TRANSPORTATION

Reality Check

Myth #8: MDOT is replacing perfectly good signs.

Reality: MDOT replaces signs and posts regularly to keep them visible at night and current with federal safety guidelines.

MDOT regularly replaces signs along our highway corridors as part of a 100 percent federally funded statewide program, on a rotation about every 15 years. This is to ensure these signs are visible both day and night and meet federal standards.

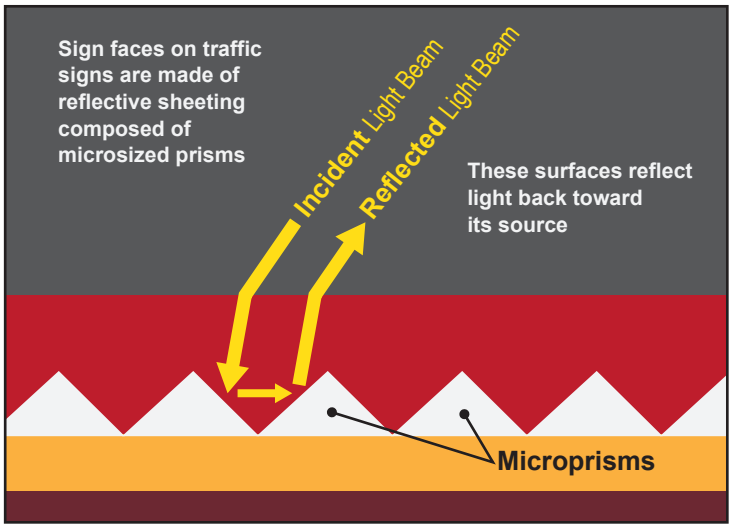
Modern road signs have a reflective surface directing lights from a vehicle's headlights back to the driver's eyes. This allows drivers to see and read signs much sooner than those without this feature. By 2030, one in five drivers will be 65 or older. While a 65-year-old needs eight times the light to see as a 25-year-old does, bright, highly reflective signs help drivers of all ages see, and react, more quickly to signs' information.

The reflective surface degrades over time due to weather, sun exposure, or other damage. When this happens, the signs become difficult to see and read at night. While only 25 percent of all travel occurs at night, about half of all traffic fatalities happen after dark. It's the same reason we regularly repaint pavement markings.

As with the signs themselves, sign posts must meet state and federal safety standards, and degrade over time. When we replace the signs, we usually replace the posts at the same time to make sure they'll break away as they should if struck by a vehicle. Replacing the signs and posts together is more cost-effective than doing it separately.

Looks can be deceiving, and just because a sign looks good in broad daylight doesn't mean it's as visible once the sun goes down. MDOT's sign replacement program is designed to make sure that when motorists need the information highway signs provide, they can find it – day or night.

Older signs that are visible during the day can be difficult to see at night



For more on this transportation myth, visit www.michigan.gov/realitycheck