

## CHAPTER 6E. FLAGGER CONTROL

### Section 6E.01 Qualifications for Flaggers

#### **Standard:**

**A flagger shall be a person who provides temporary traffic control.**

#### Guidance:

Because flaggers are responsible for public safety and make the greatest number of contacts with the public of all highway workers, they should be trained in safe traffic control practices and public contact techniques. Flaggers should be able to satisfactorily demonstrate the following skills and abilities:

- A. Skill in communicating specific instructions clearly, firmly, and courteously;
- B. Ability to move and maneuver quickly in order to avoid danger from errant vehicles;
- C. Ability to control signaling devices (such as paddles and flags) in order to provide clear and positive guidance to drivers approaching a temporary traffic control zone in frequently changing situations;
- D. Ability to understand and apply safe traffic control practices, sometimes in stressful or emergency situations; and
- E. Ability to recognize dangerous traffic situations and warn workers in sufficient time to avoid injury.

### Section 6E.02 High-Visibility Clothing

#### **Standard:**

**Flaggers shall wear safety apparel meeting the requirements of ISEA “American National Standard for High-Visibility Apparel” (see Section 1A.11) and labeled as meeting the ANSI 107-1999 standard performance for Class 3 risk exposure. The apparel background (outer) material shall be either fluorescent orange-red or fluorescent yellow-green as defined in the standard. The retroreflective material shall be either orange, yellow, white, silver, yellow-green, or a fluorescent version of these colors, and shall be visible at a minimum distance of 300 m (1,000 ft). The retroreflective clothing shall be designed to clearly identify the wearer as a worker.**

## Guidance:

When uniformed law enforcement officers are used, high-visibility clothing as described above should be worn by the law enforcement officer.

**Section 6E.03 Hand-Signaling Devices**

## Support:

Hand-signaling devices, such as STOP/SLOW paddles, lights, and red flags, are used to control road users through temporary traffic control zones.

## Guidance:

The STOP/SLOW paddle should be the primary and preferred hand-signaling device because the STOP/SLOW paddle gives road users more positive guidance than red flags. Use of flags should be limited to emergency situations.

**Standard:**

**The STOP/SLOW paddle shall have an octagonal shape on a rigid handle. STOP/SLOW paddles shall be at least 450 mm (18 in) wide with letters at least 150 mm (6 in) high and should be fabricated from light semirigid material. 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. When used at night, the STOP/SLOW paddle shall be retroreflectorized.**

## Option:

The STOP/SLOW paddle may be modified to improve conspicuity by incorporating white flashing lights. The white flashing lights may be arranged in any of the following patterns:

- A. Two white lights centered vertically above and below the STOP and/or SLOW legend;
- B. Two white lights centered horizontally on each side of the STOP and/or SLOW legend;
- C. One white light centered below the STOP and/or SLOW legend; or
- D. A series of eight or more small white lights no larger than 6 mm (1/4 in) in diameter along the outer edge of the paddle, arranged in an octagonal pattern at the eight corners of the border of the STOP side of the paddle, and/or arranged in a diamond pattern along the border of the SLOW side of the panel. More than eight lights may be used only if the arrangement of the lights is such that it clearly conveys the octagonal shape of the STOP side of the paddle and/or the diamond shape of the SLOW side of the paddle.

**Standard:**

**If flashing lights are used on the STOP/SLOW paddle, the flash rate shall be at least 50, but not more than 60, flashes per minute.**

**Flags, when used, shall be a minimum of 600 mm (24 in) square, made of a good grade of red material, and securely fastened to a staff that is approximately 900 mm (36 in) in length.**

**Guidance:**

The free edge of a flag should be weighted so the flag will hang vertically, even in heavy winds.

**Standard:**

**When used at nighttime, flags shall be retroreflectorized red.**

**Section 6E.04 Flagger Procedures****Support:**

The use of paddles and flags by flaggers are illustrated in Figure 6E-1.

