Flagger Safety

Spring and summer are the peak times of the year for highway and outdoor construction activities. Many of these projects require construction crews to work in places where moving traffic is present. Employees working in high traffic areas need to be protected. Barricades and warning signs provide employee protection but additional safety measures are required if employees are exposed to motor vehicle traffic.

Flaggers are required to be on all construction sites when required as part of a Traffic Control Plan.

How do we protect flaggers and construction workers on these sites?

Traffic Control Devices: This includes signals and message boards to direct traffic away from the work site. Cones, barricades and barrels can also be used to demarcate the area of work.

Work Zone Protection: Concrete barriers or crash cushions provide protection between moving traffic and the construction site.

Personal Protective Equipment: High visibility reflective clothing to make employees visible for at least 1000 feet. Reflective hardhats are also recommended to increase the visibility of the flagger directing traffic. Reflective clothing should be ANSI approved and either class II or III depending on the situation. Many types of reflective materials are available so select the best for the conditions of the site.

Class III
Class III garments provide the highest level of visibility to workers in high-risk environments that involve high task loads, a wide range of weather conditions and traffic exceeding 50 mph. Class III garments, provide coverage to the arms and/or legs as well as the torso, and can include pants, jackets, coveralls or rain wear. These garments are typically used for all roadway construction personnel and vehicle operators, utility workers, survey crews, emergency responders, railway workers and accident site investigators.

Class II
Class II garments are for users who need greater visibility in poor weather conditions and whose activities occur near roadways where traffic speeds exceed 25 mph. This class of garment is suitable for railway workers, school crossing guards, parking and toll gate personnel, airport ground crews and law enforcement personnel directing traffic.

Communication Devices: Two-way radios can be used to assist in directing traffic and provide a means of communication between flaggers and the construction crew.

Lighting: Flagger stations must be illuminated based on work being done. Outdoor lights can be used to provide at least 10-20 foot-candles of light based on work requirements and the Traffic Control Plan.

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What are the worksite conditions that flaggers need to be trained on?

Training: Flaggers need to be trained by a competent individual who can effectively teach the fundamental principles of flagging traffic.

Training, instruction, and signaling directions used by flaggers should conform to the applicable Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. Training must also take into account the particular worksite conditions and include the following:

- ✓ flagger equipment which must be used
- ✓ the layout of the work zone and flagging station
- ✓ methods to signal traffic to stop, proceed or slow down
- ✓ methods of one-way control
- ✓ trainee demonstration of proper flagging methods
- ✓ how to respond to emergency vehicles traveling through the work zone
- ✓ how to handle emergency situations
- ✓ methods of dealing with hostile drivers
- ✓ Single and multiple flagger situations
- ✓ personal protective equipment
- ✓ Work zone and flagging area set up
- ✓ Traffic Control Plans

What are the hazards of flagging?

Environment: Like most construction sites, employees are subject to the weather. The summer months bring warm weather and the risk of heat stress. Winter rain and snow brings the risk of cold stress and hypothermia.

Traffic: Is the biggest hazard a flagger is exposed to. Inattentive motorists and drunk drivers pose risks to flaggers even if work areas are properly demarcated and barricaded.

Time of Day: Work procedures need to be adjusted when shifting from daytime to nighttime operations. Additional lighting and demarcation is needed to increase flagger visibility when working at night.

Heavy Equipment: Outdoor construction sites and highway projects usually have heavy equipment operating in close proximity to pedestrian and vehicle traffic. Adequate communication is needed between flaggers and crew members to assure safe distance is maintained between equipment, traffic and people.

Flagger Safety

This form documents that the training specified above was presented to the listed participants. By signing below, each participant acknowledges receiving this training.

Organization:_____

Trainer:_____ Trainer's Signature:_____

Class Participants:

Name:_____ Signature:_____ Date:_____

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Remember to load your completed trainings into the Training Track application of the Risk Management Center.