



Basic Requirements of Traffic Control Devices

Design Manual
Chapter 9
Traffic Control

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A traffic control device is a sign, signal, marking, barricade, or other device placed on or adjacent to a street or highway to regulate, warn, or guide traffic. Traffic control devices notify road users of regulations, provide warnings, and assist motorists with guidance and navigation in order to safely traverse any road open to public traffic.

To be effective, a traffic control device should meet five basic requirements:

1. Fulfill a need,
2. Command attention,
3. Convey a clear, simple meaning,
4. Command respect from road users, and
5. Give adequate time for proper response.

These principles underlie the guidance in Sections [9B-2](#) through [9B-10](#), which describe the design and application of traffic control devices used in work zones.

Chronology of Changes to Design Manual Section:

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General updates.