

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

Refer to: HOTO-1

Mr. Stephen W. Baker  
President  
Springfield Plastics, Inc.  
7300 West State Route 104  
Auburn, IL 62615

Dear Mr. Baker:

Thank you for your letter of April 10 requesting Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to reevaluate your request to change Part 6 to allow drums to be open on both ends rather than requiring closed tops. Also, you mentioned that you would like to think that FHWA would reevaluate your request with thought that "Are FHWA conclusions supported by the evaluation presented by IDOT." We apologize for the delay in responding to your request. All first class mail sent through the United States Postal service to Federal agencies in the District of Columbia must be processed in a special way to protect government employees from the possibility of handling anthrax-tainted mail. The irradiation process delays delivery by several weeks.

We have review your letter, and we are still denying your request for the change to the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). Although we do not have any documented evidence to show that open top drums and drums without bottom were used as trash receptacles, we are very concerned with the potential safety hazard, such as debris, trash, rain water, or freezing water causing a safety hazard. We have consulted with experts in the field and they agree with our position not to allow open drums because of the safety concerns previously expressed. As stated in previous letters, tops on drums were required in Revision 3 of the 1988 Edition of the MUTCD, published September 3, 1993, because drums were being used as a trash receptacle and creating a potential safety problem.

For recordkeeping purposes, this has been numbered and titled request for change "6-185C – Section 6F.59 Drums."

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Charlie sears at 202-366-1555.

Sincerely yours,

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