

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

FLAGGER HANDBOOK



INTRODUCTION

Your job as flagger is an important one. The lives of the workers and those of the traveling public are in your hands. You have the responsibility to protect your fellow workers as well as to guide traffic safely through the work area. Your firm and deliberate actions will greatly reduce the possibility of accidents and injuries at the worksite.

It is important that you be courteous in dealing with the traveling public, yet be deliberate and to the point in your conversations with them. As a flagger, you must always display a professional attitude. You must be intelligent and capable of impressing the public and securing their cooperation.

If any driver refuses to follow your instructions, the vehicle's license plate number and description should be immediately recorded, and the circumstances reported to your supervisor as soon as possible.

Remember; never leave your post unless you are properly replaced.

This pamphlet has been prepared to help you in understanding your official responsibilities. It is expected that all flaggers will follow the instructions in this pamphlet.

**The term flagger, as used in this booklet, refers to a person who controls traffic through or around temporary traffic control zones.*

FLAGGER HANDBOOK

*New Hampshire
Department of Transportation*

Revised 1997

FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Traffic control is provided at all worksites where it is necessary to intermittently stop, reduce the speed of, and/or guide the traffic safely through a worksite. These functions provide safety to both the motoring public and the workers. For these reasons, you must be clearly visible to permit proper driver response to your instructions.

A “stopping distance” table is provided below as a general guide:

Stopping Distance*

Vehicle Speed (mph)	Brake Reaction Distance (feet)	Braking Distance on Level Pavement (feet)	Total Stopping Distance (feet)
20	73	34	107
25	92	55	147
30	110	86	196
35	128	101	229
40	147	162	309
45	165	219	384
50	183	279	462
55	202	337	539

¹Brake Reaction Distance is the distance a vehicle travels between the instant that the driver recognizes the existence of an object or hazard on the roadway ahead and the instant that the driver actually applies the brakes, including the interval required to make the decision that a stop is necessary. This value equals the distance the vehicle travels in 2.5 seconds.

²Braking Distance varies considerably due to such things as air pressure of tires, composition of tires, tire tread pattern and depth of tread, grade, type and condition of pavement surface, and the presence of moisture, dirt, mud, snow, or ice. It also depends on the size and type of the vehicle and its braking system.

³Total Stopping Distance equals brake reaction distance plus braking distance.

*Based upon American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) stopping sight distance (A policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets, AASHTO, 1994, page 120).

BASIC FUNCTIONS

- **To guide** traffic safely through work areas
- **To make** every effort to give the traveling public the right of way
- **To protect** the lives of workers on or near the traveled way
- **To avoid** unreasonable delays to the traveling public due to the passage of construction vehicles on the roadway
- **To answer** questions from motorists in a courteous and intelligent manner

**COURTESY IS IMPORTANT
BECAUSE YOUR ACTIONS REFLECT
A GOOD OR BAD IMPRESSION OF YOU,
YOUR EMPLOYER, AND THE STATE
OF NEW HAMPSHIRE.**

DAYTIME FLAGGING

Clothing:

For daytime flagging, you are required to wear an orange hardhat or orange baseball cap; a vest, shirt, or jacket which is orange, yellow, strong yellow-green, or fluorescent versions of these colors; khakis or white pants. Adequate footwear conducive to long hours of standing should be worn and should be of such construction as to reduce the effects of extreme heat or cold through the soles of the shoes.



No female functioning as a flagger shall report to work wearing halter-tops, shorts, or similar dress. No male shall report to work stripped to the waist, wearing shorts, or similar dress. All flaggers should maintain a clean, neat appearance with clean-shaven or with neatly trimmed facial hair.

Uniformed officers will be required to wear an orange vest and orange headgear, or duty uniform approved by the department.

Tools:

Hand signaling devices, such as STOP/SLOW paddles and lights, are used in controlling traffic through work.

Sign paddles must be at least 18 inches wide and octagonal in shape, with letters at least 6 inches high. The background of the STOP face shall be red with white letters and border. The background of the SLOW face shall be orange with black letters and border.

All paddles shall be retroreflectorized for night use. Sign paddles are most effective. Keep an extra one handy and keep them clean.

All devices shall be manufactured in accordance with the standards set forth in the “Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)”.

NIGHTTIME FLAGGING

Clothing:

In addition to the normal requirements for full clothing and adequate footwear, the nighttime flagger shall wear a retroreflectorized vest, a retroreflectorized hardhat, and retroreflectorized sleeve, which are visible at a minimum distance of 1,000 feet.

