



# Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices

for Streets and Highways


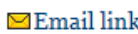
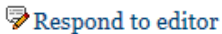

2009 Edition

Including Revision 1 dated May 2012  
and Revision 2 dated May 2012



U.S. Department of Transportation



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## New street signs and more

Friday, December 3, 2010  
Mike Hendricks

Don't know if you've heard about this or not but ABC News reported on Dec. 1 that the Federal Highway Administration is ordering all local governments, from the smallest towns to the largest, to purchase new street signs the bureaucrats say are easier to read.

It's all in the new 800 page publication, "Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices." Local entities have been ordered to increase the size of the letters on street signs from the current 4 inches to 6 inches on all roads with speed limits over 25 miles per hour. The target date for this to be completed is January 2012. They are to install signs with new reflective letters that are more visible at night by January 2018. And whenever street signs are changed for ANY reason, they can no longer be in ALL CAPS. The bureaucrats have decided we can read lower case letters better.

One example of how this will impact local governments is Milwaukee, Wisconsin. This changeover will cost them nearly \$2 million, which is twice as much as the city's entire annual allotment for traffic control.

The new regulations, written under the Bush Administration, are designed to make sure that signs are easier to read for an aging population.

Or, you could just buy a GPS.

Can you imagine an 800 page manual on uniform traffic control devices?

Not surprisingly, the American Traffic Safety Services Association which represents companies that make signs and the reflective material used on them, lobbied hard for the new rules. And at least one key study used to justify the changes was funded by the 3M Corporation, one of the few companies that make the reflective material now required on street signs.

And therein lies the real culprit; the lobbyists.

Lobbyists are never interested in the big picture. They have no concern at all about how many people will be inconvenienced or required to pay more money for products and services; they only care about the industries that pay their inflated salaries and legislation that affects their employer in either positive or negative ways. If it's a positive outcome for their bosses, they support the legislation; if it's a negative outcome they don't. It's that simple.

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## The FHWA Makes Its Move – Now What?

 [The FHWA Makes Its Move – Now What?](#)  [Traffic Sign News](#)

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By now, you may have heard that on May 10, 2012, the FHWA issued its long awaited proclamation regarding the MUTCD. In fact, if you were watching our Twitter and Facebook postings, you were well in the know.

In case you missed it, in August 2011, the FHWA issued a Notice of Proposed Amendments to eliminate 46 of the deadlines recently added to the MUTCD regarding the upgrading of sign retroreflectivity and nighttime visibility (e.g., larger lettering). Those changes included deadlines for sign upgrades, beginning in 2015.

U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood, a member of the Obama Administration, eliminated the 46 deadline regulations on traffic signs to give state and local governments more flexibility on when they need to replace signs. Or, maybe he just caved into the budgetary concerns voiced by the states and municipalities. The replacement dates that have been eliminated by this new action were Jan. 22, 2015, for regulatory, warning and post-mounted guide signs and Jan. 22, 2018, for street name signs and overhead guide signs.

# Lay v. State, Dept. of Transportation

## 23 Kan.App.2d 211 (1996)

- Negligence exists where there is a duty owed by one person to another and a breach of that duty occurs. Further if recovery is to be had for such negligence, the injured party must show: (1) a causal connection between the duty breached and the injury received; and (2) he or she was damaged by the negligence. Whether a duty exists is a question of law. Whether the duty has been breached is a question of fact.
- In order to recover in a negligence action, the breach of duty must be the actual and proximate cause of the injury. The proximate or legal cause of an injury is that cause which in natural and continuous sequence, unbroken by an efficient intervening cause, produces the injury and without which the injury would not have occurred, the injury being the natural and probable consequences of the wrongful act.
- Under the facts of this case, the Kansas Department of Transportation's duty was to warn of a stop sign controlled intersection. The risk that the duty to warn protected against was unrelated to this accident. Although there was negligence on the part of Kansas Department of Transportation, it was not a proximate cause of this accident. It was "negligence in the air," which is not actionable negligence under Kansas law.

# Force v. City of Lawrence

## 17 Kan.App.2d 90 (1992)

- The court, having found that the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) does not contain any criteria or suggestions for determining the need or desirability for placement of a left-turn signal, concluded that the decision of whether to do so is discretionary and that both defendants are immune from liability under the KTCA. The court further found that, as the MUTCD establishes no duty for the placement of such a signal, neither of the defendants can be considered negligent for their failure to do so. The court granted the defendants' motion for summary judgment, and Force appealed.

