



TULSA COUNTY ENGINEER

A Division of the Board of County Commissioners

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Memorials in the Right-of-Way (R/W) Policy

Loss of life from a traffic crash has a devastating impact on the families and friends of the victim, as well as the community. While the Tulsa County Highway Engineering Department (“Department”) understands the distressing shock of a loss of life and recognizes that some people wish to grieve by placing a memorial within a roadway R/W near the crash site, the placement of memorials within a roadway’s R/W is not allowed under Oklahoma State Statute ([69 O.S. § 1208](#)) and are authorized to be removed ([69 O.S. § 1209](#)).

Roadside memorials can adversely impact the safety and operation of public roadways in many ways, including:

- Interfere with roadway safety features or sight distances;
- Negatively impact the flow of traffic;
- Cause visual distraction to drivers;
- Pose a risk to those who illegally stop along the R/W to tend to the memorial or grieve;
- Pose an impact hazard or violate the clear zone; and
- Interfere with routine maintenance

As required by State Statute, and to limit the chances of the tragic loss of life due to a well-intentioned memorial, Tulsa County will enforce State Statute by adherence to the following guidelines:

- 1) Once a memorial is identified, Department will send a written demand to remove the memorial by registered mail or personal service, if the owner is known.
- 2) If the owner has not removed the memorial within “a reasonable time after written demand” is made, Department will remove the memorial. For the purposes of this policy, “a reasonable time after written demand” is defined as a period of 30 calendar days from date of notice, or 30 days from Department identification, if the owner is not known.
- 3) Once a memorial is removed, the owner will have 30 calendar days to retrieve the memorial from the associated Highway District Maintenance Office. If the owner does not retrieve the memorial within 30 days of it being removed from the R/W, the material will be disposed.

The Department strongly encourages grieving parties who wish to place a memorial near the site of a fatal crash to work with an adjoining landowner to designate an appropriate location off the roadway R/W for memorial placement.

Concurrent with this policy, official Tulsa County Highway Engineering signage will only be allowed for specific traffic uses. Signs previously installed as an alternative to a memorial will be removed and will be available for pickup by impacted parties as noted above.