

# NORTHWEST TERRITORIES



Northwest  
Territories Transportation



**WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD**  
Northwest Territories and Nunavut

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## **Introduction**

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Safety within a work zone on a highway is maintained through the actions of a properly trained flagperson. The safety of all other workers and the travelling public, while passing through the construction area, depends on the efficient actions of flagpersons. This handbook will help you carry out these important duties. Study it carefully to learn proper flagging procedures, and keep it handy for quick reference.

Training in proper flagging procedures, and an orientation of the construction activity is essential prior to any flagging operation. This requirement is a responsibility of the site supervisor, and adequate time must be taken to ensure a flagperson has received this training and is able to carry out this important task in a responsible and effective manner.

## Requirements for Flagging Operations

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Flagpersons are required in the following situations (*section 470 NWT General Safety Regulations*):

1. When traffic is required to pass construction vehicles or equipment that is blocking all or part of a roadway.
2. When one-way traffic through a construction area is required where traffic volumes are heavy or approach speeds are high and a traffic signal system is not in use.
3. Where construction work on a highway projects or abuts into an intersection and may interfere with regular traffic movements.
4. Where the view of road construction workers or equipment is reduced due to a hill or sharp curve and on-coming traffic would not otherwise have adequate warning.
5. In any situation where adequate protection for workers, working equipment and traffic is not provided for by other traffic control devices.

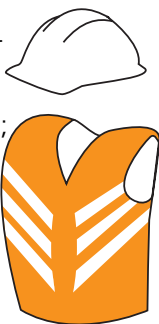
## Equipment

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### Personal

In addition to being neatly dressed, a flagperson must be dressed for safety. To be easily visible to traffic, you must wear the following items when flagging, even when you are serving as a replacement for a short period. Make sure your vest and hard hat can be worn on top of your other clothing so it is visible to on-coming traffic.

- A bright orange vest over your shirt or jacket that has reflective strips front and back;
- A white, yellow or orange protective hard hat;
- Protective footwear like steel-toed boots, as specified by the construction area guidelines in your worksite;
- For cold days, warm clothing (coveralls etc.). Remember, it is a long day without much moving around to help keep you warm;
- Full length pants or coveralls – no shorts;
- For wet weather, highly visible rainwear;
- Protective clothing, sunscreen, and repellent for insects, as necessary.



## Signage

You shall be equipped with the standard combination "STOP/SLOW" pole type paddle, or hand paddle, signs as described below.

Size: Minimum 16 inches x 16 inches octagon.

Colour: STOP sign – white letters and border, red background, fully reflectorized.



Colour: SLOW sign – black letters and background area, reflectorized orange or yellow.

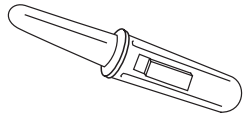


Night time flagging requires proper illumination of flagperson and equipment. In emergencies where the standard sign is not available, a red flag, lanterns or flashlight equipped with a red wand must be used by flagpersons.

## Communications

In order to communicate properly with the other workers in the construction zone, or another flagperson, you will be supplied with the following equipment:

- Two-way Radio for communicating with the other flagperson and/or pilot vehicle;
- Portable Air Horn for warning other construction workers in an emergency;
- Flashlight with red wand for night conditions.



## Code of Conduct

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Flagging is an important responsibility and must be carried out with authority and dignity. Courtesy and a professional attitude are vital in gaining the respect of the travelling public. The image you project can affect the public's attitude toward the whole project and your organization.

The following guidelines will make you a more effective flagperson and make your job site safer for yourself, your co-workers, and the travelling public.

1. Wear proper protective clothing that is clean and neat in appearance.
2. Do not leave your position to talk with the work crew. Arrange with your supervisor for lunch breaks, washroom and coffee breaks.
3. Always be visible to oncoming traffic. Do not sit in a vehicle and then jump out as the vehicle approaches. Do not read, listen to CD players or walkman tape players.
4. Be friendly and polite to the public, but do not engage in small talk. Do not leave your position to visit with motorists or pedestrians.



