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The 1982 Indiana Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (IMUTCD) is intended to be used as a guide with regard to the recommended design and suggested usage of traffic control devices. When used as a guide it allows the engineer to use his discretion and engineering judgment in the placement of traffic signs based on existing field conditions.

There are several major changes which have been incorporated to give the 1982 edition this new latitude. One of these is the definition of the terms “Shall”, “Should”, and “May”. “Shall” has been modified with the term “Normally” to mean a normally mandatory practice instead of one which is strictly mandatory. “Should” has also been modified with the term “Normally” to mean a normally advised or recommended practice instead of one which is strictly advised or recommended. The definition of “May” remains as a permissive practice.

All references to the design of signs and their support systems have been removed from this edition of the manual. Since the manual is promulgated into law, it was not considered to be advisable to incorporate design measures in the manual since these may change based on the current state of the art. All references to the number of posts to be utilized in mounting signs as well as the type of posts to be used have been eliminated. All sheet signs previously used a 90 mph wind loading for design calculations in the determination of post sizes. Based on the average life expectancy of sheet signs it was determined that the 90 mph criteria was too excessive. We therefore are intending to utilize a 60 mph wind loading for the design of sheet sign support systems. It is our intention to make this change effective July 1, 1982.

All references to the thickness of sign backing material to be utilized for sheet signs as well as the recommended spacing for hole punching have been removed. The thickness of sign backing material and their application may be found in the “Indiana State Highway Standard Specifications—1978”. The fabrication and punching details of sheet signs may be found in the FHWA publication “Standard Highway Signs—1979”. The “Indiana Supplemental Signs” are not in-
cluded in this publication. The fabrication and publication details for these signs will be made available upon request to the Division of Traffic, Indiana Department of Highways.

The vertical and lateral clearance of signs remains in the manual with only one change. On freeways and expressways the lateral clearance of sheet signs from the edge of a paved or stabilized shoulder has been changed from 2 ft to 6 ft. This change was incorporated as a cost savings measure to help eliminate the maintenance replacement of sheet signs damaged by vehicles using the shoulder.

This edition of the manual has incorporated a number of new sheet signs. The Chevron Alignment Sign (W1-8) is used to supplement standard delineation and as an alternate or supplement to the Large Arrow Sign (W 1-6, W 1-7). In light of the popularity of carpooling and the use of high occupancy vehicles, new signs have been incorporated for preferential lane usage (R3-10 thru R3-15), park and ride facilities (D4-2), and car pool information signage (D12-2). Criteria for the posting of Tourist Information Centers and Radio Information signage has also been incorporated. The use of symbol signs is more heavily emphasized in this edition to forward the application of international signing principles. An attempt has also been made to promote the utilization of sign spreading and positive guidance concepts. In order to promote uniformity, the Indiana manual has adopted the federal sign numbering system as well as the new sections on railroad-highway grade crossings and bicycle facilities.

In summary, the 1982 edition of the IMUTCD is intended to be used as a guide regarding the placement of traffic control devices. When used in this manner, in conjunction with sound engineering judgment, it provides the traffic engineer with flexibility in the placement of traffic signs based on existing field conditions.