Work Area Duration

Work duration is a major factor in determining the number and types of devices used in work zone traffic control areas. As a general rule, the longer the operation will last, the more traffic control devices are needed.

**Mobile Work:** Work that moves intermittently or continuously.

*Examples:*
- Placing cones and/or signs for stationary work zones
- Herbicide spraying
- Sweeping operations
- Paint striping operations
- Placing traffic counters

Mobile work zones provide the lowest level of traffic control and safety and should only be used where the work at any specific location will be completed within 15 MINUTES. There may be cases where site specific conditions justify longer duration use of mobile work zones to minimize the exposure of traffic and the workers to each other. In such cases, an exception may be approved by responsible person(s) designated by the region after consideration of relevant factors such as speeds, sight distance, staging of the work, degree of obstruction to traffic, traffic volumes, and the relative severity and duration of exposure to workers and traffic.

**Short Duration:** Work that occupies a location for up to 1 hour.

*Examples:*
- Placing traffic counters
- Re-lamping traffic signals/ streetlights
- Pot hole Repair
- Minor guiderail repair
- Sign Repair

Due to the short work time, simplified traffic control set-ups are allowed to reduce the hazards of traffic exposure to workers. Careful consideration of traffic and roadway conditions must be given to each work zone prior to selecting the most appropriate traffic control set-up. Shoulder work and work on low speed, low volume roadways may only require a single warning sign, cones, and a flagger, while a high speed, high volume road would require a more detailed lane closure utilizing more safety control devices such as a barrier vehicle, signs, channelizing devices and a flashing arrow panel.

**Short-Term Stationary:** Daytime work that occupies a location for more than 1 hour within a single daylight period.

*Examples:*
- Guiderail Repair
- Bridge Inspection/Repair
- Ditch Maintenance
- Concrete Roadway Repair

Short term stationary work areas are typically occupied by materials, equipment and workers, but the work area is cleared at the end of the work day and normal traffic flow restored. Traffic control typically includes signs on portable supports, cones or drums.
forming a taper and separating the work space from traffic and flashing arrow boards or PVMS as needed. Buffer space or Barrier vehicles are required and impact attenuators are required on the barrier vehicles if prevailing speeds are 45 mph or greater. Traffic control is removed at the end of the work day.

**Intermediate-Term Stationary:** Work that occupies a location more than one daylight period up to 3 consecutive days, or night time work lasting more than 1 hour.
Typically, the work area is occupied by excavations, materials, and/or equipment at times when workers are not present. Temporary traffic control requirements for these type operations are found in the 619 series of NYSDOT Standard Sheets.

**Long-Term Stationary:** Work that occupies a location for more than 3 consecutive days. Typically, the work area is occupied by excavations, materials, and/or equipment at times when workers are not present. Temporary traffic control requirements for these type operations are found in Section 619 of the NYSDOT Standard Sheets.

**Night work:** Extra care should be taken when scheduling work at night. Lighting of the work area and/or flagging stations is required. Appropriate devices include retro reflective signs, large channelizing devices, light dimming arrow panels and additional lights on work equipment. Consult your RTE for additional specific nighttime requirements.

**Incident Management Situations:**

- **Examples:**
  - Traffic accident
  - Debris on the highway
  - Initial response to flooding and emergency road and bridge repairs

The immediate response to an emergency situation must be handled safely and make use of available devices and equipment available at that moment. Given the opportunity, however, longer-term (longer than 1 hour) emergencies should be treated in a matter similar to a work zone of other temporary traffic control work sites and proper traffic control should be established as soon as possible.

Response to an emergency situation is inherently more dangerous than a planned situation. Carefully consider the personal safety risks against the public safety needs when selecting a response to the emergency. If the risks outweigh the public safety benefit, wait for assistance from police and other NYSDOT personnel and equipment.