

MDOT  
Design Division  
Quality Assurance Section

**Quick Tips**  
**For Formatting Special Provisions in *Microsoft Word***

These step-by-step guidelines will help you format your Special Provision document.

**Before You Start**

In the upper-left corner of the *Microsoft Word* toolbar:

1. Choose **File** then **Page Setup**.
2. **Set all margins at 1"** (ignore gutter settings).
3. **Before leaving the window**, choose **Layout** tab (3rd tab at top).
4. In the small window next to **Section start** choose **New page**.
5. Under **Header and Footer** check **Different first page**.
6. Set header and footer margins to **0.5"**.
7. Click **ok** at the bottom of the tab.
8. Go to **Format** on the toolbar and choose **Paragraph**.
9. Under **General/Alignment** choose **Justified**.
10. Click **Tabs** in the bottom left and enter **0.25"** in **Default Tabs**(top right).
11. Click ok at the bottom of the pop up window.

**Your Document**

**SP ID Code**

1. The first-page Header should **only** include the SP Identification (ID) Code.
2. Click **View** on the toolbar. Click **Header and Footer**. A box appears at the top of your page.
3. Type the SP ID Code in the box using X for unknown characters.
4. ID Codes have 11 characters (see [Road Design Manual](#), Chapter 11 about populating ID Codes.)
5. On the toolbar choose **Format** then **Paragraph** then Under **Alignment** click **Right..**
6. Click **Tabs** in the bottom left corner and then press **Clear All**.
7. Click **ok**.
8. This positions the **SP ID Code** properly on the page.
9. Highlight the **SP ID Code**. Click the arrow next to the font window in the toolbar. Choose **Arial**.
10. In the window next to font, choose **12** for font size.
11. **Close** the Header box on your page.

**Title Block**

1. Type and center your special provision **title block**.
2. All SPs should have  
First line -Michigan  
Second line - Department of Transportation  
Third line - blank line  
Fourth line - Special Provision  
Fifth line - For  
Sixth line - Title of SP (do not use abbreviations in title)
3. The Title Block should always be in Capital letters

### Approval Header

1. The Approval Header contains the source code, page number and approval code.
2. See the [Road Design Manual](#), Chapter 11 for more on populating **Source Code** and **Approval Code** fields.
3. Type **Source Code**, **Page Number**, and **Approval Code** with tabs between the parts.
4. Highlight them and choose **Arial** as the font and **12** for font size.
5. Position them by choosing **Format** in the toolbar then **Paragraph** then **Tab** in the lower left.
6. Clear any set tab stops by clicking **Clear All**.
7. Type **3.25** in the **Tab stop position** window. Under **Alignment** click **Center** then click **Set**.
8. Type **6.5** in the **Tab stop position** window. Under **Alignment** click **Right** then click **Set**.
9. In the same pop up window, click **ok** in the lower right.
10. This positions **Source Code**, **Page Number**, and **Approval Code** properly on the page.

### Body Text

1. Position cursor for body text. Delete any blank spaces to the right of and below your cursor.
2. Choose **Arial** as the font and **11** as the font size.
3. Put **two spaces** between sentences.
4. **Turn off automatic numbering**. Choose **Tools** in the toolbar.
5. Position cursor over arrows at the end of the drop-down menu and more choices appear.
6. Choose **AutoCorrect Options** then choose the tab **AutoFormat as You Type**.
7. Make sure **Automatic numbered lists** is not checked. Click **ok**.
8. See the Design Manual for an example of correct outline formatting. Each indent is **0.25"**.
9. To set new section indents, position cursor and choose **Format** then **Paragraph**.
10. Under **Indentation** increase **Left** indent by **0.25** for each new number or letter in the outline.
11. Make sure **Special** is set to **First Line** and **By** is set to **0.25**. Click **ok**.
12. Capitalize **Contractor** and **Engineer** whenever they appear in the document.
13. Capitalize **Standard Specifications for Construction** only if you cite a section number, if not citing a section number then just use **standard specifications**.
14. Use active voice by putting the verb first in sentences, when possible.
15. "Shall" is passive; "must" is active and is used when the Contractor is going to do something, use will when the Engineer or the Department is going to do something.
16. Use single spacing within an indented section.
17. **Spell out primary units in the text**, such as "inch" or "foot."
18. **Abbreviate compound units**, such as "pounds per square inch" (psi), when desired.
19. Use **italics** for **publication names** other than MDOT's standard specifications for construction.
20. Include all sections - **Description, Materials, Construction, Measurement and Payment**. There are a few exceptions to this but normally we want to use these four sections.
21. Use the text "**None specified.**" for sections when there is no content.

### Measurement and Payment Section

1. The **Pay Item** heading is indented to **0.5"** and **Pay Unit** is set at a right tab at **6.5"**.
2. **Pay Item** and **Pay Unit** headings are **bold**.
3. Actual pay items under headings are not bold but are indented to **0.5"**.
4. To locate the pay unit and set the dotted line from pay item to pay unit, choose **Format** then **Paragraph** in the toolbar.
5. Click **Tabs** then set **Tab stop position** at **6.5"** then under **Alignment** click **Right**.
6. In the same tab, under **Leader** click **2**. Click **Set** then **ok**.
7. In place of **Contract Items (Pay Items)** used with the 2003 spec book, use only **Pay Items** in the heading and text with the 2012 spec book.

### Tables and Figures

1. Minimize the use of tables and figures; **reference them in the text** when used.
2. **Center tables and figures** and separate them from the text above and below by a few lines.
3. Include an appropriately descriptive **table number and title in bold** above the content.
4. Put a **single space between the table number and title** with no other punctuation.
5. **Center table subheads and column heads** and do not bold them.
6. **Font size** is reduced to 10 point type.