

## **ROAD MAINTENANCE AND DOCUMENTATION PWD/ROAD**

### **OBJECTIVES**

- Staff will learn the importance of a road maintenance and signage program
- Staff will understand their procedure for identifying and reporting hazards

UCIP has seen an increase in the frequency and severity of road maintenance and signage claims. These claims generally involve a County's failure to correct road damage or defects or to replace missing signage. In many cases the County has performed reasonable maintenance but they lack documentation to prove the work was completed. Counties that operate without a reasonable road maintenance program are difficult or impractical to defend.

The main concerns with ongoing road damage and missing signage are the immediate danger it presents to the motoring public and liability exposure to the county. Every time a vehicle travels on an unsafe road (whether the problem is road damage, road defect, or missing signage); the situation has the potential for catastrophic loss. Counties have a responsibility for correcting unsafe county road and signage conditions within a reasonable period of time after notification or identification of a hazard. Counties need an ongoing road/signage maintenance program to identify these hazards before a loss occurs. The program should include the following four components:

- Inspections- a road/signage inspection mechanism that requires periodic inspection of county roads and signage, ensuring the road is in good condition and that signage is present and in good repair
- Complaints- a mechanism to receive and document road/signage maintenance complaints
- Mitigation- complete hazard abatement when a defect or hazard is identified in the inspection process or when receiving a complaint
- Documentation- the entire process should be documented, e.g., a log

## **BEST PRACTICE**

### Road/Signage Inspection Process

Counties should have a formal inspection process, where an employee has the responsibility for monitoring county road and signage deficiencies; however, most counties don't have the funding to dedicate one person for this task. A reasonable alternative is to have Road Department staff monitor county road and signage conditions while working and/or travelling on these roads and immediately report any hazard or defect to the Road Superintendent's office. Other county employees, (e.g., sheriff, assessor's office and field staff) travelling county roads in the course of their job could also monitor road and signage conditions and immediately report any hazard or defect to the Road Superintendent's office. The more eyes looking for hazards, the better opportunity we have in identifying these hazards before a loss occurs.

### Citizen Complaint Reports

Periodically citizens report hazardous road or signage conditions on county roads. Employees receiving a complaint should be expected to immediately forward the complaint to the Road Superintendent's office.

### Mitigation Effort

All reports of unsafe road or signage on county roads should be immediately reviewed by the Road Superintendent for a determination as to the seriousness of the hazard and need for immediate mitigation. Road hazards and regulatory and warning signage issues should be addressed as soon as reasonably practical.

### Documentation

Hazards identified through either the inspection process or by citizen complaint should be documented on a log in the Road Superintendent's office. The log should identify the reporting person's name, date and time of report, hazard description, hazard location, date mitigation completed, and corrective action taken.

## **POLICY**

Discuss the department's policy on road maintenance and signage

## **CLOSING**

- *Encourage discussion about the presentation, and the importance of conducting road maintenance and signage inspections, and for documenting all reports of such problems*