Federal Highway Administration
400 Seventh Street, SW
Washington, DC 20590

Refer to: HOTO-1

Mr. Bill Fitzpatrick
City of Salinas
Public Works Department
200 Lincoln Avenue
Salinas, CA 93901

Dear Mr. Fitzpatrick:

Thank you for your April 10 inquiry regarding the use of the new STOP Sign product called the BlinkerStop that has eight flashing LEDs at each of the STOP Sign corners.

This new application is distinctly different from both of the traditional STOP sign and flashing warning beacons that are discussed in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), Sections 4K.02, 4K.03, and 4K.05. You may access these sections of the MUTCD on our website at: **http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov**. Traditionally the stop sign beacon consists of one or more signal sections of a standard traffic signal face with a flashing CIRCULAR RED signal indication in each signal section. A standard STOP sign is used in conjunction with the flashing red signal indication located at the stop-controlled intersection. The MUTCD also specifies that the beacon signal lens is 8 inches in diameter. When the beacon is used to supplement a warning or regulatory sign, Section 4K.03 states that the beacon must not be included within the sign border.

Because the BlinkerStop is a distinct departure from the traditional application for flashing beacons, we are forwarding your letter and enclosed evaluation study to our Turner-Fairbanks Highway Research Laboratory for their review and comments. We are also forwarding your letter and enclosed evaluation study to the National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. The National Committee is comprised of organizations which have a wealth of knowledge and experience in the field of traffic control devices and they provide input to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) on the appropriateness of new and innovative ideas. We will share our findings with you once we receive comments from the above sources.

Additionally, it is important to note that patented, registered, or copyrighted devices are not included in the MUTCD. Please refer to MUTCD Section 1A.10 which describes the procedure for conducting experiments with innovative traffic control devices. The devices and concepts discussed in the MUTCD are considered part of the public domain and must be available for design and use by anyone responsible for selecting and installing traffic control devices. The FHWA also has standards for determining the crashworthiness of traffic control devices and we recommend that you check to be sure

that this product meets these standards. Please see the MUTCD web site for other web links and click on "ask the expert" for information on NCHRP 350.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide this information to you and we will keep you apprised of any additional information we receive. For recordkeeping and future correspondence, your experimentation has been assigned the following official ruling number: 2-480(Ex)--"STOP Sign with 8 Flashing LED's Within Sign's Border."

Sincerely yours,

Shelley J. Row, P.E.
Director, Office of Transportation
Operations