

# Maintenance Advisory

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## Time Guidelines for Mechanical Roadside Vegetation Management

MDOT utilizes an Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management (IRVM) approach to managing roadside vegetation. There are several documents including Maintenance Performance Guides, Maintenance Memorandums, and the Roadside Vegetation Management Manual which address roadside mowing and brush cutting. Roadside mowing and brush cutting have been regulated by Act No. 174 since its passage in 1999. This Act specifies when and where mowing can occur in the right-of-way (ROW) and sets requirements for brush control. As part of an IRVM practice it is best to determine what is allowed, prohibited and required under Act 174. It is important to note the Act has different requirements for mowing grass and brush.

### Grass Mowing

1. Areas within a city, village or federal aid urban boundaries can be mowed to any height at any time.
2. The area 12' from the shoulders or to the leading edge of the ditch, whichever is less, may be mowed to any height at any time.
3. Any area in the ROW may be mowed as necessary to maintain public health and safety. Clear vision areas are one example of an area that can be mowed any time.
4. Medians less than 50' wide may be mowed to any height at any time.
5. Mowing is allowed throughout the entire ROW from July 16 to August 31 however, the height of the grass in this area must be at least 12" by September 1.

**Table 1 – Grass Mowing**

Area	Month											
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
All areas of the ROW except those listed below	No Mowing from January 1 to July 15th									No Mowing From September 1 to December 31		
Entire ROW within city, village, federal aid urban area	Mow Anytime to Any Height											
12' or leading edge of ditch	Mow Anytime to Any Height											
Medians less than 50' wide and clear vision	Mow Anytime to Any Height											

**Brush Mowing**

Act No. 174 specifically addresses brush mowing and spraying.

1. Between July 16 and March 1, brush and woody stem vegetation located in the ROW may be cut to any height needed to provide control and safety. Up to 50 percent of roadsides shall be designated annually for brush control. Sec. 15b (2).
2. Medians less than 50' wide shall be maintained as brush free as possible. Twenty-five (25) percent of the medians less than 50' wide shall be annually designated for brush and tree removal or spot treatment. Sec. 15b (3).

**Table 2 – Brush Mowing**

Area	Month											
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
All areas of the ROW except those listed below	Brush Mowing Allowed		No Brush Mowing from March 1 to July 15				Brush Mowing Allowed					
Entire ROW within city, village, federal aid urban area	Brush Mowing Allowed											
12' or leading edge of ditch (shoulders and medians 50'+)	Brush Mowing Allowed											
Medians less than 50' wide and clear vision	Brush Mowing Allowed											

In addition to specifying when and where brush mowing is allowed, Act 174 also states all brush in the ROW shall be mowed and treated with herbicide.

1. Areas of brush within the ROW shall be mowed back to prevent brush from becoming established within the ROW. (Sec 15b (4)).
2. Brush or tree stumps shall be spot treated with herbicide as needed for long-term control. (Sec 15b (4)).

Contact the region resource specialist before any mowing or brush cutting in a protected area.