

OSHA updates traffic construction safety standards

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WASHINGTON — A new construction standard for traffic control signs, signals, and barricades is expected to reduce fatalities and injuries at roadway worksites, according to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. The final rule becomes effective December 11, 2002.

"Every year more than 100 workers are killed and 20,000 more are injured at roadway construction sites," said OSHA Administrator John Henshaw. "These workers deserve the benefits of this new rule; improved traffic controls, more effective protective clothing, and the necessary information and guidance that will provide better protection from safety hazards on the job."

The rule requires compliance with either the 1993 or Millennium Edition version of Part VI of the Federal Highway Administration's Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), in place of the 1971 MUTCD.

The revised standard requires retro-reflective and illuminated devices at intermediate and long-term stationary temporary traffic control zones; warning devices for mobile operations at speeds above 20 mph; advance warning signs for certain closed paved shoulders; a transition area containing a merging taper when one lane is closed on a multi-lane road; temporary traffic control devices with traffic barriers that are immediately adjacent to an open lane; and temporary traffic barriers separating opposing traffic on a two-way roadway. p