**Standard:**

**The following methods of signaling with paddles shall be used:**

- A. To stop road users, the flagger shall face road users and aim the STOP paddle face toward road users in a stationary position with the arm extended horizontally away from the body. The free arm shall be held with the palm of the hand above shoulder level toward approaching traffic.**
- B. To direct stopped road users to proceed, the flagger shall face road users with the SLOW paddle face aimed toward road users in a stationary position with the arm extended horizontally away from the body. The flagger shall motion with the free hand for road users to proceed.**
- C. To alert or slow traffic, the flagger shall face road users with the SLOW paddle face aimed toward road users in a stationary position with the arm extended horizontally away from the body.**

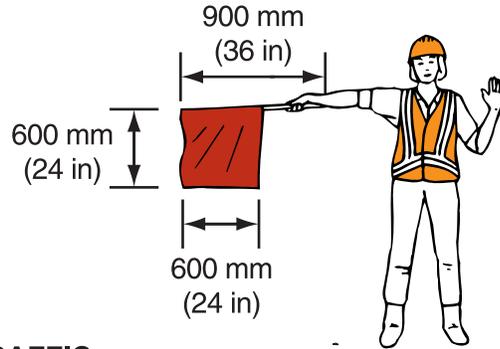
**Figure 6E-1. Use of Hand-Signaling Devices by Flaggers**

**PREFERRED METHOD  
STOP/SLOW Paddle**

**EMERGENCY SITUATIONS ONLY  
Red Flag**

450 mm (18 in)

MIN.



**TO STOP TRAFFIC**



**TO LET  
TRAFFIC PROCEED**



**TO ALERT AND  
SLOW TRAFFIC**

**Option:**

To further alert or slow traffic, the flagger holding the SLOW paddle face toward road users may motion up and down with the free hand, palm down.

**Standard:**

**The following methods of signaling with a flag shall be used:**

- A. To stop road users, the flagger shall face road users and extend the flag staff horizontally across the road users' lane in a stationary position so that the full area of the flag is visibly hanging below the staff. The free arm shall be held with the palm of the hand above the shoulder level toward approaching traffic.**
- B. To direct stopped road users to proceed, the flagger shall stand parallel to the road user movement and with flag and arm lowered from the view of the road users, and shall motion with the free hand for road users to proceed. Flags shall not be used to signal road users to proceed.**
- C. To alert or slow traffic, the flagger shall face road users and slowly wave the flag in a sweeping motion of the extended arm from shoulder level to straight down without raising the arm above a horizontal position. The flagger shall keep the free hand down.**

**Section 6E.05 Flagger Stations****Standard:**

**Flagger stations shall be located such that approaching road users will have sufficient distance to stop at an intended stopping point.**

**Guidance:**

Flagger stations should be located such that an errant vehicle has additional space to stop without entering the work space.

**Support:**

Table 6E-1 provides information regarding the stopping sight distance as a function of speed.

**Option:**

The distances shown in Table 6E-1 may be used for the location of a flagger station.

**Table 6E-1. Stopping Sight Distance as a Function of Speed**

Speed* (km/h)	Distance (m)	Speed* (mph)	Distance (ft)
30	35	20	115
40	50	25	155
50	65	30	200
60	85	35	250
70	105	40	305
80	130	45	360
90	160	50	425
100	185	55	495
110	220	60	570
120	250	65	645
		70	730
		75	820

\* Posted speed, off-peak 85th-percentile speed prior to work starting, or the anticipated operating speed

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**Standard:**

**Flagger stations shall be preceded by an advance warning sign or signs. At night, flagger stations shall be illuminated.**

**Guidance:**

The flagger should stand either on the shoulder adjacent to the road user being controlled or in the closed lane prior to stopping road users. A flagger should only stand in the lane being used by moving road users after road users have stopped. The flagger should be clearly visible to the first approaching road user at all times. The flagger also should be visible to other road users. The flagger should be stationed sufficiently in advance of the workers to warn them (for example, with audible warning devices such as

horns or whistles) of approaching danger by out-of-control vehicles. The flagger should stand alone, never permitting a group of workers to congregate around the flagger station.

Option:

At a spot constriction, the flagger may have to take a position on the shoulder opposite the closed section in order to operate effectively.

At spot lane closures where adequate sight distance is available for the safe handling of traffic, the use of one flagger may be sufficient.

