

Roadway Right-of-Way Vegetation Cutting

Policy and Procedure

Preface

Hardin County recognizes the value of trees to our healthy environment. Trees are valuable in the photosynthetic conversion of CO₂ to O₂, some research demonstrates they can help remove environmental toxins, they are aesthetically pleasing and economically valuable. For these reasons, the Hardin County Conservation Board plants 30 to 40 thousand trees on public and private land every year. Unfortunately, trees are rarely compatible with roadway rights-of-way.

Policy

Hardin County may cause all or part of trees, shrubs, underbrush, and other growth to be removed from within the roadway right-of-way, whether the right-of-way was acquired by title or easement, if, in the opinion of Hardin County, the trees, shrubs, underbrush, or other growth are a safety hazard to the public traveling upon the roadway, obstruct the roadway or tile drains, or interfere with proper improvement or maintenance of the roadway. An owner, lessee, or tenant of property abutting a roadway does not have any right, title, or interest in trees, shrubs, underbrush, and other growth other than grass, growing within the roadway right-of-way. Neither Hardin County, nor an employee or representative of Hardin County, is liable in damages for injury, death, or property damage based upon a claim of failure to remove trees, shrubs, underbrush, and other growth from the roadway right-of-way.

Conclusion

Hardin County encourages tree planting on public and private lands in area where this vegetation type is appropriate and compatible with the soil, climatic, historical and other characteristics of the site. It is important to keep in mind however, that tall grass prairie – not woodland – dominated the pristine Hardin County landscape. Keeping this fact in mind, Hardin County has implemented an Integrated Roadside Management program whose aims are in harmony with the vegetation heritage of Hardin County. The program stresses the use of native prairie vegetation will out compete weed species, provide valuable wildlife food and cover and lend beauty and color to our roadsides while not compromising the primary objective of our county roads – safe and efficient vehicular travel.

Approved by Hardin County Board of Supervisors