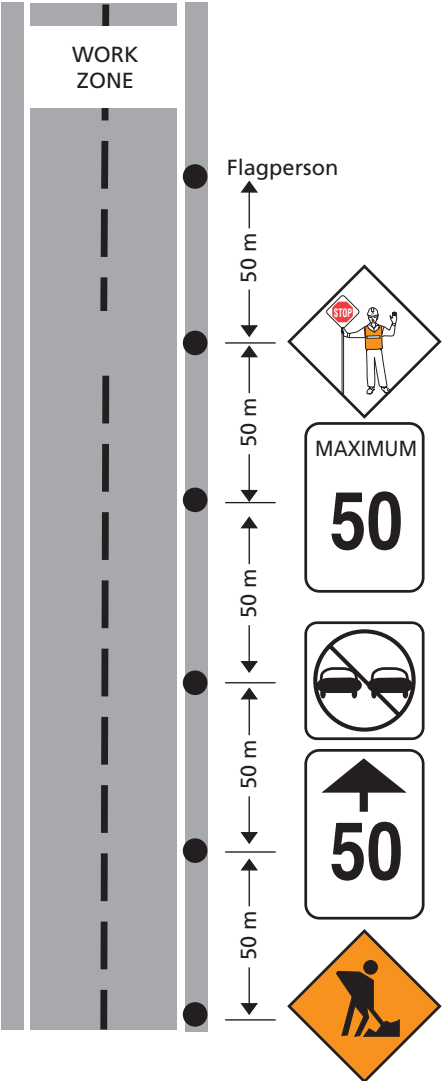
5. Never argue with the occupants of a vehicle. Be courteous, but be brief and factual in your conversation with them.
6. If a driver refuses to obey instructions, report the following information to your supervisor as soon as possible without deserting your post.
  - Radio to advise the other flagperson immediately;
  - Sound your air horn to warn other workers if required;
  - Record the general description of the vehicle and driver;
  - Record the vehicle licence number;
  - Record the circumstances involved in the incident including date and time.

## Work Schedule

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Before starting work, make sure that you know:

- The type of construction you will be involved with – paving, installing pipe, grading, cut and fill, etc.;
- The type of equipment to be used, such as scrapers, trucks, compactors and graders;
- How the equipment will be operating, such as crossing the road, along the shoulder, in culverts or on a bridge;
- Whether you will have to protect workers setting up components of the traffic control system such as signs, delineators, cones and barriers;
- Any special conditions of the contract governing road use (for instance, many contracts forbid work during urban rush hours);
- How public traffic will flow – for example, along a two-lane highway, around curves or hills, by detour or on a road narrowed to a single lane and requiring two traffic control persons to ensure that vehicles do not move in opposing directions at the same time. In some cases, where the two cannot see one another, a third flagperson is necessary to keep both in view and relay instructions.



What should I check each day?

- Make sure that the STOP-SLOW sign is clean, undamaged and meets height and size requirements.
- Place the TRAFFIC CONTROL PERSON AHEAD sign at an appropriate distance to afford motorists adequate warning.
- Remove or cover all traffic control signs at quitting time or when traffic control is temporarily suspended.
- Arrange with the supervisor for meal, coffee and washroom breaks.

## Location in Work Zone

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Following these directions carefully will help keep you safe during flagging and will assist you in skillfully controlling traffic through the work area.

1. Be alert at all times. Don't be distracted by the work operation.
2. Be on your feet facing oncoming traffic.
3. Stand where you will be highly visible at all times but do not stand in the path of an approaching vehicle.

**NOTE:** Factors such as visibility, speed, and volume of traffic, condition of the road, and the work being done, should be considered in determining your proper location. Generally, flagperson stations should be located about 200 – 300 feet in advance of the work site.

### Stopping a Vehicle

Do not stand in shadows or near parked vehicles or equipment which might hide you from approaching drivers.

4. Park your personal vehicle outside the signing and work area, well off the roadway.

5. Stand alone. Do not mingle with the work crew, the travelling public, or other people.
6. When two flagpersons are working together (one on either end of the work area), they should always be able to see each other or use two-way radios for proper communication.

**Note:** In such cases, **one flagperson is always in charge**; the other flagperson coordinates his or her activities accordingly.

## Flagging to Stop Traffic

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1. Hold the stop sign erect and away from your body. Never wave the sign.
2. Look directly at the approaching driver.
3. Raise your free arm with the palm of your hand exposed to the driver.



4. Bring the vehicle to a full stop.
5. After the first vehicle has stopped, move to a spot (near the centreline of the roadway) where you can be seen by other approaching vehicles.
6. Stop all remaining cars. (Steps 1 through 4)

### **Caution:**

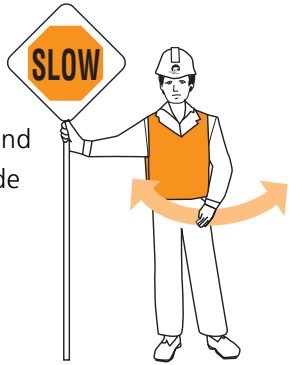
**Never turn your back on traffic.**

7. Remain in this position with the "STOP" sign facing traffic until you can permit travel through the work area.

## Flagging to Release Traffic

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1. Return to your position on the shoulder in front of the stopped traffic and turn the "SLOW" side of the sign to face the vehicles.
2. With your free arm, signal the drivers to proceed.



