

Resources for Traffic Control Devices

- **Title 67 Pa. Code, Chapter 212.5**, lists municipal responsibilities for installing and maintaining traffic control devices. www.pacode.com/secure/data/067/chapter212/chap212toc.html#212.5
- **PennDOT Publication 212, Section 212.5**, lists five sections that pertain to installation and maintenance responsibilities for traffic control devices:
 - a) Authority to erect traffic-control devices (75 Pa. Consolidated Statutes)
 - b) Traffic-control devices on state-designated highways
 - c) Traffic-control devices on local highways
 - d) Traffic-control devices on local highway approaches to intersections with state-designated highways
 - e) Police authority to use temporary signing for emergencies or to set up checkpoints
- **Strike-off Letter 494-17-05**, dated November 2, 2017, reinforces and clarifies the distinction between state and municipal responsibilities for traffic control devices. www.dot14.state.pa.us/ECMS/
- **PennDOT Publication 236** contains official Pennsylvania signs. [www.dot.state.pa.us/public/pubsforms/Publications/PUB%20236M/Sign%20Index%20for%20Change%201%202011-13%20\(nomenclature\).pdf](http://www.dot.state.pa.us/public/pubsforms/Publications/PUB%20236M/Sign%20Index%20for%20Change%201%202011-13%20(nomenclature).pdf)

MUNICIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ROADWAY SIGNING

by Steve Thompson, Pennoni

Roadway owners at every level of government share responsibility for properly installing and maintaining traffic control devices. However, the traveling public is not concerned with which agency places or maintains these devices; they only want consistent and clear messages from signs and markings.

State regulations, as well as the costs of installing and maintaining traffic control devices, demand that municipalities pay careful attention to their responsibilities for installing and maintaining these devices, which are critical for keeping motorists and pedestrians safe.

Title 67 defines a traffic control device as “Signs, signals, markings, and devices consistent with this chapter [212] placed or erected by authority of a public body or official having jurisdiction, for the purposes of regulating, warning, or guiding traffic.”

This tech sheet will focus on signs.



PennDOT and municipalities share responsibility for making sure signs and messages are consistent and clear for the motoring public.

Traffic-Control Devices on State-Designated Highways

Generally, local authorities, other than cities of the first and second class, must obtain written approval from PennDOT to install a traffic control device as well as revise or remove any installed by the department or its contractors. Cities of the first and second class may install, revise, or remove any traffic-control device without PennDOT approval unless an agreement states otherwise.

All local authorities may install, revise, or remove on state-designated highways a few signs without PennDOT approval. They are:

- Stopping, standing, or parking signs (R7 and R8 series), and
- Street name signs (D3 series).

However, PennDOT approval is required for any local authority other than a city of the first or second class to install and maintain any of the following signs on state-designated highways prior to any change in the traffic restriction:

- Speed limit signs (R2-1) for speed limits of 35 mph or less
- Pedestrian group signs (R9 Series)
- Traffic signal group signs (R10 Series)
- Street Closed [date] to [date] signs (R11-10)
- Snowmobile Road [dates] Closed to All Other Vehicles signs (R11-11)
- All Trucks Must Enter Weigh Station (R13-1-1) and weigh station signs (D8 series) for weigh stations not owned or operated by PennDOT
- Signal Ahead signs (W3-3)
- Children group signs (W15 Series)
- Parking area signs (D4-1)
- Bicycle route signs (D11-1)
- Traffic signal speed signs (I1-1)
- Trail group signs (I4 series)
- Snowmobile and all-terrain vehicles group signs (I12 series)
- School zone speed limits and all school signs (S series)

Table 1 from PennDOT Strike-Off Letter 494-17-05 shows who is responsible and whether approval is required for signing as well as other traffic control devices on state-designated highways.

