



# FLAGGER REFERENCE GUIDE



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## FLAGGING REFERENCE GUIDE

Once you begin working on the job, you may find you need to get certain information quickly. For example, you may need to refresh your memory on some flagging techniques. Thus, this Reference Guide is designed for quick and easy reference AT THE WORK POINT. It is not, however, a training piece, nor does it contain all the information you will need to do your job as a flagger well. Therefore, if you need more details, you should refer to Volume 1 of the Flagging and Traffic Control Supervisors' Manual, or the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

This Reference Guide has been divided into four major sections--general information, flagging techniques, do's and don'ts and finally an appendix.

Keep this guide handy--in your knapsack or in the glove compartment of your car. Refer to it often when you have questions. Good Luck!

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Your Responsibilities:

You are responsible for:

- 1 ) Protecting yourself and the public from road construction and maintenance dangers,
- 2 ) Protecting the work crew from the dangers presented by the traveling public and,
- 3 ) Ensuring that traffic proceeds smoothly and in a timely fashion.

Keep in mind that as a flagger you are not the "law." That is, you do not have the LEGAL AUTHORITY that police officers have to regulate, control or direct traffic. Uniformed police officers are responsible for traffic control in signalized intersections, not flaggers.



**Dress:**

You must wear an approved ORANGE HARD HAT and VEST. This is for uniformity and standardization among flaggers as well as for safety and visibility. In addition, it is always a good idea to wear heavy work boots or safety shoes.

When you are flagging at night, your official clothing--vest and hard hat--MUST be retroreflectORIZED so you remain visible.

Optional Clothing: You may find it necessary to wear long sleeved shirts and pants for protection from insects and the elements. Also, you may want to wear gloves, a dust mask or ear plugs. Finally, if you wear contact lenses, you may find regular glasses provide more protection from debris and dust.

**Equipment:**

When flagging traffic you will use a paddle sign--mounted on a 5-foot staff. The face of the sign should be at least 18 inches with 6 inch letters. The sign should read "STOP" on one side, and "SLOW" on the other side. This sign may be used at night, providing it is retroreflectORIZED. The paddle sign may include lights - Red or White on the "STOP" side, and Yellow or White on the "SLOW" side.



2



**Flashlights:** If you are flagging at night you should be carrying and using a flashlight with a 6-inch (at least), red-lighted cone.

**Lighted Wands:** If you are not using a flashlight, you will be using a 30-inch lighted wand for night flagging.

**Advance Warning Signs:**

Before you begin flagging, you should always make sure that the proper signing has been positioned AHEAD of your flag stand: "Advance Flagger" and "BE PREPARED TO STOP." The "Advance Flagger" sign should generally be placed 500 feet in advance of your flag station. If the "BE PREPARED TO STOP" sign is used, it should be between the "Advance Flagger" sign and the Flagger.



3



## FLAGGING TECHNIQUES

### Your Flag Station:

Remember, you must be visible. DO NOT stand in the shade, behind shrubs or trees, on the blind side of a curve or in front of or behind heavy equipment. Always park your car away from your flagging station. CDOT recommends 200 feet.

NEVER STAND in the traveled lane. Always stand well out of the way of passing vehicles. If you have been assigned a position ON the highway, make sure that your station is adequately barricaded or protected.

Stand FAR enough AWAY from the work site so that cars have ample time to stop or slow down before reaching the site. Stand CLOSE enough to the site to protect the workers. Usually, 200-300 feet should be adequate, but special situations may require you to either be closer or farther away from the site.

NEVER MINGLE with the work crew while on duty. And, DO NOT LEAVE YOUR POST UNLESS YOU ARE RELIEVED BY A CERTIFIED APPROPRIATELY DRESSED FLAG PERSON.

If you are to be flagging at night, make sure that your station is LIGHTED, and that all tools, hard hats, and vests are RETROREFLECTORIZED.



### To Stop Traffic--Daytime:

To stop traffic using a paddle sign, face traffic and hold the paddle sign away from your body horizontally. Be sure that the "STOP" portion of the sign faces traffic. You may raise your free arm, with your palm facing traffic for emphasis.



### Releasing Traffic--Daytime:

To release traffic, turn the sign so that the "SLOW" portion of the sign faces traffic. Motion traffic to proceed with free arm.





