



Signing and pavement marking

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The 2000 MUTCD and 2002 Wisconsin Supplement are still in effect. When does WisDOT anticipate the new 2003 MUTCD being adopted and a new Wisconsin supplement being issued?

WisDOT anticipates it being adopted by the end of this year. In the interim you are encouraged to wait until the new Wisconsin MUTCD supplement is published; otherwise you may be taking a risk by choosing an option in the 2003 MUTCD that is not allowed by the new Wisconsin supplement.

When I have a speed zone change, is it best to have step down speed zones?

Yes. Drivers comply with the speed limit better when it is changed in increments. For example: going from 55 MPH to 40 MPH to 25 MPH is better than reducing the speed limit directly from 55 MPH to 25 MPH. Remember to also install the REDUCE SPEED AHEAD signs.



What is the proper REDUCE SPEED AHEAD sign?

The new 2003 MUTCD has changed the REDUCE SPEED AHEAD sign from a regulatory sign to a warning sign. The new sign code is W3-5 and W3-5A. There is a 15 year compliance period. After Wisconsin adopts the new MUTCD manual later this year you should begin using the new signs as old ones are replaced.

How far apart should speed limit signs be placed?

The MUTCD says to locate signs at the points of change from one speed limit to another. Install additional speed limit signs beyond major intersections and at other locations where it is necessary to remind road users of the speed limit. WISDOT uses the following guidelines:

- 55 MPH – Leaving a zoned area less than 55 MPH such as a town, village, city or municipality. After major intersections.
- 45 MPH – At points of change from one speed limit to another, after major intersections, and every half mile between reminder signs.
- 40 MPH – 2000'
- 35 MPH – 1500'
- 30 MPH – 1000'
- 25 MPH – 1000'

▲ Can I put a stop sign on the left side of the road?

Only as a supplement, and not in all locations. At an approach controlled by a stop sign, the MUTCD requires that, at a minimum, a stop sign shall be placed on the right side of the approach to which it applies. According to the MUTCD Wisconsin Supplement, placing a stop sign on the left as a supplement should not be done on roadways that do not have maintained centerline marking since it could be confusing to the driver. Exceptions allow their use on a one-way road or low volume rural gravel road.

If I install chevrons on a curve or turn, how many are needed?

Usually at least three, spaced 75-100 feet apart. Road users should always have two in view as they go around the curve, the MUTCD says. Remember to install one just before the curve starts, as a lead-in, and have one at the end of the curve. Chevrons really act as delineators and are an excellent device to guide the driver around a curve or turn.

Does a mailbox post have to meet breakaway standards?

Yes. Wood 4"x4" posts meet this standard.



Can I install a large two-direction arrow sign (W1-7, "double-headed night arrow") at a side road T-intersection?

Yes. This sign can be very beneficial to provide additional warning to the driver approaching a

T-intersection. The sign should be mounted at a right angle and in line to approaching traffic.

Where can I find guidelines on which crossings to mark and sign as school crossings?

Review Part 7A.02 of the MUTCD for guidance. Consider:

- the availability of adequate sidewalks
- number of students using the crosswalk
- the age levels of the students using the crossing
- the total extra walking distance

Can I use a school advanced warning sign even when the roadway doesn't border the school property?

Yes. The advanced warning sign can be used in advance of a school crossing. Remember to include the AHEAD plaque

(W16-9P) with the school warning sign (S1-1) and diagonal arrow sign (W16-7) at the marked crossing. The fluorescent yellow-green sign sheeting version of these signs is also permitted. When a school's grounds border a roadway, the S1-1 school advanced warning sign is required on that roadway prior to the school.

What low-cost safety improvements can I make to my roadways?

Many signing and marking improvements are relatively inexpensive and can help your roadways where you have safety problems, curves and turns, or other roadway characteristics. For example:

- add curve and turn warning signs
- install advisory speed plaques as a supplement to a warning sign for curves and turns
- install night arrows (one directional large arrow sign) on turns and curves
- install chevrons around sharper or troublesome curves or turns
- mark pavement centerlines or edgelines
- remove hazardous objects from the roadside clear zone or shield objects with guardrail

Can I make intersections safer at low cost?

Many changes can improve approaches to stop signs or uncontrolled intersections where crashes or potential crashes are a problem:

- install a STOP AHEAD sign where visibility is restricted or crashes related to running the stop sign have been a problem.
- double mark STOP AHEAD signs (right and left) or stagger them.
- double mark the STOP signs (right and left) where appropriate.
- install larger STOP signs.
- install a TRAFFIC ON [name the road or highway number] CROSSROAD DOES NOT STOP sign under the STOP sign where there are failure-to-yield problems.
- add rumble strips on the approach to a stop sign, but consider noise in residential areas before installing.
- overhead signing provides additional guidance, especially for older drivers.
- for uncontrolled intersections: install crossroad or sideroad warning signs where the approaches have sight restrictions as defined in the MUTCD Wisconsin Supplement, Section 2C.34.

For more help see the T.I.C. bulletins **Signing for Local Roads, No. 7**, and **Pavement Markings, No. 9**. (See Resources, page 6.)