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Picture 1. Pedestrian Crossing W11-A2 and Bicycle Crossing W11-1 signs at a busy intersection

On the Road in New Hampshire

Signs at Pedestrian Crosswalks: New MUTCD Defines Sign Types and Placement

The *Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices* (MUTCD) governs the design and use of traffic control devices for all public streets and highways. The *MUTCD Millennium Edition* took effect in New Hampshire this spring. This article describes its rules and recommendations for pedestrian crossing signs. It also describes use of the New Hampshire Supplemental Crosswalk Identification Device within the MUTCD rules.

Pedestrian Crossing Sign (W11-2)

The MUTCD Pedestrian Crossing Sign is designated W11-2. It, like other Crossing Signs, warn of conflicts that are relatively confined, or occur randomly over a segment of roadway.

The *MUTCD Millennium Edition* has added a new design for advance crossing and crossing

signs. In the past, crossing signs were distinguished from advance crossing signs by the use of crosswalk lines on the sign. The sign in Picture 1, designated a W11-A2, is an example. However, people rarely noticed the difference. The illustrated W11-2 sign is the correct sign for new installations. The effective date for changing existing W11-2A signs to W11-2 signs is January 17, 2001.

In Picture 1 the W11-2A Pedestrian Crossing Sign has a fluorescent yellow green background. The Bicycle Crossing Sign (W11-1) behind it has a yellow background. The MUTCD recommends that one background color be used for all crossing signs within a zone or area.

Which color is best in the Picture 1 situation? The UNH campus is on the right and downtown Durham is on the left. There is heavy pedestrian and bicycle traffic at the crosswalk across a medium volume one way street. Here, and in school zones in general, fluorescent yellow green backgrounds are recommended. And should be used for both signs.



W11-2

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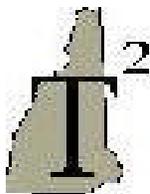
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Pedestrian Crossing Sign Placement

In Picture 1 the Pedestrian Crossing Sign is correctly placed with regard to the crosswalk. Correct placement also involves lateral offset and mounting height.

Lateral offset is the distance from the edge of the pavement (if there is no shoulder) to the near edge of the sign. The MUTCD Standard is a minimum of 6 feet. An Option, however, states that "signs may be placed on existing supports used for other purposes, such as...utility poles."

What does one do then, if the utility pole is too close to the road, such as in Picture 1? The MUTCD emphasizes the use of engineering judgment, which should consider the intent of lateral offset. Minimum lateral offset is intended to keep trucks and cars that use the shoulders from striking the signs or supports. In Picture 1 the curb restricts motorists from hitting the sign. Of course, the utility pole is the greater danger.

Mounting height provides clearance for cars and pedestrian as well as visibility. The MUTCD Standard is, "Where parking or pedestrian movements occur, the clearance to the bottom of the sign shall be at least 7 feet." In Picture 1, the height to the Pedestrian Crossing Sign is 6 feet 5 inches. It should be raised when the sign is replaced.

The Bicycle Crossing Signs in Picture 1 are obviously too low. They also have improper lateral offset. Even if these signs were in good condition (which they aren't), they should be replaced with a single sign mounted 7 feet high on a new post at proper offset. To be consistent with the W11-2A, the new sign should have a fluorescent yellow green background.

Supplemental Crosswalk Identification Device

In New Hampshire Supplemental Crosswalk Identification Device (SCID) inform drivers of pedestrian crosswalks. Being a supplemental sign, local governments must still install traffic signs and pavement markings as described in the MUTCD Part 3.

The SCID is shown in Picture 2. It can be used at pedestrian crossings in New Hampshire to supplement MUTCD devices. Picture 2 shows an appropriate use, in that it supplements pavement markings. It

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Picture 2. A SCID at a crosswalk, the intended use of the supplemental device

Milestones:

Mike Lynch was promoted to the position of the Director of Public Works in Durham.

Scott Pike has rejoined the highway department in Rochester.

Doug Sargent is the Director of Public Works in Ossipee.

Websites:

There are many helpful websites for public works employees. If you have others that your colleagues could benefit from, send the urls to t2.center@unh.edu. We'll publish the site and your name in Road Business. (No commercial sites please).

UNH T2 Center: <http://www.t2.unh.edu>

NHCRP 350

http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/roadside_hardware.htm

NH Department of Environmental Services

<http://www.des.state.nh.us/>

NEW! New Hampshire Department of Transportation

<http://webster.state.nh.us/dot/index.htm>

New Hampshire Department of Labor

<http://webster.state.nh.us/dol/>

NPDES Phase II

<http://www.epa.gov/owm/sw/phase2/index.htm>

Snow and Ice Control

<http://www.sicop.net/>

Weather

<http://www.intellicast.com>

<http://www.weather.com>

<http://www.weatherunderground.com/>

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Picture 3. The appropriate sign is a W11-2; not a Supplemental Crosswalk Identification Device

should, however, be placed before the crosswalk relative to the direction of the one way traffic.

The SCID in Picture 3 is used as a substitute rather than a supplement for a MUTCD sign. The "Standard" or mandated rule for a W11-2 Pedestrian Crossing Sign is to use it adjacent to the crossing location. An "Option" or permissive rule allows Pedestrian Crossing Sign placement in advance to alert road users of unexpected entry into the roadway. The W11-2 is the appropriate sign for this application. A supplemental plaque with the legend AHEAD installed below the W11-2 sign would warn motorists of the crosswalk.

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