



NC LEAGUE
OF MUNICIPALITIES
RISK MANAGEMENT SERVICES

HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST | WORKERS' COMPENSATION | PROPERTY & LIABILITY

308 WEST JONES STREET RALEIGH NC 27603 919-715-4000

Number 2014-28

September 2014

NEW MUTCD SIGN RETROREFLECTIVITY REQUIREMENTS

Traffic signs provide important information to drivers at all times, both day and night. To be effective, their visibility must be maintained. The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) addresses sign visibility in several Sections. These sections address factors such as uniformity, design, placement, operation, and maintenance. Previously, the MUTCD did not specify minimum retroreflectivity levels.

The new standards require that agencies maintain traffic signs to a minimum level of retroreflectivity. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) believes that this will promote safety while providing sufficient flexibility for agencies to choose a maintenance method that best matches their specific conditions.

The MUTCD does not imply that an agency must measure every sign. Rather, the new MUTCD language describes five methods that an agency can use to maintain traffic sign retroreflectivity at or above the minimum levels. Agencies can choose from these methods or combine them. Agencies are allowed to develop other appropriate methods based on engineering studies. However, agencies should adopt a consistent method that produced results that correspond to the current MUTCD.

The new MUTCD language recognizes that there may be some individual signs that do not meet the minimum retroreflectivity levels at a particular point in time. As long as the agency with jurisdiction is maintaining signs in accordance with Section 2A.09 of the MUTCD, the agency will be considered to be in compliance.

RETROREFLECTIVITY MAINTENANCE:

The MUTCD describes two basic types of methods that agencies can use to maintain sign retroreflectivity at or above the MUTCD minimum maintained retroreflectivity levels: Assessment Methods and Management Methods. A full report on these methods can be found at:

www.fhwa.dot.gov/retro

A “Retroreflectivity Toolkit” is also available at this site:

http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/roadway_dept/night_visib/retrotoolkit/

For additional information contact risk management services at **1- 800-228-0986** and select “**safety and risk control**” from the available options.

This Bulletin is intended to assist in minimizing potential exposure to financial loss and is not intended to insure compliance with federal, state or local laws, regulations or rules, nor is it intended to be a substitute for legal counsel, actuarial assistance or other professional services. By offering periodic information on safety or risk management topics, neither the League nor its sponsored risk pools undertake to assume or guarantee safety or risk from injury or loss.