

FOR RELEASE #05-162
June 16, 2005

HIGHWAY VISITOR SIGN REGULATION CHANGED

WHITEHORSE – Today Highway and Public Works Minister Glenn Hart announced regulation changes on size, fees and location of visitor highway information signs.

“The Yukon government has worked closely over the years with many groups to produce a safe, fair and consistent visitor highway sign regulation,” Hart said.

The majority of the 2003 visitor sign regulation remains the same; today’s changes reflect decisions on some outstanding issues.

“The department listened to many different opinions and positions about highway signs in the territory,” Hart said. “These sign regulation changes recognize traveler safety and business and tourist needs, while maintaining the scenic integrity of the Yukon.”

The department consulted with the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce, the Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon, individual business sign owners and the Association of Yukon Communities.

“The Whitehorse Chamber supports these regulation changes,” president Rick Karp said. “The changes reflect what our membership has asked for since 2003. We believe the Urban Visitor Sign option provided by the department gives more Whitehorse businesses space to provide visitor information, while recognizing the need to limit the number of individual signs within the city boundary.”

The Department of Highways and Public Works will process the 20 new permit applications on hand and incorporate these changes.

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Backgrounder and image attached.

Contact:
Peter Carr
Cabinet Communications Advisor
(867) 667-8688
peter.carr@gov.yk.ca

Marie-Louise Boylan
Communications Manager
Highways & Public Works
(867) 667-3146
marie-louise.boylan@gov.yk.ca

Michael McArthur
Policy Officer
Highways & Public Works
(867) 667-8785
michael.mcarthur@gov.yk.ca

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**Visitor Highway Sign Regulation Changes
BACKGROUND:**

What has changed?

Most of the regulation that was approved in 2003 remains the same – there were a few outstanding issues at that time that are addressed in today’s changes:

1. Fees: There will be a one time only \$25 fee payable to the Department of Highways and Public Works when an applicant applies for a highway visitor sign.
2. Size: The size of the new option of an urban visitor sign on a government owned structure (see diagram) has increased from 3’ X 3’ to an 8’ X 4’ tab.

This means that there will be a total of three signs, rather than four, on each government-owned urban visitor sign structure.

3. Location: Signs for businesses inside a community, other than Whitehorse, may be located up to five kilometres outside of the community. Whitehorse businesses signs must be within the city limits.

Signs for businesses located outside of a community, such as a highway lodge, are not subject to a distance restriction.

Under the sign regulation, “community” includes municipalities and established unincorporated communities such as Carcross, Mount Lorne and Marsh Lake for example.

As was agreed in 2003 due to the space limitations within Whitehorse city limits, only urban visitor signs on government-owned structures will be allowed after a sunset period. The sunset period – for signs that meet safety regulations, has been extended from 2006 to 2008.

Current sign owners may choose this option now to capitalise on this new signing opportunity. The use of urban visitor signs within Whitehorse allows for more businesses (up to a 35% increase) to indicate available services using fewer signs.

What remains the same?

The Government of Yukon’s commitment to highway safety and care for needs of travelers on our roads and highways;

the government’s understanding of business’ use of highway signs; and

the government’s respect for the requests and interests of Yukon communities.

The majority of the 2003 sign regulation has not changed.

Conceptual Design of the Urban Visitor Sign Structure