Tools:

A retroreflectorized STOP/SLOW paddle, with or without flashing white lights on the STOP side, shall be used.

Procedure:

Night operations require special precautions above the reflectorized clothing for the flagperson. Illumination of the flagging stations is vital.

Stand in a safe position on the shoulder facing traffic and wave the flashlight or wand back and forth over the edge of the traffic lane. After the first vehicle has been stopped, move to a position near the center line so that your signal may be seen by drivers approaching from the rear.

During nighttime flagging, it is important to use the utmost care in guiding traffic through the work area and in safeguarding the workers and yourself.



STATION OR POSITION

The flagger shall stand in a conspicuous position on the shoulder adjacent to the traffic being controlled or in the barricaded lane facing the approaching traffic.

The position taken should be near enough to the workers being protected so that there is no doubt as to the flagger's purpose, but not so close as to be mistaken for one of the workers. This position may vary up to 500 feet depending upon the distances, etc. In urban areas the distance from the flagger to the worksite can be reduced.

Special care must be taken to avoid long traffic delays that may "clog up" the local street system. At a spot work site it may be necessary to stand on the shoulder of the left hand lane or opposite the work site in order to effectively control the traffic.

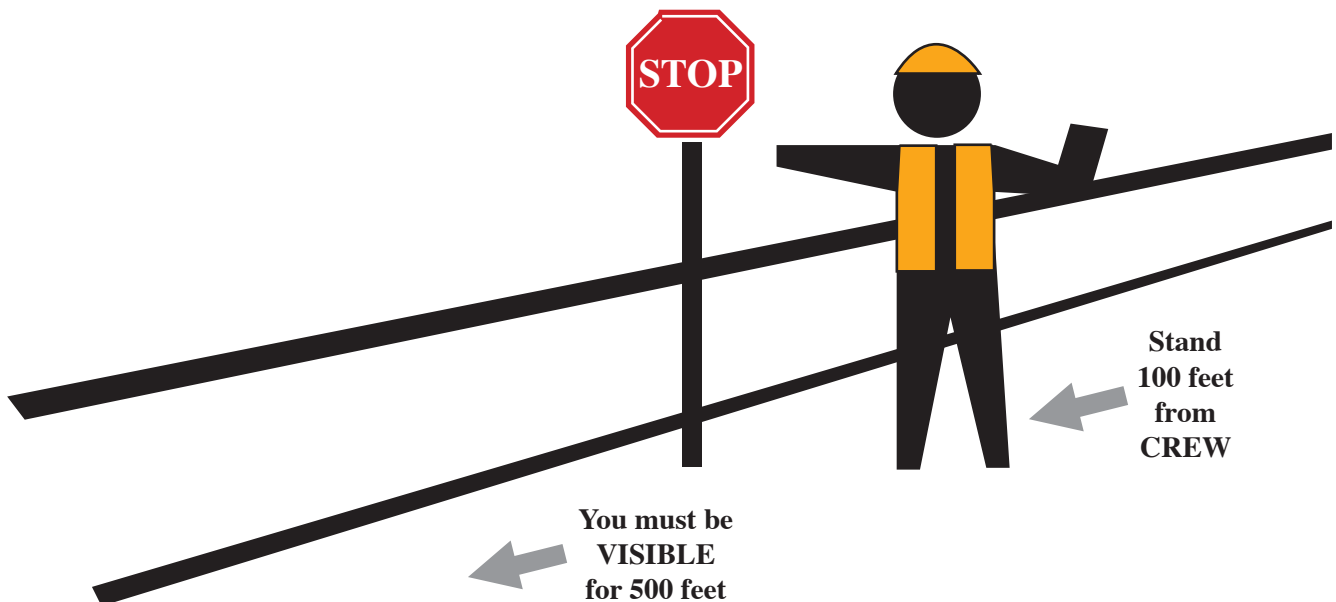
Proper advance warning signs must adequately cover flagging positions, and nighttime stations must have adequate illumination.

A flagger should not leave the flagging station to pick up or replace signs or barricades. This is the responsibility of the supervisor.

REMEMBER

- **The flagger should be visible at all times.**
- **Never stand in an open traffic lane.**
- **Stand alone and don't permit workers to gather around you.**
- **Do not stand near equipment.**
- **Do not watch the operations.**
- **Never turn your back to the traffic.**

Your job is to provide the motorist with guidance. You will lose their respect and add to their confusion by turning your back to them.