TABLE 1 – RESPONSIBILITY FOR TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES ON STATE DESIGNATED HIGHWAYS - CONVENTIONAL HIGHWAYS

Traffic Control Device	State Designated Conventional Highway		
	Responsible Authority	Department Approval Required	Regulation Cite (67 Pa. Code §212.5)
Revision or removal of traffic control device installed by the Department or by a contractor for the Department	Local Authority or Department as detailed below	Yes	(b)(1)(i)
<i>Installation, revision, removal, maintenance, operation of traffic control devices within cities of first and second class (city)</i>			
Traffic control devices as required in agreement between city and the Department	City	Agreement	(b)(1)(ii)(A)
Traffic signals			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City without municipal traffic engineering certification in accordance with Chapter 205 (relating to municipal traffic engineering certification) 	City	Yes	(b)(1)(ii)(B)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City with municipal traffic engineering certification 	City	No	
All Other Traffic Control Devices	City	No	(b)(1)(ii)
<i>Installation, revision, removal, maintenance, and operation of traffic control devices within local municipalities other than cities of the first and second class</i>			
Regulatory Signs			
Pedestrian Group Signs (R9 Series)	Local Authority	Yes	(b)(1)(v)(D)
Railroad			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Railroad Crossbuck Sign (R15-1), Track Sign (R15-2), Emergency Notification Sign (I-13a), Other signs, gates, or lights within railroad company's ROW 	Railroad Company Railroad Company Railroad Company	Yes Yes Yes	(b)(1)(v)(I)
Snowmobile Road Closed to All Other Vehicles Sign (R11-11)	Local Authority	Yes	(b)(1)(v)(G)
Speed Limit Signs (R2-1), 35 mph or less, <i>except</i>	Local Authority	Yes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hazardous grade speed limit signs Bridge speed limit signs Department rest areas speed limit signs Department welcome center speed limit signs Department weigh station speed limit signs 	Department Department Department Department Department	Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes	(b)(1)(v)(B)
Stopping, Standing, or Parking Signs (R7 and R8 series)	Local Authority	No	(b)(1)(iv)(A)
Street Closed (R11-10)	Local Authority	Yes	(b)(1)(v)(F)
Traffic Signal Group Signs (R10 Series)	Local Authority	Yes	(b)(1)(v)(E)

Traffic Control Device	State Designated Conventional Highway		
	Responsible Authority	Department Approval Required	Regulation Cite (67 Pa. Code §212.5)
Weigh Stations not owned or operated by the Department <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Truck Must Enter Weigh Station (R13-1) Weigh Station signs (D8 Series) 	Local Authority Local Authority	Yes Yes	(b)(1)(v)(H)
Warning Signs			
Children Group Series (W15 Series)	Local Authority	Yes	(b)(1)(v)(L)
Entrance and Crossing Signs (W11 Series) <i>except</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Deer Crossing (W11-3),</i> <i>Elk Crossing (W11-20),</i> <i>Horsedrawn Vehicle (W11-14),</i> <i>Left Turns and Cross Traffic Sign (W11-105),</i> <i>Left Turns (W11-106),</i> <i>Watch for Turns Sign (W11-107)</i> 	Local Authority Department Department Department Department Department Department	Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes	(b)(1)(v)(K)
Signal Ahead Sign (W3-3)	Local Authority	Yes	(b)(1)(v)(J)
Guide Signs			
Bicycle Route Sign (D11-1)	Local Authority	Yes	(b)(1)(v)(O)
Parking Area Sign (D4-1)	Local Authority	Yes	(b)(1)(v)(M)
Street Name Signs (D3 Series)	Local Authority	No	(b)(1)(iv)(B)
Telephone Directional Signs (D9-1)	Local Authority, Installation by telephone company	Yes	(b)(1)(v)(N)
General Information Signs			
Snowmobile and All Terrain Vehicle Group Signs (I12 Series)	Local Authority	Yes	(b)(1)(v)(R)
Traffic Signal Speed Sign (I1-1)	Local Authority	Yes	(b)(1)(v)(P)
Trail Group Sign (I4 Series)	Local Authority	Yes	(b)(1)(v)(Q)
School Signs			
School signs (S Series)	Local Authority	Yes	(b)(1)(v)(S)
School Zone Speed Limits	Local Authority	Yes	(b)(1)(v)(S)
Pavement Markings			
Crosswalk pavement markings at intersections	Local Authority	No	(b)(1)(iv)(C)
Crosswalk pavement markings at midblock locations	Local Authority	Yes	(b)(1)(v)(T)
Curb markings	Local Authority	No	(b)(1)(iv)(E)
On-street parking - parallel parking and existing angle parking stall markings	Local Authority	No	(b)(1)(iv)(D)
On-street parking – creation of new angle parking pavement markings	Local Authority	Yes	(b)(1)(iv)(D)
Stop and Yield Line markings at intersections	Local Authority	Yes	(b)(1)(v)(C)
Traffic Signals and Traffic Signaling Devices			
Traffic Signals, and all associated signs and markings included on the Department-approved traffic signal plan	Local Authority	Yes	(b)(1)(v)(A)
All Other Traffic Control Devices	Department	Yes	(b)(1)(iii)
Parking Meters	Local Authority	No	(b)(1)(iv)(F)

Traffic-control devices on local highways

Local authorities are responsible for signing on local roads except for two circumstances when PennDOT approval is required:

- Installing, revising, or removing a school zone speed limit or traffic signal, and
- Revising or removing a sign that was installed under an agreement with the department.

