# Grooving for recessed pavement markings

Effective: November 1, 2017 Revised: September 24, 2021

Description. This work shall consist of grooving the pavement surface in preparation for the application of recessed pavement markings.

Equipment. Equipment shall be according to the following.

(a) Preformed Plastic Pavement Marking Installations: The grooving equipment shall have a free-floating saw blade cutting head equipped with gang-stacked diamond saw blades. The diamond saw blades shall be of uniform wear and shall produce a smooth textured surface. Any ridges in the groove shall have a maximum height of 15 mils (0.38 mm).

(b) Paint, Epoxy, Polyurea, Modified Urethane, and Thermoplastic Pavement Marking Installations: The grooving equipment shall be equipped with either a free-floating saw blade cutting head or a free-floating grinder cutting head configuration with diamond or carbide tipped cutters and shall produce an irregular textured surface.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS

General. The Contractor shall supply the Engineer with a copy of the pavement marking material manufacturer’s recommendations for constructing a groove.

Pavement Grooving Methods. The grooves for recessed pavement markings shall be constructed using the following methods.

(a) Wet Cutting Head Operation. When water is required or used to cool the cutting head, the groove shall be flushed with high pressure water immediately following the cut to avoid build up and hardening of slurry in the groove. The pavement surface shall be allowed to dry for a minimum of 24 hours prior to the final cleaning of the groove and application of the pavement marking material.

(b) Dry Cutting Head Operation. When used on HMA pavements, the groove shall be vacuumed or cleaned by blasting with high-pressure air to remove loose aggregate, debris, and dust generated during the cutting operation. When used on PCC pavements, the groove shall be flushed with high pressure water or shot blasted to remove any PCC particles that may have become destabilized during the grooving process. If high pressure water is used, the pavement surface shall be allowed to dry for a minimum of 24 hours prior to the final cleaning of the groove and application of the pavement marking material.

Pavement Grooving. Grooving shall not cause ravels, aggregate fractures, spalling or disturbance of the joints to the underlying surface of the pavement. Grooves shall be cut into the pavement prior to the application of the pavement marking material. Grooves shall be cut such that the width is 1 in. (25 mm) greater than the width of the pavement marking line as specified on the plans. Grooves for letters and symbols shall be cut to the shape of the corresponding letters and/or symbols such that the letters and/or symbols shall fit entirely within the recessed shape. Overgrind is expected given the various shapes of letters and/or symbols. However, this overgrind shall be limited to 2 ½ in. (62.5 mm) beyond the interior or exterior perimeters of the proposed marking. The position of the edge of the grooves shall be a minimum of 2 in. (50 mm) from the edge of all longitudinal joints. The depth of the groove shall not be less than the manufacturer’s recommendations for the pavement marking material specified, and according to the following.

(a) Preformed Plastic and Thermoplastic Pavement Markings. Grooving shall be to a minimum depth of 110 mils (2.79 mm) and a maximum depth of 200 mils (5.08 mm).

(b) Paint, Epoxy, Polyurea, and Modified Urethane Pavement Markings. Grooving shall be to a minimum depth of 40 mils (1.02 mm) and a maximum depth of 80 mils (2.03 mm).

The cutting head shall be operated at the appropriate speed in order to prevent undulation of the cutting head and grooving at an inconsistent depth.

At the start of grooving operations, a 50 ft (16.7 m) test section shall be installed and depth measurements shall be made at 10 ft (3.3 m) intervals within the test section. The individual depth measurements shall be within the allowable ranges according to this Article. If it is determined the test section has not been grooved at the appropriate depth or texture, adjustments shall be made to the cutting head and another 50 ft (16.7 m) test section shall be installed and checked. This process shall continue until the test section meets the requirements of this Article.

For new HMA pavements, grooves shall not be installed within 10 days of the placement of the final course of pavement.

Final Cleaning. Immediately prior to the application of the pavement marking material or primer sealer, the groove shall be cleaned with high-pressure air blast.

Method of Measurement. Grooving for lines will be measured for payment in place, in feet (meter) for the groove width specified.

Grooving for letter, numbers and symbols will be measured in square feet (square meters). This measurement to be equal to the corresponding areas for the letters, numbers or symbols shown in TABLE 1 of Article 780.15 of the Standard Specifications.

Basis of Payment. This work will be paid for at the contract unit price per foot (meter) for GROOVING FOR RECESSED PAVEMENT MARKING of the groove width specified, and per square foot (square meter) for GROOVING FOR RECESSED PAVEMENT MARKING, LETTERS AND SYMBOLS.