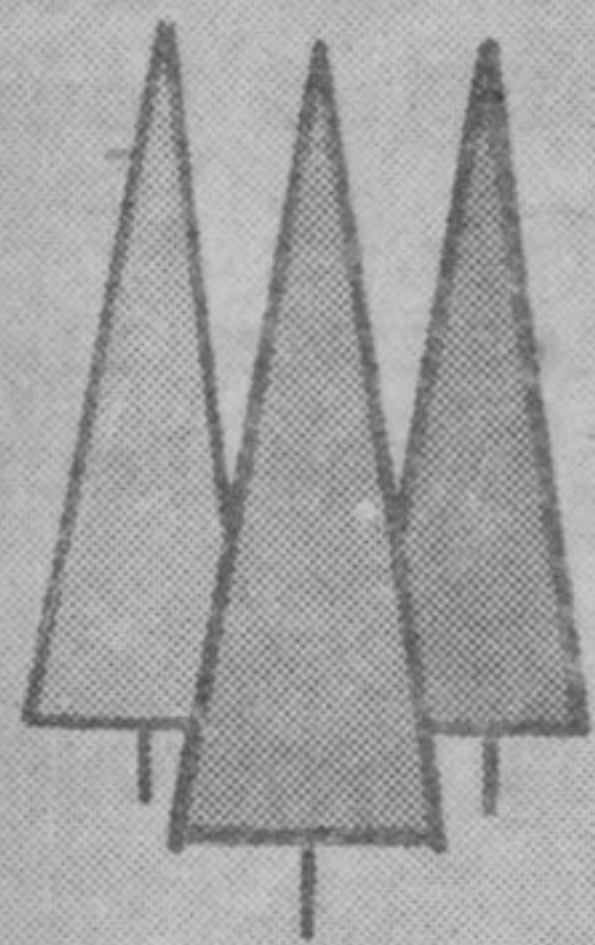
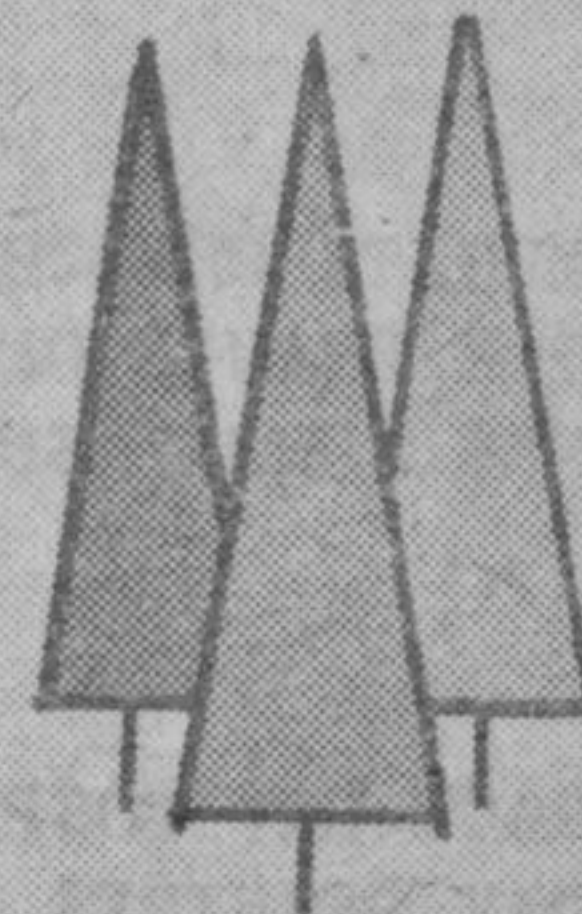


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## ONTARIO'S HIGHWAYS TO GO METRIC

Ontario's 13,000-mile provincial highway network will go metric effective Sept. 6, Minister of Transportation and Communications James Snow announced.

"My Ministry will convert all provincial highway signs to metric units as Ontario's part in a Federal Government directed Canada-wide conversion. Conversion of the 42,000 signs will begin Sept. 6th, the day after Labor Day," Snow said.

Replacement of existing speed signs with overlay kilometre distances will take about two-weeks.

Kilometres (km) will replace miles on distance signs; kilometres per hour (km/h) will replace miles per hour on speed limit signs; and metres (m) will replace yards and feet on advisory signs.

"Ontario drivers will soon discover that actual speed limits haven't changed; that distances between towns and cities are the same; that driving times haven't changed. Just the method of measurement will change," Snow pointed out.

Snow cited some examples to demonstrate the differences between miles and kilometres and miles per hour and kilometres per hour.

"We know that 1.6 kilometres equals a mile. So, using this as a conversion factor, you simply move the decimal point one place to the right, and you see that 16 km equals 10 miles.

"Speed limits will be based on units of 10 km/h and motorists will find the new metric speed limits easy to recognize because of the striking difference in numbers between mph and km/h."

For example: 40 km/h replaces 25 mph; 50 km/h replaces 30 mph; 80 km/h replaces 50 mph; 100 km/h replaces 60 mph.

Snow explained that metric conversion is part of the national plan developed by all provinces -- except Manitoba -- which opted out -- in conjunction with the Federal Metric Commission.

"Adoption of the metric system brings Ontario in line with all major countries outside of North America," he said.

Snow noted that motorists should have few problems adjusting to metric signing.

"Most European countries have used metric for many years and countries like Australia and New Zealand have changed to the metric system in recent years with few problems for motorists."

A second phase of metric conversion of Ontario highways should begin in April, 1978, Snow added. All commercial vehicle permits, vehicle weights and dimensions, and weight restrictions are expected to be changed to metric measurement at that time.