

Connecticut Department of Transportation
Mowing
June 23, 2020

Be advised, any maintenance issues, such as mowing, that are not a direct safety matter will take a greater length of time to resolve until the ongoing COVID 19 crisis is beyond us. Until recently, due to COVID 19, Department of Transportation (Department) Highway Maintenance was operating with a reduced staff in the field. Our Paving Program and safety repairs continue to consume most of our resources right now. Below is a brief synopsis to the Department's mowing guidelines. Any mowing complaints received by the Department will be directed to the respective District Office. Upon request, they can provide the expected timeframe that the work in question will be scheduled.

Roadside mowing for both limited access highways and secondary state routes is a core function of the Department of Transportation. The purpose of mowing is to provide a safe travel-way for the public by maintaining sightlines and safe pull-off areas. The other purpose is to foster a stabilized turf area to support the roadways and activities needed to maintain the roads and accompanying roadside appurtenances such as guiderail systems, signage, electrical cabinets, drainage, etc.

The intent of the Department's Roadside Mowing Guidelines is to mow as much and as often as is necessary for safety purposes, but in general, mowing will take place once grass reaches 8 inches in height. However, there are considerations and external factors that can affect mowing schedules and result in observed overgrowth in roadside vegetation (including seasonal periods of heavy rainfall). Since the Department had been operating at a reduced staffing level due to COVID-19, as in past staffing shortages and other extenuating circumstances, alternative work hours (such as Saturday morning mowing) may be implemented to ensure mowing for safety reasons can be kept up (i.e., clearance of obstructed sightlines, etc.).

Compounded by aging equipment, the Department's ability to mow proactively, while tending to other necessary priorities such as work activities related to COVID 19 response, pavement resurfacing projects, repairing guiderail, fixing potholes and removing hazardous trees, has been taxed. In addition, the Department has embraced efforts to increase our pollinator habitat on

Department right of ways; so, in some locations, motorists may see areas that might be defined as “conservation areas” in support of that effort.

Based on all of the current conditions, Maintenance Supervisors responsible for specific geographical areas routinely patrol their respective sections and assign mowing activities to address areas of most concern, including those reported by motorists. The Department will continue to effectively address the vegetation management needs of the state roadway network maximizing all available resources.