



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

400 Seventh St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

September 24, 2002

Refer to: HOTO-1

Ms. Nikk Katzman
Overgrown Farm
2614 Old Ruckerville Road
Winchester, KY 40391-9045

Dear Ms. Katzman:

This is in reply to your email of September 3 requesting clarification on several items in Part 7 of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). We will address your questions below:

1. When must all school zone signs be changed from reflectorized to retroreflectorized? (7B.02)

The compliance date is January 17, 2003. The final rule effective date for the 2000 MUTCD was January 17, 2001. The standard compliance date for the 2000 MUTCD is 2 years from the effective date (January 17, 2003). This information can be found in the Federal Register, dated December 18, 2000, which can be found on our website: <http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov>, under the heading "Resources."

2. Can the word SCHOOL be painted across all 3 lanes of a road (2 lanes in one direction, one lane in the other, the word painted only once, in the direction of the 2 approach lanes)?

Section 7C.0 Pavement Word and Symbol Markings, optional statement, states that the SCHOOL word marking may extend to the width of two approach lanes.

3. Can you use the "kids and a crosswalk" sign if there's no crosswalk?

I believe the "kids and a crosswalk" sign you are referring to is the S2-1 sign that has been deleted from the 2000 MUTCD. This sign was deleted because road user comprehension studies show that road users generally do not know the difference between the sign with the crosswalk and without the crosswalk. Instead of using crosswalk lines within the sign to indicate where the actual crossing is located, the new application in Section 7B.09 consists of a crossing sign (S1-1) with supplemental downward pointing arrow plaque to show the crossing location.



4. Can each letter of the SCHOOL pavement marking have a stenciled look, or should the pieces of the preformed plastic that make each letter be put together?

The letters should be together as shown in Figure 7C-1 on page 7C-4 of the MUTCD.

5. Can a sign with an adult and a crosswalk be used instead of a school advance sign in school zone areas?

The S1-1 should be used at in school zones rather than the pedestrian crossing sign (W11-2). The pentagon-shape of the S1-1 sign is unique to school zones.

6. When (compliance date) must the school advance sign plus a diagonal arrow be used instead of the "kids and a crosswalk" sign be used? (7B.09)

There is a 10-year (January 17, 2011) phase-in compliance period with no new installations of the S2-1 allowed. A full listing of the compliance dates for the 2000 MUTCD can be found on our website home page.

7. When (compliance date) must the school speed limit assembly be used? (7B.11).

The standard effective date of January 17, 2003.

8. When are nonstandard signs, such as END OF SCHOOL ZONE instead of END SCHOOL ZONE, allowed?

Word message signs may have slight modifications from those shown in the MUTCD (See Section 2BA.06). The END SCHOOL ZONE would be allowed. We also suggest that a speed limit sign be installed to advise the driver what the speed limit is beyond the school zone.

9. What, other than increased liability for the municipality, are the penalties for noncompliance with the MUTCD?

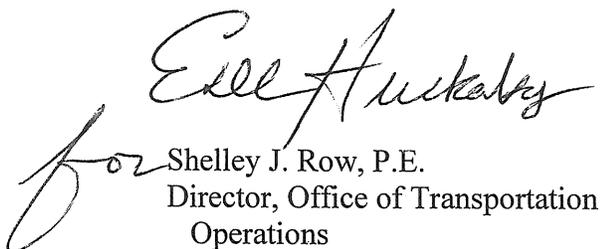
The liability issue should be a concern for the jurisdiction. The Federal Highway Administration does not have the resources to ensure that all TCDs are in compliance with the MUTCD. The goal of the MUTCD is to achieve consistency and uniformity in the design, use, application, and operation of all traffic control devices.

Laws related to traffic control device use vary from state-to-state. We suggest that you check with the State department of transportation for State laws that may be in effect for the use of traffic control devices and other school-related traffic actions.

For reference purposes, we have assigned your request the following official interpretation number and title: "7-50(I)-Part 7-Traffic Control Devices for School Zones." Please refer to this number in future correspondence.

Thank you for your interest in the safety of school children and your effort to assure that your city is in compliance with the MUTCD. If you require further clarification, please contact Ms. Cherie L. Kittle at 202-366-2188.

Sincerely yours,

The image shows a handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shelley J. Row". To the left of the signature, the word "for" is written in a smaller, simpler cursive script. Below the signature, the name and title are printed in a standard serif font.

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