### **Alerting or Slowing Traffic--Daytime:**

To slow traffic, using a paddle sign, stand facing traffic with the "SLOW" portion of the sign showing. You may also extend your free arm with your palm facing the ground for emphasis. Slowly move your arm up and down in a "slow down" motion.



### **Releasing Traffic--Nighttime:**

Move back to your position on the road shoulder or to the barricaded lane. Lower your hand with the flashlight to your side and slowly signal the drivers to proceed.

### **To Slow Traffic--Nighttime:**

Use the paddle sign flagging techniques learned for daytime.

If you are using a flashlight or wand, face traffic and slowly swing the light across your body in a sweeping motion, making sure your arm does not swing above your shoulder.

### **Night Flagging:**

Make sure that your flag station is lighted. And, make sure tools, such as sign paddles, and clothes, such as vests and hard hats are retroreflectorized.

### **Stopping Traffic--Nighttime**

Stand, in a safe spot, facing traffic. Wave a flashlight or lighted wand slowly back and forth across your body. When the first vehicle has stopped, you may move to a position near the centerline or left of the traveled lane so that your signal may be seen by drivers approaching from the rear. However, be sure that you are visible if you do this. If you are using a paddle sign, use the regular method of stopping traffic you learned for daytime flagging.





## DO'S and DON'TS

--DO BE ALERT AT ALL TIMES. The difference could result in a loss of life/property.

--DO WEAR THE PROPER EQUIPMENT. You must wear an approved orange vest and hard hat. In addition, you may need to wear other optional items.

--DO ACQUAINT YOURSELF at the start of a shift as to current operations and activities, in order to better answer the public's questions.

--DO TREAT EACH DRIVER as if he/she were the first one you've handled all day. As far as the driver is concerned, he/she may think they are the first one.

--DO BE EXTRA CAREFUL when you are flagging at night. Remember that motorists will have a lot more difficulty in seeing you and the construction dangers.

--DO BECOME FAMILIAR with all of the equipment and traffic control devices--you can only help yourself by being informed.

--DO CONSIDER ALL TRUCKS TO BE HEAVILY LOADED. You must understand that a heavily loaded truck will take a much longer time to stop.

--DO HAVE AN ESCAPE ROUTE IN MIND.

--DO NOT WAVE YOUR STOP/SLOW PADDLE.

--DO NOT READ OR LISTEN TO A RADIO WHILE ON DUTY. Don't take part in unnecessary conversations with motorists, pedestrians or your fellow crew members. Your job demands all of your attention.

--DO NOT STAND WITH A GROUP OF PEOPLE. Always stand alone. And, if possible make sure that you contrast with the colors in your background.

--DO NOT LEAVE YOUR FLAG POSITION unless you are relieved by a certified flagger.

--DO NOT COME TO WORK IMPAIRED BY ALCOHOL, DRUGS, OR LACK OF SLEEP.

--DO NOT RECLINE, SIT OR SQUAT. It will not command respect from motorists. You will not be able to respond quickly to an emergency.

--DO NOT PARK YOUR PERSONAL CAR NEAR YOUR FLAGGING STATION.



## APPENDIX

### Stopping Distances Chart

The following chart shows you the average distance it takes for a vehicle to stop on clean, dry, level pavement. Remember, this is only the average distance. Some drivers may take further to stop. In addition, always be sure to consider all trucks as being heavily loaded, and thus, more difficult to stop.

Remember that adverse weather conditions will affect the stopping distances. So, when road conditions are wet or icy, keep in mind that it will take cars and trucks much longer to slow down or stop.

#### STOPPING DISTANCE\*

SPEED (MPH)	SPEED (FPS)	Stopping Sight Distance
20	29	115
25	37	155
30	44	200
35	51	250
40	59	305
45	66	360
50	73	425
55	81	495
60	88	570
65	95	645
70	103	730
75	110	820



## **FLAGGING SAFETY**

### **Ten Commandments:**

- 1 ) Your job is important.
- 2 ) Keep yourself physically and mentally alert.
- 3 ) Wear the required clothing.
- 4 ) Brighten your appearance with a smile.
- 5 ) Station yourself in the proper location.
- 6 ) Know the standard flagging procedure.
- 7 ) Make sure advance warning signs are in place.
- 8 ) Slow down traffic for safe approach.
- 9 ) Give special attention to one-way traffic.
- 10 ) Use proper equipment for nighttime flagging.

