

South Carolina Department of Transportation
Traffic Engineering Guidelines

NUMBER: TG-22

SUBJECT: “Move Over or Reduce Speed for Stopped Emergency Vehicles” Sign

BACKGROUND: S. C. Code of Laws Section 56-5-1538(G) states:
A person driving a vehicle approaching a stationary authorized emergency vehicle that is giving a signal by displaying alternately flashing red, red and white, blue, or red and blue lights, or amber or yellow warning lights shall proceed with due caution, significantly reduce the speed of the vehicle, and:
(1) yield the right-of-way by making a lane change into a lane not adjacent to that of the authorized emergency vehicle, if possible with due regard to safety and traffic conditions, if on a highway having at least four lanes with not less than two lanes proceeding in the same direction as the approaching vehicle; or
(2) maintain a safe speed for road conditions, if changing lanes is impossible or unsafe.

To inform motorists of this law, the Department will install signs with the legend “Move Over or Reduce Speed for Stopped Emergency Vehicles”. This guideline has been developed to establish a consistent and uniform method for determining where to erect these signs.

GUIDELINE: Based on Section 56-5-1538, the Department will erect signs to warn motorists to move over or reduce speed for stopped emergency vehicles. All signs shall be located and erected in accordance with the MUTCD, the *Standard Specifications for Highway Construction* (latest edition) and the *Standard Drawings For Road Construction* (latest edition). The following criteria are to be used when determining where to erect this sign:

1. The sign shall be erected on all interstate facilities entering the state near the state line and may be erected downstream after major interchanges between other interstate and freeway type facilities.
2. The sign shall be erected on all four-lane divided highways or multi-lane facilities with two or more travel lanes in the same direction entering the state near the state line. The sign may be erected on other four-lane divided facilities where the speed limit is greater than 45 mph.
3. All other requests for signs should be forwarded to the appropriate District Traffic Engineer for approval. The request should include crash data associated with vehicle crashes involving stopped emergency vehicles along with any other pertinent data, such as records of arrests or results of targeted enforcement associated with aggressive driving. The final determination on the use of these signs at any specific location rests with the District Traffic Engineer, based on sign spacing, available funding, etc.

4. If agreement between the District Traffic Engineer and Requestor can not be reached on any specific sign installation, the matter should be referred to the State Traffic Operations Engineer for final resolution.
5. Where possible, the signs should be installed behind guardrail, along a cut section of the roadway, or other selected locations where the signs will cause the least safety and/or installation problems.
6. The sign design for "Move Over or Reduce Speed for Emergency Vehicles" shall conform to the attached layout.
7. All costs associated with fabricating, erecting, and maintaining any approved "Move Over or Reduce Speed for Stopped Emergency Vehicles" signing will be the responsibility of SCDOT.

Approved: Richard B. Wertz
Director of Traffic Engineering

4-14-09
Date