

SUMMARY OF OUR DETERMINATIONS

Oregon Travel Experience (OTE) is proposing a revision to its current permit fee schedule and how we determine a fair price for your highway signs.

Since 1972 OTE has maintained the program with a lower than national average fee for all categories of signs. Program fees have followed a three-category schedule based on sign location, sign type, and sign density factors.

WHY WE NEED TO ADOPT REVISIONS

While the three-part regional schedule worked for many customers, it did not consider lesser traveled regions of the state. The current fee schedule also did not set costs according to traffic density.

WHO WE ARE

The Oregon Travel Information Council (OTIC), branded and doing business as Oregon Travel Experience, is a semi-independent state agency charged with promoting public safety, preserving the recreational value of public travel on state highways and promote economic prosperity by directing motorists into nearby communities.



We are the official state administrators for Oregon's Highway Business Sign permits and for the Oregon Historic Marker and Heritage Tree programs. We also manage 29 of the state's largest and busiest highway safety rest areas and issue permits for displays within motorist information kiosks, TripCheck listings, and for the driver safety Free Coffee Program at selected rest areas.



Our lowest cost permit had not increased since 1997—making it difficult to maintain a sustainable and self-funded program.

OTE's legislative mandate is to operate the sign program without using General Fund dollars and to meet costs solely through permit fees. We are faced with continuously spiraling costs for materials and skilled labor and must ensure that your signs are installed according to federal and state regulations.



Email us at admin@oregonte.com
or telephone us toll free
1-800-574-9397.



OTE Proposed Fee Schedule Facts
"Who, What, Why, How, Where and When"

A Guide to Rate Revisions in the OTE
Highway Business Sign Program
and Public Hearing Date

HOW WE FACTORED THE REVISIONS

By comparing traffic count data obtained from the Oregon Department of Transportation with our current fee structure, it became apparent that a majority of customers fell into a fee category not based on how many travelers actually viewed a sign.

For example, in low-traffic areas, and on highways less traveled, customers paid the same rates for their signs as those with sign locations on the busiest roadways.

WHAT WE ARE PROPOSING

OTE is proposing an equitable fee schedule expanded to accommodate a more realistic six regions. Traffic counts have been applied to every highway and mile-point.

OTE is also proposing an amendment to current rules that would allow for an increase to the type, placement, and category of signs. This is intended to help decrease the backlog of customers on waiting lists. Approximately 44 possible highway exits could accommodate more signs under the proposal.

You will receive a letter with this guide noticing how this new fee schedule will change (or not change) your permit rates. Your current fee schedule will be printed in the letter alongside the proposed rate calculations so that you may compare the schedules.

A POWER POINT PRESENTATION ON THE PROPOSED HIGHWAY BUSINESS SIGN RULES REVISIONS IS AVAILABLE ON THE OTE WEBSITE AT:

<http://ortravelexperience.com/for-businesses/sign-programs/highway-business-sign-proposed-rule-revisions/>

WHO THIS AFFECTS

For the majority of OTE highway business sign customers, your rates will not increase. However, the proposed changes will affect customer signs located in high traffic density regions (Portland Metro, etc.), as well as moderate fee increases to customer signs located in low-traffic count areas.

In some instances, permits fees may actually decrease, depending upon sign location and type. For example, signs located along low-traffic rural roads within OTE's Tourist Oriented Directional category.

Another category of customer who will be affected by the proposed rule are not-for-profit and government agencies or entities. Under the new rule, businesses or customers who wish to continue receiving a *discounted rate must provide OTE with verification of their 501 or 503 status. OTE is in the process of alerting these customers about the verification and will require response within 30 days of the request.

Not-for-profit and government agency customers will also see changes to their fee schedules under the proposed restructuring.

Previously there were only two categories for these entities: one for Interstate signs and one for Off-Interstate. Under the proposed rule changes, these customers will fall into the same six regions defined by traffic count and prices will be adjusted upwards according to placement. (*This permit category will still qualify for a discounted rate).

WHERE AND WHEN TO RESPOND

As an OTE highway sign customer, you have the right to attend a public hearing concerning these proposed rule and rate changes. You are invited to attend the following public hearing:

OTE PROPOSED RESTRUCTURING OF SIGN PERMIT FEES
WEDNESDAY, SEPT 24, 2014
9:00 A.M.
HOOD RIVER REGION
LOCATION TO BE ANNOUNCED

The hearing location is still being finalized. Please check our website home page at: ortravelexperience.com for location announcement.

In addition, you may respond to the proposed fee restructuring in writing by sending an email with your comments to: dianec@oregonte.com or by mailing your comments to: OTE, Attn: Fee Restructure Proposal, 1500 Liberty St SE, Suite 150, Salem, OR, 97302.

The deadline for written commentary to be included in the hearing is Friday, August 29, 2014 at 4:00 p.m.

