

## **Guidance to Operators Regarding Emergency Response Signage on State Forest Roads**

On January 26, 2013, Pennsylvania’s Chapter 78 regulations were amended to include Emergency Response Planning at Unconventional Well Sites. This was based on the authority granted in Act 9 of 2012. The new regulations require that operators place specific emergency response signage at the entrance to well sites (i.e., well pads), among other requirements. The Bureau of Forestry understands that some operators are beginning preparations for the production of the required signage so as to meet regulatory deadlines.

The regulations define Administrative Roads as “a road owned and maintained by the Commonwealth open to the public at the discretion of the Commonwealth that may or may not have a name and address range [§ 78.55(f)(2)].” State forest roads, maintained by the Bureau of Forestry, fall under this definition.

### **Sign Appearance**

For most types of roads, the regulations stipulate that the sign displayed at the entrance must have a white background with a 2-inch red border and black numbers and letters. However, the regulations also stipulate that, “Signs for entrances on administrative roads may use other colors provided that the signs use contrasting colors between the background, border, numbers, and letters [§ 78.55(f)(4)(ii)(B)].”

The Bureau would like to state its preference that the emergency response signage on state forest roads be designed as specified below:

- Signs should have a brown background, matching as nearly as possible the stain used for our wooden signs, which is Sherwin Williams DeckScapes Acrylic-based Russett Brown. A thumbnail of this color is shown below and attached to this message as a jpeg file.



- The border, lettering, and numbering should be white or cream/off-white, so long as it contrasts with the chosen brown background.
- All other sign specifications in the regulations, regarding construction materials and information content, should be followed.

The Bureau requests that operators share a template or example of their proposed sign design prior to installation so that the Bureau can verify that it meets this guidance.

## Sign Placement

As stipulated in the regulations, the signs must be installed at the “entrance” to the well pad, being the intersection of the access road and the nearest road with an address range. The Bureau prefers that emergency response signage be installed as near as possible to pad locations. As a general rule, if a pad is not visible from a named road, then the Bureau wishes to give a name and address range to the access road. Also, for unnamed roads that provide access to multiple pads, the Bureau wish to have a name and address range assigned. The Bureau will work cooperatively with operators and the proper authorities to ensure that names and addresses are assigned as efficiently as possible. These solutions will be beneficial to emergency responders and will minimize sign pollution in the state forest.

For signs being installed for existing well pads (to meet the July 25, 2013 deadline), the Bureau requests that operators send a list, shapefile, or map of the proposed sign locations to the respective District Forester. With this information, the District Forester may decide that additional roads should receive names and address ranges prior to sign production and installation.

For signs being installed for new well pads, the Bureau will come to agreement with operators regarding the placement of the sign as part of the Bureau’s existing pad approval process. Proposed construction of a new road may necessitate the assignment of a name and address range to the proposed road. Again, the Bureau will work cooperatively with operators and proper authorities on the naming of such roads.

If additional road signs or directional signs are requested by the municipality or county (that are not required by Chapter 78 regulations), then the Bureau requires that such signs conform to our sign manual and be approved by the District Forester. The sign manual is available upon request from the District Forester or central office.

Any questions regarding this guidance can be directed to Ryan Szuch ([rszuch@pa.gov](mailto:rszuch@pa.gov)), 717-787-2980, or John Piekara ([jpiekara@pa.gov](mailto:jpiekara@pa.gov)), 717-783-3227.