



# Mn/DOT POLICY POSITION STATEMENT

**Date:** September 7, 1983

**Reference:** Highways No. 83-2  
Closure of State Highways  
Severe Winter Storms or  
Natural Disasters

## **Position Statement:**

Every effort within the limits of available resources should be made to keep the highways open to traffic at all times.

Safety for the motorists and Mn/DOT employees are primary considerations of Mn/DOT.

Should weather deteriorate to a condition that requires closing the highway to all vehicular travel or should a natural disaster occur which makes the roadway impassable this policy sets forth the general method to follow.

## **Background:**

### DEFINITIONS:

Road "Closed" A road declared closed by word only through the news media or other informational sources. Because of the numerous access points to the roadway, it is deemed impractical to barricade all access to it.

Road "Barricaded" A road declared closed and barricaded to physically prevent travel. This would generally occur on freeways because of the minimal number of access points or on short sections of roadway where the local access to the highway can be reasonably controlled.

It is the responsibility of Mn/DOT Area Maintenance Engineer with the concurrence of the District Engineer to determine when a road should be closed or barricaded.

If there is immediate danger of the road becoming impassable or if visibility is so limited that safe travel is impossible, the Area Maintenance Engineer should declare the road "closed".

If conditions are such that the Area Maintenance Engineer deems it advisable and advantageous

to physically prohibit travel, he shall effect closing of the road by placing appropriate barricades and/or traffic control devices and shall declare the road “barricaded”. Prior to barricading a road, the Area Maintenance Engineer and State Patrol Commander will confer and agree on the necessity of this action. When the Area Maintenance Engineer and Commander agree that the motorist will need verbal instructions at the barricade, they will attempt to arrange for qualified personnel to provide these instructions.

The State Patrol has the authority to halt traffic and implement temporary road closures in matters relating to public safety; for example, to allow for emergency services following a major accident or series of accidents.

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**R. P. Braun, Commissioner**

**Any questions regarding this position statement should be directed to:**  
Lawrence F. McNamara, Assistant Commissioner – Operations, Room 413 Transportation Building, Telephone (612) 296-3008.