Retro Requirements
Management Assessment Plan
How to keep your signs in good condition and yourselves out of court

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A wise man once said......

“We can’t do everything at once, but we can do something at once“.
Calvin Coolidge

Safe Sign Supports
SAFE SIGN SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS – JANUARY 37, 2033
"Post mounted sign supports shall be crashworthy (breakaway/yielding) or shielded with a longitudinal barrier or crash cushion if within the clear zone on roads with a 50 mph or greater speed limit.“  MUTCD SECTION 2A-19
If you are using square tubing such as Unistrut Telspar Sign Posts you are in compliance. When using channel posts you must have a breakaway joint or lap splice when signs are placed on roads with a 50 mph or greater speed limit. Another factor to consider is the small cost of a lap splice and why you chose not to use it on roads with a lesser speed limit.

Safe Sign Supports  cont’d
If signs are placed on existing supports they shall meet other placement criteria contained in the manual. In short – anytime a sign installation is worked on it must be brought into compliance and meet current standards. It will likely be necessary to relocate the posting location based on posted speed and advisory speed. Advisory speed signs shall supplement curve signs where the advisory speed is less than the legal speed limit. A placement guide can be found on PAGE 21 of the TRAFFIC SIGN HANDBOOK. These are minimum distances. Field conditions may require modification or changes.
Document and record the reason for the deviation and the method used to determine your decision.

Set Standards and Parameters
Set standards and policies and work within them. Establish practices and policies based on sound, accepted engineering standards. Get outside opinions, review policies with your legal council. Make sure you are on ground he/she is comfortable with. In the event of an incident they will likely be the one to represent you.
Again – document any deviation from standards and the reason for it.
Set Standards and Parameters

- Example – a curve posting sign on a 55 mph roadway that requires a 35 mph advisory sign by guidelines would normally be posted at a minimum of 400 feet in advance of the curve. However in this instance that location is in the middle of a drive way and homeowners have shade trees that over hang the clear zone so the posting distance would need to be reduced to 320’ or extended out to 625’ in advance of the curve….what do you do?

Set Standards and Parameters cont’d

Another frequent area of litigation the lawyers have a lot of fun with are “Loose Gravel” signs. For months after the tar and chip treatment operations the lawyers will blame any incident on loose gravel. This is particularly true of motor cycle crashes.

Establish a policy on posting loose gravel signs. How, when and where. How to determine when they are no longer needed and when to remove them. Apply a consistent program and document your actions.

Sign Management

A good sign management system need not be complicated or even computer based as long as key information is kept.

EXAMPLE:

DATE: January 14, 2012
LOCATION: – 5”/8”(2000 feet WEST OF MAIN STREET) RIGHT SIDE
SIGN TYPE: – W3R (RUBBER PATCH) x W3s (35 MPH ADVISORY SPEED)
SIGN SIZE: – 30” x 30”
SIGN MATERIAL: – TYPE II HDX
POST MATERIAL: – UNSTRUCT X 4” X 4” X 8’ POST
HARDWARE USED: – X = (4) X 4” THIEF RESISTANT BOLTS
REASON INSTALLED OR REPLACED: – TRAFFIC ACCIDENT DAMAGE
REPORTED BY: – STATE POLICE
PERSON(S) PERFORMING WORK: – FRED JONES, TOM SMITH

This information can be used to track material usage, show maintenance records by location and keep track of the age of your inventory for compliance with reflectivity requirements. It can also provide support in the event of litigation involving traffic control devices.

What Do You Do????

It is understood that under real world conditions “one size” does not fit all. Conflicts with road side appurtenances will require the adjusting of posting locations. Therefore the established policy is in general, to extend posting distances and note the reasons why.

In the event that an extended posting is not possible other measures can be taken to compensate, such as increased sign sizes.

Documentation, Data Retention and Sign Management

One of the single most important factors in a good traffic control program is documentation and data retention. Traffic control devises that you work on tomorrow may be called into question 25 years from now in the event of a highway incident.

Personnel changes, failing memories, retirements and just employees moving on in life can present huge challenges when you are faced with making an accounting for your actions in a court case.

SIGN RECORD FORM

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**SIGN MANAGEMENT**

**EVALUATION**
Periodic evaluation and inspections should be performed and documented.

**Day Time Inspection**
Day time inspection should be conducted twice a year in early spring. Inspect for damage from weather or snow plows. In mid-summer, check signs again to make sure that vegetation has not blocked the line of sight.

**Sign Condition**
Look for missing or damaged vandalized and scratched signs or anything that looks out of place.

**SIGN MANAGEMENT cont’d**

**Post Condition**
Look for missing bolts or accident damage. Look to see if the post is leaning or twisted. Make sure that break away devices are in good condition. Look for soil erosion around the base that could leave the breakaway device more than 4 inches above the ground.

**Obstructions**
Anything blocking the view of the sign including other sign assemblies, if so take measures to mitigate the problem.

**Night Time Inspections**
Should be performed at least annually. They are one of the recognized management techniques for reflectivity but they also help identify road features and problems that may not be readily apparent during day light hours.

**High -Visibility Safety Apparel**

“All workers within the row who are exposed to traffic or to work vehicles and construction equipment “shall” wear ANSI/ISEA 107-2010 Class 2 or Class 3 high visibility safety apparel.”

“A person selected by the employer to be responsible for worker safety shall make the selection of the appropriate class of garments”

**EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 21, 2011**

Be sure to purchase products that are marked as conforming to standards.

**SIGN MANAGEMENT cont’d**

Setting standards and policies and following them makes it difficult for anyone to allege negligence or lack of due diligence in the event of claim as a result of an automobile collision.

**REPUTABLE PRODUCTS**
Always buy quality Traffic Control Products from a known and reputable source. The mass mailed “sale” flyer may sound good but the quality of the materials may not be up to standard and the sellers may not be around 2 years from now!
"LIFE ISN'T LIKE A BOX OF CHOCOLATES. IT'S MORE LIKE A JAR OF JALAPENOS. WHAT YOU DO TODAY MIGHT BURN YOUR BUTT TOMORROW."

Larry the Cable Guy

A Pool Speed Limit...... For Swimmers or Drivers?

Does this make sense?

A Green one??

Does this make sense??

Does this make sense???
Little Brother?

Why not use your old 350 Chevy Engine as a base for the mail box!

Does this make sense??????

Is that a yield sign back there?

We may never know.....

“As much as we’d like to......”
I wonder why those cones are there...

What can we do different here?

What have we got here?

Do you see the problem now?

MUTCD Placement Guide
Remind me not to run over my own kids........

Resources in part

www.retroreflectivity.net

www.FHWA.dot.gov/retro

Fhwasa09025.pdf