FLAGGING PROCEDURES

With Paddles:



To Stop Traffic- face the traffic and extend the paddle in a vertical position away from the body so full “STOP” side of the paddle is visible to approaching traffic. Look directly at the approaching driver and raise and expose the palm of the free hand to indicate that the vehicle is required to stop.



To Alert and Slow Traffic- face the traffic and extend the paddle in a vertical position away from the body with the “SLOW” side of the paddle visible to the driver. For added emphasis, the free hand may be raised and lowered with the palm down.



To Direct Stopped Traffic to Proceed- face the traffic, show the “SLOW” side of the paddle, and motion traffic to proceed with the free hand.

With Flags:

FLAGS ARE TO BE USED ONLY IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS AND AT LOW SPEED AND/OR LOW VOLUME LOCATIONS.

To Stop Traffic- face the traffic and extend the flag horizontally across the traffic lane in a stationary position. Raise the free hand, palm up, toward the traffic.

To Alert or Slow Traffic- face the traffic and slowly wave the flag in a sweeping motion of the extended arm from shoulder level to straight down, without raising the arm above the horizontal position.

To Direct Stopped Traffic- stand on the side of the road with the flag arm lowered to your side and motion traffic ahead with the free hand. Flags shall not be used to signal traffic to proceed.



HAUL ROADS

Haul Roads crossing a public road presents a particularly difficult problem for flaggers, especially when construction vehicles cross two lanes of opposing traffic.

One Lane: When construction vehicles cross only one lane of a public way, one flagger should be adequate to control traffic. Flaggers should be particularly alert to the slow speeds of construction vehicles and longer stopping distances. Flaggers should endeavor to minimize delays and stoppages for both the public and construction vehicles.

Two Lanes: Construction vehicles crossing two lanes of opposing traffic on a public way require two flaggers, with one designated as the lead flagger to coordinate their activities. Flaggers should be stationed so as to provide adequate safe stopping distance for traffic and must be alert at all times to the flow of both public and construction traffic. When public traffic must be stopped, directions to drivers should be clear and deliberate.

PILOT CAR

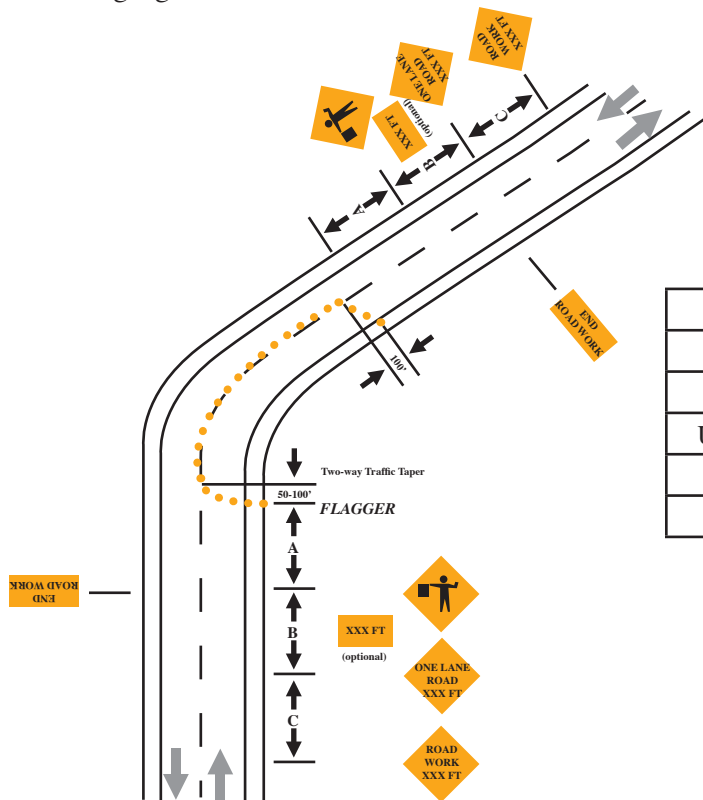
A pilot car is used to escort vehicles through a work area when a flagger at the opposite end is not visible, when there is only one lane of traffic, or when the route through the work zone is difficult to follow.

Stop approaching vehicles in the prescribed manner and detain them until the “pilot car” arrives to lead them through.

Other means of controlling traffic on long jobs is through the use of two way phones or walkie talkies.

SIGNING

All signing during maintenance and construction operations shall conform to the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control as adopted by the State of New Hampshire. Flaggers should not be required to control traffic without proper placement of advance warning signs.



