Flagger Safety on Construction Sites Meeting Kit

Flaggers have one of the most dangerous jobs in the country. Even if a flagger has the best training and is paying attention to what is going on around them at all times, they still put their lives in danger every day to direct traffic in work zones and make conditions safer for workers and drivers.

When working near high-speed traffic like this, driver inattention or any number of other factors can quickly result in an accident. In cases like these, the flaggers who work closest to this traffic can be severely harmed.

Construction flaggers face grave dangers as they are either flee or are stuck, which in turn causes a dangerous situation.

Flaggers face unique hazards, making it crucial to follow proper flagger safety techniques each time they pick up the flag.

ROLE OF FLAGGER (TCP)

- Stop, slow, and safely direct traffic through work or construction sites.
- Protect workers in the construction zone by regulating traffic flow.
- Give traffic control directions and signals clearly and precisely so that motorists understand their meaning.
- Keep the flow of traffic moving with as few delays as possible.

HIGH VISIBILITY CLOTHING AND SAFETY EQUIPMENT

A flagger must wear warning clothes in specific, highly visible colors. They can wear a vest, jacket, or shirt in colors of orange, strong yellow-green, or fluorescent versions of these. These garments must be worn rain or shine. If it is dark, the flagger should be wearing reflectorized garments, visible from a minimum distance of 1,000 feet.

WHAT A TRAFFIC CONTROL PERSON SHOULD KNOW BEFORE EACH

JOB

- The overall traffic protection plan and layout of the traffic control zone.
- Your duties, role and responsibilities.
- That you have the right training for this job, and that you understand your duties.
- What activities will be done on the work or construction site (e.g., paving, grading, etc.).
- What equipment is present and how the equipment will be operated (e.g., scrapers, trucks, graders, etc.).
- What personal protective equipment is required.
- Practices and procedures for that job (how to stop and slow traffic), where to stand, etc. The traffic control zone will vary depending on the speed allowed on the roadway, volume of traffic, weather conditions, etc.
- What communication methods will be used, including how to use radios, hand signals, etc.
- What to do in an emergency, including your personal escape route in case a vehicle comes too close.
- Be sure you have adequate eye sight and hearing ability to do this job safely.
- How communication will be handled if there is a need for a third (or more) traffic control person, such as when the work zone is around curves or hills where sight lines to the other end of the work zone are obstructed.
- That the “stop-slow” sign you will use is in good repair (e.g., undamaged, clean).
- That measures are in place and at appropriate distances to give motorist enough warning to slow down.
- How to report incidents (near-misses, accidents, etc.).
- That a traffic control person should never leave their position unattended

WHAT A TRAFFIC CONTROL PERSON DOES TO CONTROL TRAFFIC

- Always stay alert. The situation can change very quickly.
- Be visible. Stand where you can see traffic and be seen by traffic.
- Think ahead and plan your escape route. Know where you will move to if a motorist drives too close.
- Stand “alone”, which means do not stand in a group of people. Drivers must be able to see you clearly.
- Stand the correct distance from the work area. This will vary with the visibility, speed and volume of traffic.
- Keep visual contact with the other traffic control person if you are not using radios.
- Work as a team with other traffic control persons.
- Hold the stop/slow sign away from your body, and in the driver’s line of sight.
- Raise your free hand with the palm facing the driver to stop traffic.
- Allow time for the vehicle to stop safely by turning the sign when the vehicle is at an appropriate distance away for the speed it is travelling.
- After stopping the first vehicle, move to a safe position where the incoming next vehicle can see you.
- Be aware of everything going on around you, behind you, lane beside you,

etc.

- When you are ready to release traffic, return to your position outside the travel lane, confirm with the other traffic control person it is safe to let traffic move, turn the sign to “slow”, and with your free arm, signal to drivers to proceed.
- To slow moving traffic, extend the slow sign away from your body (but do not wave it), and use your free hand in an up and down motion (palm down).
- Be alert for emergency vehicles (police, fire). These vehicles have priority through the traffic control zone.
- Guide cyclists and pedestrians safely through the zone.
- Cover or remove traffic control person signs when there are no traffic control persons present.
- Do not assume a vehicle will stop until it has actually come to a full and complete stop.
- Do not look away from on-coming traffic.
- Do not do any other activity, other than control traffic.

FINAL WORD

Flaggers (TCP) are required at locations on a construction site where barricades and warning signs cannot control the moving traffic. In these required situations, flaggers (TCP) must be placed in relation to the equipment or operation so they can give effective warning.