



Major Provisions of MUTCD Sect. 6-I

5-Minute Lesson Plan

In January, the 2009 edition of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) was published by the U.S. Department of Transportation. New Jersey automatically adopts the latest edition. In June, the Attorney General office endorsed the Highway Incident Traffic Safety Guidelines for Emergency Responders (NJ HITSG). The NJ HITSG is designed specifically for limited access highways (such as the I-95 system, the Garden State Parkway, and the NJ Turnpike), while the MUTCD covers all roadways in the state. Chapter 6I – “Incidents” of the MUTCD governs traffic control measures during motor vehicle crashes, etc.. Effective traffic control increases safety for both emergency workers and the motoring public. Key provisions include:

- The Incident Command System is required by both documents.
 - All responders must be proficient in establishing command and working in an ICS operation. The first arriving responder is the Incident Commander, until Command is transferred to a higher authority.
 - On roadways, the police are typically the Lead Agency. However, this may change if the incident includes fire, hazardous materials, or injuries. This information can be found in the municipality’s Emergency Operation Plan.
- Traffic incidents should be classified as Major, Intermediate, or Minor, depending on the anticipated duration of the incident. The amount of traffic safety measures depend on the duration of the incident. Emergency agencies must be prepared to effectively control traffic for all classifications
 - Major – expected duration of more than 2 hours
 - These incidents require extensive warning signs, possible detours, fully equipped personnel to direct traffic (called flaggers in the MUTCD), and more.
 - Warning signs for incidents should have a black legend on a fluorescent pink background.
 - Intermediate – expected duration of between 30 minutes to 2 hours
 - Minor – expected duration under 30 minutes
 - While incidents typically only require short periods of traffic control. on-scene responders are still responsible to warn and direct traffic safely through the scene.
- All responders on a roadway shall wear ANSI/ISEA 107–2004 Class 2 or 3, or Public Safety Apparel Standard ANSI/ISEA 207-2006, for high visibility apparel (Chapter 6D.03).
 - Turnout gear meeting NFPA 1761-1986, or later, is permitted while exposed to fire.
 - High visibility vests shall not be worn during firefighting, but should be worn afterwards.
- Flares or light sticks may be used, but STOP / SLOW paddles should be available for Major Incidents.
- Emergency vehicle shall be safe-positioned. The NJ HITSG recommends the first-arriving fire truck be positioned to block one or two lanes of traffic (blocker vehicle) and the second truck (shadow vehicle) be placed 50 feet before (upstream of) the first vehicle. Ambulances are typically positioned past (downstream of) the incident.
- Emergency Vehicle Lighting is essential for warning motorists in the early stages. However too much can be distracting, or even blinding. Responders must evaluate the effect of vehicles’ emergency and driving lights on on-coming traffic.

This lesson plan is intended for general information purposes only. It should not be construed as legal advice or legal opinion regarding any specific or factual situation. Always follow your organization’s policies and procedures as presented by your manager or supervisor. For further information regarding this bulletin, please contact your Safety Director at 877.398.3046.