

New license plates issued across the state this week

Today, the North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT) began issuing the new flat plate called the Sunrise License Plate. The new flat plate replaces the current embossed Buffalo plate which has been in circulation for 23 years and Lewis and Clark plate.

“After 23 years some vehicles have deteriorated plates that are losing their reflectivity. In 2013, the state legislature recognized the need and provided the resources to replace the general issue plate. They also indicated it should be a flat plate design,” said NDDOT Director Grant Levi.

The NDDOT worked with Tourism, Highway Patrol and Roughrider Industry to design the new plate, while taking the history and tradition of North Dakota into consideration. In 2014, the North Dakota Legislative and Budget Committee approved a design which features:

- Actual photographs of the beautiful sunrise in the North Dakota skyline with a buffalo
- The ND tourism slogan *Legendary*, along with the official nickname *Peace Garden State*
- North Dakota’s number one crop - wheat

The new flat plate will be distributed to vehicle owners through the regular license plate renewal process. Once a motorist pays their motor vehicle registration fees they will receive the new flat plate in the mail.

“This is a momentous event as we begin the process of replacing the North Dakota license plate with a newly designed plate,” stated Mark Nelson, NDDOT Deputy Director for Driver and Vehicles Services. “We issue over one million motor vehicle registrations a year, it will take time to replace plates on nearly every vehicle across the state and we ask everyone to be patient as we work through this new process.”

The new plates are being mailed to residents who recently renewed online and have also been distributed to all motor vehicle branch offices statewide. The distribution of the new plate will occur in phases:

- In this first phase the standard 6 X 12 plate that is used on most vehicles and standard trailers will be replaced.
- During the second phase, which takes place in 2016, the smaller 4 X 7 plate that is on motorcycles and small trailers will be replaced.

“As required in state statute, all of the new flat plates will be distributed by June 30, 2017,” said Nelson.

Over the past two years Roughrider Industries of the state penitentiary procured the necessary equipment and trained staff on manufacturing the new flat plates. “Roughrider has worked hard to ensure there is a sufficient inventory of plates ready for distribution,” said Rick Gardner, Director of Rough Rider Industries.

There is no additional charge for the new plates, but normal registration fees will apply as residents renew their vehicle registrations. Motorists can renew their vehicle registration through the mail, online at dot.nd.gov, through the smartphone app NDRenewals or at any Motor Vehicle Branch Office throughout the state.

Vehicle owners are encouraged to recycle old plates at their local recycling facility or they can bring the old plates to their nearest motor vehicle office and deposit in the recycling bins. It is recommended that they bend or cut the plate in half before recycling.

For more information visit NDDOT’s New Plate Frequently Asked Questions web page on our website: dot.nd.gov or call our toll free number: 1-844-NDPLATE (1-844-637-5283).