

Idea Exchange

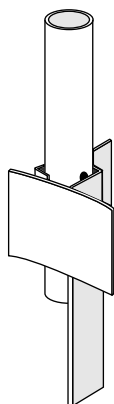
Breakaway post couplers



Replacing broken sign posts and mailbox supports is an expensive nuisance. Yet, to protect the motorist, they must break relatively easily. With new coupling devices, traffic signs and mailbox supports safely break away and are quick and easy to fix.

Couplers, like posts, must meet FHWA crash test criteria, breaking away on impact with an 1800 pound vehicle. Communities should beware of legal liability in using uncertified coupling systems.

Two coupler types available in Wisconsin are the Minute Man at about \$10 each used with U-channel posts only, and the V-Loc at about \$15 each which can be used with 2½ inch round, 2 inch square and U-Channel posts. Anchors for both can be installed in soil and asphalt. The V-Loc can also be placed directly in fresh concrete.



Both types create a permanent socket flush with the ground. The post is a separate piece which is wedged or spliced to the socket. Replacement is quick, inexpensive and usually needs only one person. Posts which are slightly bent can often be

straightened and reused. The socket system also simplifies winter sign replacements. For situations like the nose of a traffic island where you want to control the sign's fall, there are cables to tie post to base.

For more information on coupler systems, contact your supplier of traffic and parking signs. Thanks to Rick Bergholz of TAPCO for help with this idea. Brand names are for information; no endorsements are implied.

Stop sign warning study needs help



Sometimes drivers approaching a stop sign incorrectly assume that the cross street traffic also has a stop sign. They then pull out in front of oncoming traffic and get hit. To address this problem, some traffic control personnel have added a warning sign, like *Cross traffic does not stop*, either on the stop sign pole or ahead of the stop sign.

A University of Arkansas study of such signs needs your help. If you use them, they would like to know about

it, what colors and words you use, and if you've done any before-and-after studies of their effectiveness. Please contact J.L. Gattis, Civil Engineering Department at 501/575-7586 (phone), 501/575-7168 (FAX), or write at 4190 Bell Engineering Center, Fayetteville, AR 72701.

Hydraulic motor for shouldering machine



When their shouldering machine's gearbox wore out, Sawyer County, Wisconsin, Shop Foreman Jay Sands decided to replace it with a hydraulic motor. The gear system made it difficult to run the shouldering belt slowly at low speeds. The hydraulic replacement has smoothed out the problems. The system includes a hydraulic motor and pump to run the belt. Cost of parts to convert to the hydraulic system was \$2835 and installation took about 75 hours.

"We've used it for two construction seasons," says Shop Superintendent Barry Gobler. "It works well."

For information on this hydraulic motor contact Barry Gobler or Jay Sands, Sawyer County Highway Department, P.O. Box 348, Hayward, WI 54843, Phone: 715/634-3691. Thanks to Ron Evert, applications specialist, for passing along this idea.

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Crossroads

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