WORK ZONE
TRAFFIC CONTROL
AND FLAGGER SAFETY
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Flagger Safety

- The Flagger. No job is more important to protect workers in the roadway than a highly motivated, professional, and trained flagger.
- For without their skills, training, and expertise, traffic flow through construction zones would be a disaster.
Flagger Safety

• The *Manual of Traffic Controls for Construction and Maintenance Work Zones* is the basic standard that provides guidance for flagger conduct, skill, and the science they use.

• Some states may have varying guidelines and regulations, but most state programs are based upon this manual and regulation.
Flagger Safety

• This course provides you with basic guidelines and information, so it’s important for you to understand and closely follow your company’s specific policies and procedures.
Flagger Safety

- If you have a question about your job assignment, be sure to ask your supervisor, as this job is extremely important and you can’t take chances with not fully understanding your job assignment.
Flagger Safety

• As a flagger, you must remember that your job is the most important one on the crew as the lives of all individuals in the work space depend upon you and your decisions.
Flagger Safety

- As a flagger, you must look and act as a professional. Dressing in a sloppy manner and not looking the part of a professional only serves to reduce your authority and effectiveness as you try to control traffic.
Flagger Safety

- Dress the part.
- Wear only clean and neat clothing along with fresh reflectorized and highly visible garments required for street wear.
- Work boots are a must due to the walking surface on a construction or maintenance site.
Equipment

• The clothing worn must be approved and according to your state’s standards.
• Flagger garments must meet Class 2 American standards for high visibility safety apparel.
• Generally, your vest, shirt, or jacket and pants should be orange, yellow, strong yellow-green, or a fluorescent version of these colors.
• At night and in low visibility situations, the vest, shirt, or jacket should be reflective.
• Reflectorized pants must be worn at night and in low visibility situations.
• Reflective clothing must be visible at a minimum distance of 1,000 feet and must identify the wearer as a person through the full range of body motions.
Equipment

• Generally, a hard hat with reflective material attached is required as well.
• Again, be sure to maintain a neat, professional appearance.
Equipment

- Your basic tools are a standard stop/slow paddle with a minimum of 18” by 18” octagon.
- The staff of the stop/slow paddle should be a minimum of 5 feet to the bottom of the sign, but a 7 foot staff is recommended.
- It’s a good practice to use a paddle with a staff to help prevent fatigue as well. The paddle should be reflectorized in standard colors.
Equipment

• When two flaggers are used on one job, two way radios should be used to coordinate efforts.
• Floodlights illuminating the flagger and a flashlight with wand are required for nighttime operations.
Flagging Position

• Flaggers must remain alert and standing at all times. No lawn chairs or straddling barricades.
• However, a small plastic foot rest can go a long way to reducing fatigue and back pain.
Flagging Position

- Always face oncoming traffic and never turn your back to oncoming traffic or stand in the path of moving traffic.
- A flagger’s normal station is on the shoulder of the road, not in the line of traffic.
Flagging Position

- If you drive to the work site, park your vehicle well off the road away from your station.
Flagging Position

- Stand alone; do not mingle with the work crew or the public.
- Make sure you’re visible to oncoming traffic, not standing where the sun is impeding visibility or in a shadow.
Flagging Position

- Stand in a location that allows approaching traffic adequate time to respond.
- Vehicle drivers must be able to recognize you as a flagger for at least the minimum site distance.
- As an example, if the posted speed limit is 30 miles per hour, minimum site distance is approximately 550 feet.
Flagging Situations

- Prior to the start of flagging operations, all signage must be in place.
- A good visibility location is one where the sight distance is sufficient and the flagger is clearly visible to approaching vehicles.
Flagging Situations

• When the temporary traffic control zone covers a long segment of highway, additional flagger signs may be needed.

• In high speed areas, the maximum distance from the last sign to a point where the driver detects the flagger must not exceed one mile.
Flagging Situations

- When more than one flagger is being used, all communications procedures should be clear before any flagging begins.
- If there is a major intersection within the closed area, an additional flagger may be needed to control traffic entering the temporary traffic control zone from the intersection.
Flagging Situations

• Usually the flagger may not override an in-place regulatory traffic control device, such as a stop sign or traffic lights control system.
• Flaggers must also coordinate their operations with the signal systems.
Single Flagger

- In general, there are two different applications requiring a single flagger situation.
- On a low volume road with good visibility, a single flagger may be used to control one direction of traffic, while the other direction flows freely.
Single Flagger

- In this situation, the flagger is positioned in the closed lane at the beginning of the taper.
- The flagger stops the traffic approaching in the closed lane.
- When the open lane is clear, the flagger allows traffic to proceed.
- Two flaggers may be required during low sight distance situations and during high peak traffic periods, or if there is a major intersection near the activity area.
Single Flagger

