

ROAD CLOSURE

23 MRSA §2051. POWER OF COMMISSIONERS

1. Layout, maintenance and discontinuance of roads in unorganized areas. County commissioners may lay out, alter, close for maintenance or discontinue highways within the unorganized areas of their counties and grade hills in such a highway. The county commissioners may close a county road for maintenance and preserve the right-of-way for the use of abutting landowners, any others using that way for access to their property and public utilities and corporations with facilities legally located within that way, at their own risk. At a regular session of the commissioners, responsible persons may present a written petition describing a way and stating that the location, alteration, grading or closing for maintenance or discontinuance of that way, in whole or in part, or an alternative action, is desired. The commissioners may act upon the petition, conforming substantially to the description without adhering strictly to its bounds.

2. Closing roads in unorganized areas for the winter. The county commissioners may close any county road in the unorganized areas of their county under the same conditions and following the same procedure established in section 2953, subsections 1 to 4 for the closure of roads in municipalities by the municipal officers, except that the county commissioners approve the order closing a road and may annul, alter or modify any such order. A copy of the order must be filed with the county clerk or county administrator. Any person may appeal from a decision of the county commissioners to close a county road for the winter in the same manner as provided in Title 17, section 2852.

23 MRSA §2953. CLOSING OF ROADS IN WINTER

1. Announcement of winter closing of roads. The municipal officers may on their own initiative, or upon petition by 7 legal voters of the municipality, at any time between May 1st and October 1st of any year, set forth that any road or roads, or portion thereof, in the municipality are so located with reference to population, use and travel thereon, that it is unnecessary to keep the road or roads maintained and open for travel during the months of November, December, January, February, March and April or any part of these months.

2. Notice and hearing. Prior to an announcement under subsection 1, the municipal officers shall hold a hearing on the proposed winter closing of a road or roads or portion thereof. The municipal officers shall place a written notice of the hearing in some conspicuous, public place in the municipality at least 7 days before the hearing.

3. Order of closing. After a hearing under subsection 2, the municipal officers shall file with the municipal clerk any order specifying the location of the road, the months or portions thereof for which it is to be closed and for how many years, not to exceed 10, the closing shall be

operative. The legislative body of the municipality shall by vote either approve each order or provide that orders so made by the municipal officers shall be a final determination.

4. Alteration of order. The municipal officers may on their own initiative, or upon petition by 7 legal voters of the municipality, at any time subsequent to one year from the date of a final determination, after notice and hearing, annul, alter or modify the original determination. The municipal officers shall file with the municipal clerk an order specifying any decision to annul, alter or modify, which shall not become final until the legislative body of the municipality by vote either approves each order or provides that orders so made by the municipal officers are a final determination.

5. Appeal. The final determination by the legislative body or the municipal officers may be appealed to the board of county commissioners of the county in which the municipality lies, upon petition by 7 legal voters of the municipality within 30 days after the final determination is made. In an appeal before a board of county commissioners, the decision of the commissioners shall be governed by the standards set forth in this section.