versus the time it takes to mill an asphalt driveway.
- In order to maintain access for the property owner, concrete driveways are often required to be poured half width at a time, where asphalt can be placed the full driveway width.
- Concrete can take up to 28 days to fully cure resulting in project delays, where asphalt can be driven on the same day.
- In some cases, asphalt driveways can be placed at the same time the contractor is paving the lane of the road.

In fact, in 2019, the Ottawa County Road Commission paid almost \$150,000 extra in project costs to remove concrete driveway approaches and restore them with HMA (refer to graphic to the right).

The OCRC could instead use that \$150,000 to implement one of a variety of other improvements, including gravel road surfacing, cape seal surfacing, culvert replacement, chip seal, and more.

Having rigid concrete driveways located in the shoulder of the road can pose safety risks to our maintenance staff and cause equipment damage. Our operators need to grade shoulders in the summer and plow in the winter.

Striking a rigid concrete driveway can have the same effect on our vehicles as striking snow that is blown/shoveled back into the street. Flexible asphalt driveways minimize impacts to both our drivers and equipment.

A reminder about driveway permits

If a driveway connects to:

- An Ottawa County road, a permit is required.
- A state or municipal road, a permit from that jurisdiction may be required.

RESURFACING PROJECT COSTS TO REMOVE CONCRETE DRIVEWAY APPROACHES & REPLACE WITH ASPHALT

In 2019, the Ottawa County Road Commission paid almost \$150,000 extra in project costs to remove concrete driveway approaches and restore them with HMA.

The OCRC could use that \$150,000 to implement one of the following improvements each year:

- REPLACE SEVERAL CULVERTS
- CHIP SEAL 7 MILES OF ROADS
- CAPE SEAL SURFACE 2.5 MILES OF ROADS
- GRAVEL SURFACE 4 MILES OF ROADS
- HMA RESURFACE 1 MILE OF ROAD

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A permit MUST be obtained from the Ottawa County Road Commission in order to construct, reconstruct, relocate, surface, or resurface a driveway or private road approach adjoining a road under the Road Commission's jurisdiction. The permit is the responsibility of the property owner but a knowledgeable contractor can assist property owner in obtaining permit

Please [visit the residential driveway section of our website](#), or contact our office at 616-842-5400 and ask to speak to the Special Services Department regarding obtaining a driveway permit. Our team will be happy to assist you in completing this task.

'Can you fix that railroad crossing?'



One of the more common service calls we receive here at the Ottawa County Road Commission and online on our Facebook page is in reference to the maintenance and repair of railroad crossings.

While it may seem like this would be something that the OCRC would be responsible for, the Road Commission does not maintain railroad crossings, nor does it have any authoritative control or jurisdiction governing them.

Instead, it is the railroad company that owns the track that has the exclusive responsibility of the right of way at their rail crossings.

Need help identifying which railroad is responsible for a particular crossing? There is usually a small metal placard located on the railroad crossing sign adjacent to the track with the appropriate railroad company information.

And should you have safety concerns regarding crossing surface conditions, these issues can be addressed by contacting one of the following:

CSX Railroad:

Covers South of Fillmore Street to the Allegan County line.

For railroad EMERGENCIES call (800)-232-0144.

Michigan Shore Railroad:

Covers North of Fillmore Street to the Muskegon County line.

For railroad EMERGENCIES call (866)-527-3499.

Any issue or incident that risks the safety of any person should be reported immediately to 911. Be prepared to tell the emergency dispatcher your name, location and what you observed.

It's time again for back to school bus basics

While this school year promises to be different than most, one aspect about back-to-school time will remain unchanged on many roads throughout Ottawa County: the presence of school buses filled with student.

With cars, trucks and SUVs once again sharing the road with students heading to and from school each day, it's important that we all keep an extra eye out and remember what to do when approaching a school bus.

Here's a refresher on how to react when driving near a school bus. Remember to treat the bus lights like a traffic signal.

- **Flashing Yellow Lights**=Prepare to Stop.
- **Flashing Red Lights**=STOP!
- **Flashing Hazard Warning Lights**=Proceed with Caution.

By following these steps, you can ensure that everyone has a safe commute during before and after-school hours.



LABOR DAY WEEKEND REMINDER

IN OBSERVANCE OF LABOR DAY,
THE OCRC WILL BE CLOSED ON
FRIDAY, SEPT. 4, AND MONDAY,
SEPT. 7. WE WILL BE BACK OPEN AT
7:30 A.M. TUESDAY, SEPT. 8.

WE HOPE EVERYONE HAS A SAFE,
RELAXING HOLIDAY WEEKEND!

OTTAWA COUNTY
ROAD
COMMISSION

Important Dates:
September 10, 2020 | 9AM | Board Meeting
September 24, 2020 | 9AM | Board Meeting



14110 Lakeshore Drive
Grand Haven, Michigan 49460
616-842-5400
Office Hours: Monday-Friday; 7:30AM-4PM

The Ottawa County Road Commissioners:
Tom Bird | Tom Elhart | Betty Gajewski | Tim Grifhorst | Jim Miedema

Managing Director: Brett Laughlin