• A single flagger may also be used to stop traffic in a lane while that lane is closed.
• An example would be a truck depositing material off the edge of the roadway.
• In this situation, the flagger would stop the traffic in this lane while the other lane flows freely.
Single Flagger

- When the lane is open again, the flagger allows the traffic to proceed in its normal lane.
- After stopped traffic is allowed to proceed, the flagger should turn the flagger paddle parallel to traffic so that no message is displayed to either direction of traffic.
Two Flaggers

• When two flaggers are required, lines of communications must be established prior to the start of flagging operations.
• This is a good time to conduct a tailgate meeting to ensure everyone is on the same page.
Two Flaggers

- The two flaggers must be able to see each other or have two way radios or other methods designated for clear communications.
- One flagger should be assigned as the lead flagger and coordinate all activities.
Two Flaggers

- When two flaggers are used and two way radios are unavailable, the flag transfer method may be used.
- This method is: providing the last vehicle proceeding into the one lane section with a flag or other object and is instructed to deliver it to the other flagger at the other end.
- The opposite flagger then knows that it is safe to allow traffic to move in the other direction.
Two Flaggers

- Two flaggers may also be used in conjunction with a pilot vehicle.
- In this situation, the flagger stops the traffic until the pilot vehicle arrives and has pulled into position to lead the traffic through or around the activity area.
- The flagger shall then stop all traffic until the pilot vehicle has returned for the next trip.
Two Flaggers

- An advance flagger may be used where there is limited sight distance to the activity area or where long lines of traffic form.
Two Flaggers

• In a situation such as limited sight distance, the advance flagger should stop each vehicle and inform the driver of the situation ahead.

• Where there are long lines of stopped traffic waiting to proceed, the advance flagger should move down the line and inform each driver of the reason for the delay and the approximate length of the delay.
Flagging Procedures

• To stop traffic, stand in a safe location on the shoulder of the road, away from moving traffic.
• Face traffic and extend the Stop paddle in a stationary position with your arm extended horizontally away from your body.
• Your free arm should be raised with your palm toward approaching traffic.
• Look directly at the approaching driver. Make sure that you make direct eye contact with the driver.
Flagging Procedures

- Remain on the shoulder of the road after the first vehicle has stopped.
- Always make certain that the flagger and the paddle are visible to the drivers of all stopped vehicles.
Flagging Procedures

• The flagger should never stand in the traffic lane unless, in the flagger’s opinion, the drivers of the stopped vehicles are unaware of the flagger’s presence.

• If it’s necessary for the flagger to stand in the traffic lane, the flagger may only stand near the center line and never cross it.
Flagging Procedures

• When the flagger is satisfied that the drivers of all stopped vehicles are aware of his or her presence, the flagger should return to the shoulder of the road.
Flagging Procedures

- Any time the flagger is required to take a position near the center line of the traffic lane, the flagger should remain aware of the traffic traveling in the opposite direction.
Flagging Procedures

• To direct stopped traffic to proceed, remain at your station on the shoulder. If you’re in the stopped traffic lane, return to the shoulder.
• Face traffic and turn the Slow paddle to face traffic. Hold the Slow paddle in a stationary position with your arm extended horizontally away from your body.
• Do not wave the paddle around as it creates a confusing message.
Flagging Procedures

• To alert or slow traffic, stand on the shoulder of the road and face traffic with the Slow sign paddle held in a stationary position with your arm extended horizontally away from your body.

• You may motion up and down with the free hand, palm down, indicating that the vehicle should slow down.

• Never stand in the path of oncoming traffic.
Flagging Procedures

- At night, flagger stations should be well illuminated.
- The flagger shall wear reflective pants, and vest, shirt, or jacket, or other approved garment such as a jumpsuit.
- Reflective channelizing devices should also be used. In an emergency situation, a minimum size 24 inch by 24 inch red flag may be used instead of a paddle, until a paddle is available.
- However, as soon as a paddle is available, it should be used.
Proper Conduct

- Never abandon your post for any reason until the work is finished or a replacement arrives.
- Do not engage in extended conversations with motorists or lean on vehicles. Be polite, but brief.
- Never argue with or confront motorists. Be courteous. You never know how the driver or passenger will react.
Proper Conduct

• If a driver refuses to obey instructions, record a description of the car, the driver, license plate, and the circumstances.
• Report this information to your supervisor as soon as possible.
Proper Conduct

• Remove or cover all signs indicating the presence of a flagger, when a flagger is not actually flagging. This includes lunch and breaks.

• Be alert for emergency vehicles. They have priority rights. Allow them to pass as quickly as possible.
Summary

• Flagging is a very important job, but it requires training, following the rules and of course, watching out for motorists every minute of the time.
• Your best bet is to follow your company’s policies and procedures and to perform your job in a professional manner and watch out for motorists who choose not to follow the rules of the road.