

**160.232 MOWING DITCHES OUTSIDE CITIES.**

(a) To provide enhanced roadside habitat for nesting birds and other small wildlife, road authorities may not mow or till the right-of-way of a highway located outside of a home rule charter or statutory city except as allowed in this section and section 160.23.

(b) On any highway, the first eight feet away from the road surface, or shoulder if one exists, may be mowed at any time.

(c) An entire right-of-way may be mowed after July 31. From August 31 to the following July 31, the entire right-of-way may only be mowed if necessary for safety reasons, but may not be mowed to a height of less than 12 inches.

(d) A right-of-way may be mowed as necessary to maintain sight distance for safety and may be mowed at other times under rules of the commissioner, or by ordinance of a local road authority not conflicting with the rules of the commissioner.

(e) A right-of-way may be mowed, burned, or tilled to prepare the right-of-way for the establishment of permanent vegetative cover or for prairie vegetation management.

(f) When feasible, road authorities are encouraged to utilize low maintenance, native vegetation that reduces the need to mow, provides wildlife habitat, and maintains public safety.

(g) The commissioner of natural resources shall cooperate with the commissioner of transportation to provide enhanced roadside habitat for nesting birds and other small wildlife.

**History:** *1985 c 127 s 2; 1986 c 398 art 27 s 1; 1989 c 179 s 1; 1Sp2005 c 1 art 2 s 137*