



Traffic Control Device: **Work Zone**

Date of Revision: **March 15, 2002**

Division:

Subject: **Fundamental Principles**

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Purpose

Construction and maintenance work zones often present the motorist with unexpected or unusual situations. Consequently, special care must be taken when applying traffic management techniques to these areas. The following principles and procedures contribute to the safety of motorists and workers in construction and maintenance work zones.

Policy

All employees, contractors and utilities doing work on, or adjacent to, highways are required to follow this set of Fundamental Principles when establishing Work Zone Traffic Management Plans.

Standard

Traffic Safety

Traffic safety in work zones must be an integral and high priority element of every project from planning through to completion of the work. The safety of motorists, pedestrians, and workers must be kept in mind at all times.

The safety principles governing the design of permanent roadways should also govern the design of construction and maintenance sites. **The objective should be to route traffic through the work zone using geometry and traffic control devices comparable to those used in normal highway situations.**

A Traffic Management Plan (TMP), in sufficient detail to reflect the complexity of the work project, must be prepared, understood by all responsible parties, and put into operation before the site is occupied.

Construction equipment or vehicles must not be parked so as to obscure or in any way block motorists' view of traffic control devices. Vehicles may only be parked on the roadway if they are being used in the performance of the work.

RECOMMENDED: _____
Director, Traffic Engineering

APPROVED: _____
Executive Director
Highway Engineering

The travelled way must be kept free of foreign objects such as spilled earth, rock, timber, and other items that may fall from construction vehicles. Materials spilled near or dropped along or across any public travelled roadway must be removed immediately.

Traffic must be channelized with pavement markings, traffic cones, flexible posts, breakaway posts, and other lightweight devices that yield when struck.

To accommodate errant vehicles or emergencies, construction equipment, material and debris must be stored so as to provide an unobstructed roadside recovery area, as wide as practicable.

Traffic Movement

To minimize the disruption of service, traffic movement through work zones should be inhibited as little as possible.

Reduced speed zoning should be avoided as much as possible and must be verified by a traffic engineering analysis.

Abrupt or frequent changes in geometry such as lane narrowing, dropped lanes or transitions that require rapid maneuvers should be avoided. Except as specified in the TMP, the width and number of lanes available to traffic must not be reduced.

Construction time should be minimized to reduce motorist exposure to potential hazards.

Motorist Guidance

Motorists should be guided in a clear and understandable manner while approaching and traversing construction and maintenance work zones.

Adequate warning, delineation and channelization through the use of appropriate traffic control devices must be provided to assure the motorist of positive guidance throughout the work zone. The traffic control devices must be effective under varying conditions of light and weather to ensure traffic guidance is maintained at all times.

For both long and short duration construction and maintenance projects, inappropriate traffic control devices must be covered or removed to avoid misleading the motorist. On projects of less than several days duration, existing pavement markings may be left in place, but only if the intended vehicle paths can be properly delineated.

Flagging procedures, when used, provide positive guidance to the motorist when travelling through the work zone. The complexity of the work being performed and the TMP will dictate the use of flagpersons.

Operations

Work zones must be regularly monitored under varying conditions of traffic volume, light, and weather to ensure that traffic management measures are operating effectively and that all traffic control devices are clearly visible, clean, and in good repair.

Work zone accident records must be maintained and periodically analyzed to help identify conflicts and to guide officials in improving operations.

During periods of inactivity, including nights, weekends, and holidays, traffic control devices not required for traffic management must be covered or removed. All traffic control devices must be removed when no longer applicable.