

if we utilized this process much more extensively than the license plates. So I contacted our Department of Roads to find out what they had done and why they hadn't utilized this system. In the little packet of information you have, you have a letter of a couple of weeks ago from the Department of Roads and I would like you to read it with me, if you would, because it really highlights what we are talking about two different systems, and remember, if you are bidding on delivering ten hogs and I am bidding on delivering one hog, we are bidding on two different animals, two different types of things. It is not the same thing at all. "The first and most extensively used system is one that is generally referred to as 'reflective sheeting'", this is the Department of Roads and this explains the two things. "This consists of minute glass spheres embedded or encapsulated in plastic on a sheeting or film that is then adhered to the basic sign background material such as aluminum, wood or steel. The second system consists of a painted surface on which a very thin film of glass spheres is spread." That is the beaded system. "After the paint dries, the glass spheres form a reflective surface. There is a third reflectorizing system using unit plastic reflectors which are encapsulated in the numerals and letters used on large highway signs to reflectorize the sign message. Reflective sheeting", in other words system #1, if you want to call it, the one that 3M and half a dozen other companies apparently provide, "is used much more extensively than beaded signs, primarily because of its durability and cleaning characteristics. The flat top or smooth surface of the material facilitates putting the message on the sign and it also enhances considerably the cleaning of the signs. A beaded surface", we are talking about the other system now, "is not a smooth surface. There are small interstices between the beads which has a tendency to fill up with a very fine colloidal material, air-borne from road spray. When this film gets into these spaces between the beads, it is virtually impossible to clean the surface. A dirty beaded surface has little, if any, reflectivity so that its nighttime effectiveness is very adversely decreased." Now it goes on to discuss why the beads come apart but I am going to get to the heart of this. "On recurring occasions during the past thirty years the Highway Department has experimented with a variety of sign fabricating techniques including repeated attempts with the beaded system, but because it lacked the quality of appearance, durability, maintenance problem, and effectiveness, we've always felt that it wasn't a wise use of tax funds for that particular purpose." So our state has experimented. Twelve other states, as you see from the handout have had beads and have switched because of those problems.