

Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation Guidelines for Establishing Reduced-Speed School Zones

Overview

Recent amendments to *The Highway Traffic Act* authorize local governments, such as municipalities, Northern Community Councils and First Nation Band Councils, to make by-laws establishing reduced-speed school zones (RSSZ).

The new *Reduced-Speed School Zones Regulation* (regulation) sets out requirements related to speed reductions, by-law development and the signage necessary for the establishment of RSSZ's. Local governments opting to designate portions of roadways as RSSZ's are required to do so in accordance with the regulation. This helps to ensure that RSSZ's are identifiable and the maximum speeds within them are enforceable.

The regulatory requirements for establishing RSSZ's are set out below. The requirements are only applicable to RSSZ's. Traffic authorities will continue to have autonomy in determining the location and erecting approved signage for school areas where there is no speed reduction.

Designating Reduced-Speed School Zones

With the exception of privately-owned roadways, local governments may establish RSSZ's on portions of roadways within their geographical boundaries without Highway Traffic Board approval. This includes roadways under provincial authority (i.e. provincial roads and provincial trunk highways).

For the purposes of establishing a RSSZ, a *school* includes:

- Both public and private schools from kindergarten to grade 12; and
- All *school property*, this includes the school building, school yard and school recreational facility.

The regulation establishes the following parameters regarding the size and location of RSSZ's:

- Roadways with a speed reduction must be within 150 m from the boundary of the school property; and
- At least some length of each roadway where the maximum speed is reduced must abut the *school property*.

Maximum Speed in a Reduced-Speed School Zone

Local governments may determine the maximum speed in RSSZ's within the following parameters.

- The maximum speed must not be lower than 30 km/h on roadways where the posted speed limit is less than 80 km/h; and
- The maximum speed must not be lower than 50 km/h on roadways where the posted speed limit is 80 km/h or more.

Local governments may determine when speed reductions are in effect. In cases where the speed reduction is not in effect at all times, signs must be erected to inform motorists of when to slow down (see section on signage).

Note that the maximum speed(s) must be reduced in increments of 10 km/h. The regulation requires maximum speed signage to be in accordance with the specifications set out in the *Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Canada* (MUTCD). The MUTCD does not include maximum speed signage in increments other than ten.

By-law Requirements

Reduced-speed school zone(s) must be established under a by-law(s) that includes specific information required by the regulation. Providing all the required information in the by-law is necessary for speed reductions to be authorized and enforceable. Ensuring the by-law meets the regulatory requirements will help reduce the possibility of tickets being challenged on the basis that the maximum speed was not legally established.

By-laws authorizing RSSZ's must include the following information:

- Maximum speed(s);
- Hours/days/months in which the speed reduction is in effect;
- Description of where the RSSZ(s) begins on a roadway and where it ends;
- Description of how the portions of road designated as RSSZ's are measured (i.e. 75 m from the front door, 150 m from the school property, etc.);
- The schools in connection with the RSSZ's and, if applicable, any separate school yards and school recreational facilities in connection with the RSSZ; and
- A list of highways on which RSSZ's are designated and cross-referenced to the affected school property.

Local governments may use one by-law to designate all reduced-speed school zones within their geographical boundaries. Local governments are encouraged to consult with their legal counsel in the development of RSSZ's by-laws to help ensure speed reductions are in accordance with the regulation.

Sample by-law description of reduced-speed school zones:

The maximum speed limit for vehicles traveling along a portion of highway described herein within 150 metres along the highway in either direction beyond the school property line is 30 km/h between 7:00 am and 5:00 pm from Monday to Friday.

Highway	School
<i>Blue Drive</i>	<i>Redlake Elementary School, 43 Red Drive</i>
<i>Red Drive</i>	<i>Bluelake High School, 12 Blue Road</i>
<i>Yellow Avenue</i>	<i>Yellowlake Middle School, 15 Yellow Avenue</i>

Required Signage & Placement

The regulation sets out the signage required to identify RSSZ's and the maximum speed within them. Only signage prescribed in the regulation may be used for the purposes of RSSZ's. Although many of the signs required in the regulation are the same as those already approved for use throughout Manitoba (i.e. yellow/green school area sign), there are specific requirements regarding the combination and placement of these signs that is unique.

Signage must meet either the requirements of the MUTCD for Canada or conform to the requirements prescribed in the regulation, as applicable. The regulation specifies the minimum dimensions of the required signs; however, local governments may proportionally increase the size of signs when deemed necessary. Bilingual versions of the signs are also prescribed in the regulation.

Local governments may establish RSSZ's on provincial highways/roads; however, Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation's (MIT) Director of Traffic Engineering must approve the physical characteristics and erection of the signage. This is to ensure that signs are erected in accordance with safe traffic engineering practices and will not affect a local government's decision to establish a RSSZ's. MIT will supply and install signage for RSSZ's located on highways/roads under provincial jurisdiction.

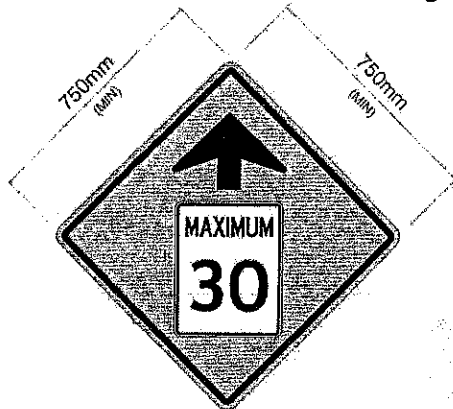
Sign Placement on Roadways

The regulation requires signs to face drivers entering, proceeding through, and leaving a RSSZ. There are also requirements regarding the placement of signs on two-way, multi-lane and one-way roadways, as follows:

- On two-way undivided roadways, signs must be erected to the right of the roadway;
- On roadways with two or more traffic lanes in one direction, signs must be erected to both the right and left of the roadway, provided there is a centre median of sufficient width to place signs; and
- On one-way roadways, signs must be placed to both the right and left of the roadway.

