



SHIFT BRIEFING



MOBILE WORK ZONES TRAFFIC CONTROL BEST PRACTICES

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, over 1,000 workers are killed yearly in work zones on our nation's roadways. New Jersey has experienced a fatality and several serious injuries involving municipal workers operating in mobile work zones in the past 3 years. This Toolbox Talk will address effective Temporary Traffic Controls (TTC) in a Mobile Work Zone, such as leaf collection, cold patching, trash collection, or bulk pick-up.

The [Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices \(MUTCD\), 2009 Edition](#), is the law in New Jersey. Supervisors and workers MUST be aware of the requirements in this document. Part 6 on Temporary Traffic Control is the standard when working on or near roadways.

Part 6 defines a 'Mobile Work Zone' as an operation that moves continually or with short stops, typically up to 15 minutes.

Safety in mobile operations should not be compromised by using fewer devices simply because the operation will frequently change location. According to the MUTCD, devices having greater mobility might be necessary, such as signs mounted on trucks, or larger, more imposing, or more visible can be used effectively and economically. Some additional guidance from the MUTCD includes:

- Warning signs, high-intensity rotating, flashing, oscillating, or strobe lights on a vehicle, flags, and/or channelizing devices should be used and moved periodically to keep them near the mobile work area. A vehicle's four-way hazard lights MAY NOT be used in place of high-intensity amber lights.
- Appropriately marked vehicles with high-intensity rotating/strobe lights may be used in place of signs and channelizing devices for mobile operations. These vehicles may be augmented with warning signs.
- Shadow vehicles may be equipped with an arrow panel when vehicular traffic speeds or volumes are high. Right or left arrows may never be used on 2-lane roadways. Where feasible, warning signs should be placed along the roadway and moved periodically as work progresses.
- Flaggers may be used for mobile operations that often involve frequent short stops.

Some additional considerations:

- The above are MINIMUM STANDARDS. Towns must use good judgment and local knowledge when establishing temporary traffic controls (TTC).
- Workers must wear ANSI Class 2 high-visibility apparel. Class 3 is required when the roadway is high speed, high volume, or low visibility (rain, snow, fog, etc.).
- Workers are required to receive training on setting up TTC.
- Drive through TTC periodically to check the visibility of operations to approaching drivers.

Discussion Questions:

1. What operations or locations should extra precautions be taken to protect employees in mobile work zones?
2. What extra precautions would make the operation more visible to motorists?