Road Type	Distance Between Signs		
	A	B	C
Urban (30 mph or less)	200	200	200
Urban (30 mph or greater)	350	350	350
Rural	500	500	500
Expressway/Freeway	1,000	1,600	2,600

SAFETY

You should constantly bear in mind that when dealing with thousands of vehicles and drivers, there always exists the chance that an erratic, unpredictable, inattentive or careless driver will appear and become a hazard. In those cases you should give verbal warning of danger to your fellow workers and the public when necessary and possible.

Uniform action is an important part of traffic operations. With uniform flagging programs the motorist can proceed in a safe manner and your job will become one that is respected and heeded.

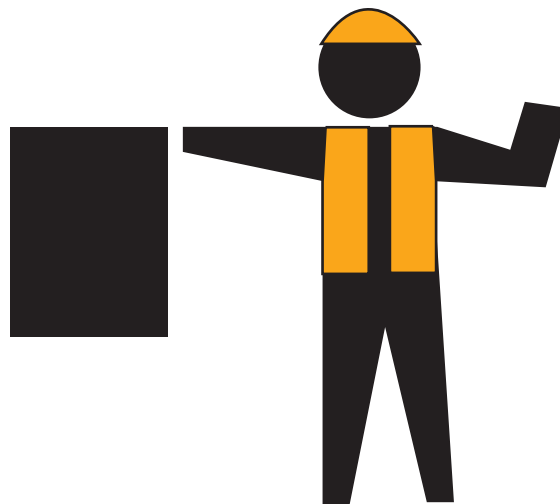
REMEMBER

- Your job is critically important.
- Keep alert.
- Wear the proper clothing.
- Station yourself at the right location.
- Know the standard flagging procedure.
- Make certain proper advance warning signs are in place.
- Slow down traffic for safe approach. Slower traffic is safer.
- Give special attention to one-way traffic.
- Use proper equipment for nighttime flagging.
- Treat each and every driver courteously.
- Be alert to changing conditions on the work site and adjust traffic control patterns appropriately.



THE BASIC DO'S OF FLAGGING

- DO** Be alert at all times. An alert flagger will command the respect of motorists and will be able to respond to emergency situations.
- DO** Wear proper equipment while on duty; an orange hardhat, an orange vest, light colored shirt, khaki or white pants, and adequate footwear.
- DO** Stand alone where the motorists can readily identify you.
- DO** Have thorough knowledge of the project's traffic control plans. Your ability to answer questions from the traveling public such as the type of work and when it will be completed, the conditions they are likely to encounter within the limits of the project, and how in general they should proceed through the project, will have the desired effect of sending them on their way informed, content, and safe.
- DO** Treat each driver as you would the first one you contacted that day, for, as far as they are concerned, they are. They know nothing of your own instruction, or of previous motorist contacts, or any problems you may have had with other motorists.
- DO** Bring a water bottle, sunscreen to protect exposed skin, and your lunch- you may not be offered a long lunch break.
- DO** Be prepared for changing weather. A raincoat, sweatshirt, vest, warm coat, or dry socks may be necessary.



THE BASIC DO'S OF FLAGGING

DON'T Stand in an open traffic lane.

DON'T Stand with a group of people.

DON'T Stand near equipment.

DON'T Stand with your back to the traffic.

DON'T Take part in unnecessary conversation with workers, pedestrians, or motorists.

DON'T Give flagging instruction contrary to traffic control devices operating in your area.

DON'T Read while on duty.

DON'T Bring ipods, mp3 players, books, or anything else that may distract you.

**BE PREPARED TO WORK.
STAY ALERT.
DON'T DAYDREAM.
MANY PEOPLE ARE DEPENDING ON YOU!**

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Courtesy and a professional attitude are keys to good flagging. The traveling public will respect and obey you if your appearance and actions are those of a well-trained and informative flagger.

Be brief and to the point with the traveling public when stopping traffic. Advise the first motorist of the situation and give an estimate of the duration of the delay. Do the same for other motorists if it will not interfere with fulfilling your duties.

DO NOT LEAVE YOUR POSITION TO TALK WITH A LARGE NUMBER OF MOTORISTS.

DO NOT LEAN ON VEHICLES, OR ARGUE WITH MOTORISTS.

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU BE COURTEOUS AND COOPERATIVE IN ALL YOUR DEALINGS WITH THE TRAVELING PUBLIC.

Disclaimer:

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