**Never wave the sign!**



## Flagging to Slow Traffic

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1. First use the STOP paddle to bring the traffic to a complete stop.
2. Approach the driver side of the vehicle and inform the driver of the conditions within the construction zone and the importance of maintaining a slow speed through the work zone.
3. Use a SLOW paddle to indicate to the driver to proceed.



## **Flagging at Haul Road Intersections**

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Generally, traffic control procedures are the same for haul road intersections as for other work areas. (See flagging procedures for stopping, releasing and slowing traffic.)

When trucks are making a right turn onto the highway, only one flagperson is required.

When trucks have the right-of-way and are crossing the highway or making a left turn, two flagpersons are required to control traffic, one from each direction.

## Flagging for Pilot Car Operation

Work is often performed over a long section of highway. When the flagperson at the opposite end is not visible to you, a pilot car may be used to escort vehicles through the work area. Use the following directions when a pilot car is being used.

1. Stop vehicles in the approved manner.  
(See steps, Flagging to Stop Traffic.)
2. Detain all vehicles until the pilot car arrives from the opposite direction.

**Note:** Be alert to prevent vehicles from pulling out of line to try and pass other waiting vehicles.

3. After the pilot car arrives and has pulled into position at the head of your column of vehicles, step back onto the shoulder.
4. With the "SLOW" sign facing traffic, motion the pilot car driver and others to proceed.

## **Flagging to Stop Traffic at Night**

Because visibility is reduced at night, it is important that you use utmost care when guiding traffic through the construction area, and that you protect yourself from injury by:

1. Standing in a safe position on the shoulder facing traffic.
2. Wave flashlight with red wand attached, back and forth.
3. After the first vehicle has stopped, move to a position near the centreline so that your signal may be seen by drivers approaching from the rear.

### **Flagging to release traffic at night.**

1. Follow the procedure for daytime flagging. Using the flashlight, motion the drivers to proceed.

## **The Do's and Don't of Flagging**

Do stay alert at all times.

Do use hand signals that are clear and deliberate, when directing traffic.

Do stand on the shoulder of the road out of the path of oncoming traffic.

Do have a good description of the day's work to answer motorists' questions.

Do treat motorists courteously.

Do use proper equipment.

Do wear proper clothing.

Do stand alone.

Do be prepared for changing weather by bringing a rain coat, sweater, or warm coat.

Do consult your Flagperson's hand book or your supervisor, if you have questions about your flagging duties.

Do treat all vehicles as if they are not going to stop, until they have come to a complete stop.

Don't stand in an open lane.

Don't make unnecessary conversation with workers, pedestrians, or motorists.

Don't give flagging directions against a traffic signal.

Don't stand in the shade, over the crest of a hill, or around a sharp curve.

Don't leave your station until properly relieved.

Don't stand near equipment.

Don't stand with a group of people.

Don't daydream.

Don't read while on duty.

Don't bring radios, CD players or walkmans.

Don't forget to bring insect repellent and sunscreen.

## Questions and Answers

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1. Training for a flagperson is the responsibility of:
  - a) Supervisor
  - b) Flagperson
  - c) Company
  - d) All of the above
  
2. A late vehicle arrives after the pilot vehicle has left with a group of vehicles. The flagperson should:
  - a) Stop the vehicle and wait until the pilot vehicle returns
  - b) Allow the vehicle to catch up to the group of vehicles
  - c) Have the vehicle activate the emergency flashers and slowly proceed through the construction zone
  - d) Radio ahead to the pilot vehicle to return and allow this vehicle to join the group
  
3. A bright coloured parka can be worn over the safety vest in the following conditions:
  - a) Colder than  $-20^{\circ}\text{C}$
  - b) Colder than  $-5^{\circ}\text{C}$
  - c) Only if colder than  $-30^{\circ}\text{C}$  with a strong wind
  - d) Never

4. When a driver will not comply with a flagperson's instructions, you should:
  - a) Record the vehicle and driver details and inform your supervisor
  - b) Warn the other flagperson of the situation immediately
  - c) Warn the other workers in the construction zone if required
  - d) All of the above
  
5. At the end of the day when the work zone is not active, it is most important to:
  - a) Take off your safety vest
  - b) Clean your stop/slow paddle signs for the next day
  - c) Arrange your next day's lunch breaks
  - d) Remove or cover all traffic control signs related to the work zone

Answers: 1d, 2a, 3d, 4d, 5d.



## Notes

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Vehicle Description .....

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Licence Plate Number .....

Date and Time of incident .....

Description of incident .....

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Vehicle Description .....

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Licence Plate Number .....

Date and Time of incident .....

Description of incident .....

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Vehicle Description .....

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Remember that you play a vital part in keeping the public and your co-workers safe. If you are unsure of any flagging procedure, ask your supervisor for further explanation.

**Lives, including yours,  
could depend on it!**