

Cable Median Barrier

As traffic volumes have grown, Minnesota has experienced an increase in cross median crashes. Installing cable median barrier in strategic locations has proven to be effective in preventing these crashes that so often have tragic outcomes.

Cable median barrier projects have been funded through the Central Safety Fund and the Area Transportation Partner’s (ATP) Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Funds. Project selection was based on crash data, traffic volume, and existing median width following AASHTO guidance.



Cable Median Barrier Currently Installed - Nov 2014	
	Miles
Metro	169
Greater Minnesota	281
Statewide Total	450

Studies of existing cable median barrier installations show dramatic decreases in fatal and serious injuries due to cross median crashes. Cable median barriers can reduce fatal crashes by 95 percent. There is no other safety device available that virtually guarantees consistent success in saving lives every year on the interstate system. Since the first installation in 2004, cable median barriers have saved approximately 80 lives in Minnesota to date.

The typical cost for installation is about \$140,000-\$150,000 per mile. However, there are restrictions in where cable median barrier can be installed depending on the cross section of the median area. For example, if the side slope is too steep, additional costs can be incurred through grading and/or providing cable median barrier for both directions.

For each installation, engineers must determine how far the barrier should be placed from the shoulder. The placement is influenced by a variety of factors including: ditch slopes, manufacturer and FHWA recommendations, median widths, soil conditions, maintenance issues, and curvature of the roadway. Improper placement of the barrier could result in vehicles overriding the barrier and crossing into oncoming traffic.

Maintenance & Repair Costs

Metro

- \$7,200 per mile
- 61% of these costs are recovered*

Greater Minnesota

- \$6,000 per mile in Greater Minnesota
- 67% of these costs are recovered*

*A percentage of repair costs are recovered through insurance companies of the individuals responsible for damaging the cable median barrier.

For More Information

Visit: dot.state.mn.us/trafficeng/safety

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