Table 2 from PennDOT Strike-Off Letter 494-17-05 shows who is responsible and whether approval is required for signing as well as other traffic control devices on local highways.

TABLE 2 – RESPONSIBILITY FOR TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES ON LOCAL HIGHWAYS

Traffic Control Device	Local Highway		
	Responsible Authority	Department Approval Required ¹	Regulation Cite (67 Pa. Code §212.5)
School Zone Speed Limits and Associated Signs	Local Authority	Yes	(c)(1)
Revising or removing a traffic-control device installed in accordance with an agreement between the local authorities and the Department.	Local Authority	Yes	(c)(2)
All Other Traffic Control Devices	Local Authority	No	(c)

¹ Department approval is not required for cities of first and second class or other local authorities that have municipal traffic engineering certification in accordance with Chapter 205.

Traffic Control Devices on Local Highway Approaches to Intersections with State-Designated Highways

PennDOT is responsible for approving traffic control on all approaches at intersections of local and state-designated highways. At new intersections, traffic-control devices must be installed as required by an approved highway occupancy permit by the permittee.

At existing intersections, municipalities are responsible for installing and maintaining specific signs on the local highway approaches, but department approval is required. These signs are:

- Stop signs (R1-1)
- Yield signs (R1-2)
- No Right Turn signs (R3-1)
- No Left Turn signs (R3-2)
- No Turns signs (R3-3)
- Left turn signs (R3-5)
- Left Lane Must Turn Left signs (R3-7L)
- One-way signs (R6 series)
- Other similar type of traffic restriction, prohibition, or lane-control signs

Stop Ahead (W3-1) and Yield Ahead (W3-2) signs are the responsibility of local authorities, including determining if these signs are warranted. PennDOT approval is not necessary to install these signs.

Municipalities also have to obtain written

TABLE 3 – RESPONSIBILITY FOR TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES ON LOCAL HIGHWAY APPROACHES TO INTERSECTIONS WITH STATE-DESIGNATED HIGHWAYS

Traffic Control Device	Local Highway Approaches to Intersections with State Designated Highway		
	Responsible Authority	Department Approval Required ¹	Regulation Cite (67 Pa. Code §212.5)
New intersections – traffic control devices as required by an approved highway occupancy permit (HOP) issued in accordance with Chapter 441 (relating to access to and occupancy of highways by driveways and local roads)	Installation by HOP Permittee	Yes	(d)(2)
Existing intersections – traffic control devices as required to control traffic on the local highway approaches, including replacement or repair of missing, damaged, blocked or outdated devices in need of upgrade.	Local Authority or HOP Permittee	Yes	(d)(3)
Stop Signs (R1-1) and Yield Signs (R1-2)	Local Authority	Yes	(d)(3)(i)(A)
Stop Ahead Signs (W3-1) and Yield Ahead Signs (W3-2)	Local Authority, including determining need for	No	(d)(3)(i)(A)
Stop and Yield Line markings	Local Authority	Yes	(d)(5)
Traffic Signals and Traffic Signaling Devices	See Table 1		
Traffic restriction, prohibitions or lane control signs, such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Right Turn Signs (R3-1) • No Left Turn Signs (R3-2) • No Turns Signs (R3-3) • Left Turn Signs (R3-5) • Left Lane Must Turn Left Signs (R3-7L) • One-Way Signs (R6 Series) 	Local Authority	Yes	(d)(3)(i)(C)
All Other Traffic Control Devices	Local Authority	No	(d)

¹The Department is responsible for approving the traffic control at intersections of local highways and State designated highways, including the local highway approaches.

approval from PennDOT to revise a traffic control scheme.

Table 3 from PennDOT Strike-Off Letter 494-17-05 shows who is responsible and when

approval is required for signing as well as other traffic control devices on local highway approaches to intersections with state-designated highways.