Warning Signs

The following warning sign must be placed at the approach of a RSSZ to alert drivers of the up-coming speed reduction. The sign must be erected not less than 100 m and not more than 200 m before the beginning of a RSSZ's in both rural and urban areas.



Warning signs must be a minimum of 750 mm along each side and conform to MUTCD requirements.

Signs at the Beginning of the Zone

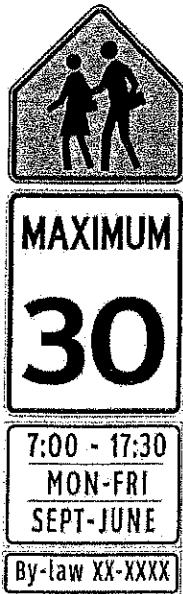
The beginning of a RSSZ must be identified with the following combination of signs: a school area sign, a maximum speed limit sign directly below the school area sign, and a sign identifying the by-law number authorizing the speed reduction which must be placed directly below the maximum speed sign if the speed reduction is in effect at all times.



School area signs must be at minimum 600 mm x 600 mm and maximum speed signs must be at minimum 600 mm x 750 mm - both must conform to MUTCD requirements.

The by-law number sign must be at minimum 600 mm x 150 mm, display black lettering and look similar to that pictured.

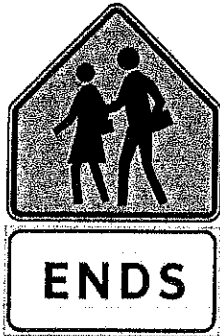
In cases where the speed reduction is not in effect at all times, a sign identifying the effective hours/days/months must be placed in between the maximum speed sign and the by-law number sign as shown below.



A sign identifying when the speed limit is in effect must: be at minimum 600 mm x 400 mm, be reflectorized and look similar to the sign pictured.

Signs at the End of the Zone

A school area sign with an 'end' sign below it must be erected to identify the end of a RSSZ. The 'end' sign must be of at minimum 600 mm x 300 mm and look similar to the sign shown below.

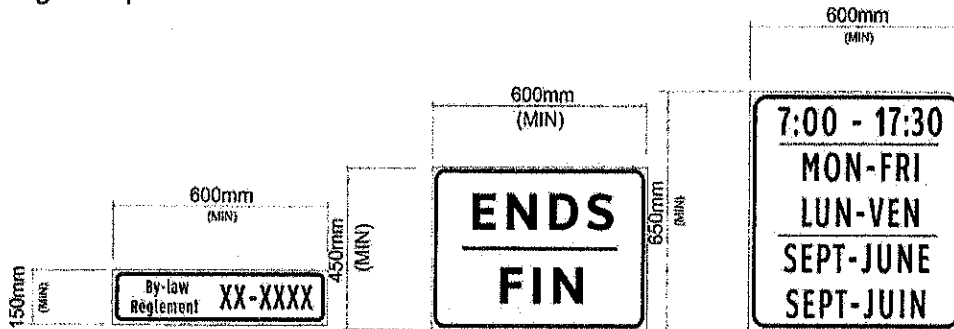


Signs at Intersecting Roadways

Where roadways, other than back lanes intersect with the portion of road comprising a RSSZ, a maximum speed sign must be placed at the intersection to ensure drivers are aware of the speed reduction. If the speed reduction is not in effect at all times, then the required signage indicating when the speed reduction is in effect must be placed below the maximum speed sign.



The following bilingual signs are also authorized for use in place of the English-only signs depicted above.



Samples of Reduced-Speed School Zone Signage

Appendix A provides sample signage for RSSZ's on two-lane, two-way roadways, four-lane divided roadways and multi-lane one-way roadways.

Speed Enforcement

The RCMP and local police forces are responsible for speed enforcement in Manitoba, including speed enforcement in RSSZ. Speeding in a RSSZ is *not* a by-law offence. It is a speeding offence like any other under *The Highway Traffic Act*. A driver caught speeding in a RSSZ will be issued a provincial offence notice for speeding and, in most cases, be required to pay a set fine prescribed in provincial regulations.

Usually when a local government wants to reduce an existing speed limit, it must seek approval from the Highway Traffic Board (HTB). If the HTB approves the speed reduction, the new maximum speed for the specific portions of roadway is prescribed in the *Maximum Speed Order (MSO)* which is a regulation under *The Highway Traffic Act*.

The MSO authorizes the maximum speed and makes it enforceable; however, because the maximum speed in a reduced-speed school zone does not require HTB approval, it is not possible to authorize it under the MSO. Consequently, a by-law is required to authorize the maximum speed in a RSSZ so that it may be enforced. The by-law simply authorizes the speed reduction; it does not create an offence and is not in itself enforceable. A by-law officer is not authorized to enforce speeding offences, including a speed offence in a RSSZ.

Further Information

This guideline is intended to provide an overview of the regulatory requirements regarding the establishment of RSSZ's. The *Reduced-Speed School Zones Regulation* provides the precise details related to designating RSSZ's. It is accessible at: <http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/regs/pdf/h060-136.13.pdf>

Appendix B contains a question and answer regarding RSSZ's.

Signage:

For further information regarding signage requirements, or to obtain approval of the signage for RSSZ's on provincial highways/roads, contact MIT's Traffic Engineering at 204-945-3781

Other Questions:

Questions related to any other matters regarding RSSZ's should be directed to MIT's Legislative and Regulatory Services Branch at 204-945-2003.