

Training flaggers to be safe and effective

Flagging may be an entry-level job but your flagger is the most visible member of your maintenance or construction crew. The safety of the crew and of the passing drivers depends on the flagger doing a good job. Every flagger should be appropriately trained and properly equipped.

Training for trainers—with handbooks and a video— help you prepare to do the needed training. The T.I.C. is again offering its 1½-day Flagger Trainer course at four locations around the state. This course will give street, highway, construction, and utility supervisors, and safety trainers the tools to properly train their own employees to be effective work zone flaggers.

Course participants will participate in the half-day flagger training course and then learn how to use the instructor's kit to make their own training sessions interesting and effective. Participants receive the *Flagger Training Instructors Guide*, a professional-quality training video, and 20 copies of the *Flaggers Handbook*. For agencies too small to have their own flagger trainer, the T.I.C. will offer the half-day flagger course around the state in May and June.



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Test your Flagging I.Q. — *What's wrong with these pictures?*



1 No equipment. A flagger should always use the proper equipment. At a minimum, a STOP/SLOW paddle and a safety vest, shirt or coat of approved color are required. Approved colors are orange, yellow, strong yellow-green, and fluorescent versions of these colors. Too often flaggers use an 18" x 18" orange flag instead of the required STOP/SLOW paddle. In emergency situations only, a red-orange 24" x 24" flag can be used, but must be replaced with a STOP/SLOW paddle as soon as one is available. The 18" x 18" orange flag is not permitted for flagging.

2 Not on shoulder. A flagger should stand on the shoulder. Sometimes a flagger has to walk into the road to be more visible to approaching cars. If this is necessary, the flagger should only enter the road after one or more cars are stopped. The flagger should always return to the shoulder before releasing traffic.

3 No escape route. A flagger should stand so there is always a free escape route. Too often a flagger stands next to a parked car or other obstruction that blocks a safe and quick get-away.

4 In shade and not on shoulder. A flagger should stand where he/she is visible to approaching traffic. This usually means in the sun, not the shade. Consequently, a flagger needs to have a hat, sun glasses, water, and sun screen for protection from the sun.

5 Crouching. A flagger should stand. Flaggers who crouch or sit down increase the time it takes to make a safe escape and are less visible to approaching traffic.