Introduction

Work Zone Traffic Control

The purpose of work zone traffic control is to provide a safe work area for workers within the roadway, while facilitating the safe and orderly flow of all road users (motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians including persons with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990) through the work zone.

This manual is intended to provide New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) employees, utility companies, municipalities, and contractors who are involved with the design, set-up and maintenance of highway work zones, or anyone working within the state right-of-way, with the basic principles and elements constituting a safe work zone. The information presented in this manual is based on the requirements set forth in the National Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices and the NYS Supplement, review of work zone manuals from a selection of state and federal agencies, and discussions with members of the NYSDOT Work Zone Traffic Control Committee.

This manual includes basic information on work zone traffic control, including a description of traffic control devices, illustrations of acceptable, commonly used devices, and the proper flagger attire and methods. Color diagrams (typical applications) depicting typical traffic control set-ups for two-lane and multilane highways are intended to show the minimum requirements for a safe work zone set-up. Traffic control or protection can be enhanced for situations that may require additional measures such as high traffic or pedestrian volume, high speeds, restricted sight distance, poor or confusing alignment.

This is a “living document” that will evolve as recommendations are received from the Regions. Work zone traffic control diagrams will be added, and deleted, as necessary, and all will be posted on the NYSDOT internet site (Work Zone Traffic Control Manual).

Please address any questions, comments, and/or recommendations regarding this manual to Charles Riedel 518.457.2185 or MD Haque 518.457.7784. Office of Traffic Safety & Mobility, NYSDOT.
Fundamental Principles

The principles listed below provide a guiding philosophy of good temporary traffic control and enhance the safety of motorists, pedestrians and workers within and near temporary traffic control zones.

- Make traffic safety and temporary traffic control an integral and high-priority element of every project from planning through design, construction, and maintenance.
- Inhibit traffic movement as little as possible.
- Provide clear and positive guidance to drivers and pedestrians as they approach and travel through the temporary traffic control zone.
- Inspect traffic control elements routinely and modify when necessary.
- Train all persons that select, place and maintain temporary traffic control devices.
- Establish proper legislative authority to implement and enforce needed traffic regulations, speed zoning, parking controls, and incident management.
- Keep the public well informed.
- If there is a side road intersection/driveway or ramp within the work area, additional traffic control, such as flaggers and appropriate signs, may be needed on the side road/driveway approaches or ramps.

The Work Zone

The work zone is the distance between the first advance warning sign and the point beyond the work area where traffic is no longer affected.

- Advance warning area tells traffic what to expect ahead.
- Transition area moves traffic out of its normal path.
- The Activity area provides space for the work, traffic, and buffer space and/or protective vehicles between the two.
  - Buffer areas separate traffic from workers and provide a recovery area for errant vehicles. **No equipment, vehicles or material shall be placed in this area.**
  - Protective vehicle area provides a temporary barrier vehicle and roll-ahead distance for worker safety. If a vehicle is not being used, then the roll-ahead distance is not necessary. **No equipment, vehicles or material shall be in the roll-ahead distance.**
  - Work area is set aside for workers, equipment and material storage.
- Termination area lets traffic resume normal driving.
Components of a Work Zone Traffic Control Area

- **TERMINATION AREA**: Lets traffic resume normal operations.
- **ACTIVITY AREA**: Is set aside for actual work, workers, equipment, vehicles, material storage, buffer space and barrier vehicle w/ TMIAs.
- **TRANSITION AREA**: Moves traffic out of its normal path.
- **ADVANCE WARNING AREA**: Tells traffic what to expect ahead.

**Buffer Space**: (Lateral) Provides protection for traffic and workers.

**Traffic Space**: Allows traffic to pass through the activity area. 10 Ft. Minimum for Conventional Roadway, 11 Ft. Minimum for Expressway/Freeway.

**Downstream Taper**: 100'/Lane where space is available.

**Work Space**: Is set aside for workers, equipment, and material storage.

**Roll Ahead Distance**: Provides protection for traffic and workers. No workers, equipment or vehicles in this area.

**Buffer Space (Longitudinal)**: Provides protection for traffic and workers. No workers, equipment or vehicles in this area.

**Merging Taper (L)**: Moves traffic out of its normal path.

**Shoulder Taper (L/3)**: Begins closure to traffic.

**NOT TO SCALE**