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SCOPE AND NATURE

The purpose of this Engineering Practice is to provide for signs to be conspicuously placed and used for identification and emergency situations at highway and pedestrian grade crossings so that the public can notify the proper authorities to report a stalled vehicle or an unsafe condition that may be present at the crossing that could endanger the operation of trains. These signs are part of the Emergency Notification System. This practice is in compliance with the FRA Final Rule Vol 77, No. 113; FR 35164 dated June 12, 2012.

SPECIAL REFERENCE

See 49 CFR Parts 234.309, 234.311 and 234.317. Also reference the MUTCD 2009 Section 2A.19 and 8B.18 and NCHRP (National Cooperative Highway Research Program) Report 350. See Standard Plan SP-462-4.

SPECIAL MATERIALS

When sign posts are used for the conspicuous display of the emergency signs they shall be galvanized crashworthy breakaway type and compliant with NCHRP Report 350.


PROCEDURE

Each highway and pedestrian grade crossing on Amtrak property must be equipped with a sign identifying the crossing location by name and milepost number to the nearest tenth of a mile visible to passing train crews and with Emergency Notification Signs (ENS) conspicuously placed on each approach to the crossing. Only one (1) ENS sign is required at farm crossing. ENS sign placement on a signal bungalow is NOT acceptable.

The ENS sign must be conspicuous both day and night in varying weather conditions. The sign placement must not obstruct any traffic control device or the view of any approaching trains. The sign may be mounted on a breakaway post, signal masts, or cross-buck assemblies.

If post mounted, a galvanized 1-1/2" "U" channel shall be used with a break-away connector capable of 360° shear, break clear at ground level, and be compliant with NCHRP Report 350. The sign shall be mounted with 3/8" stainless steel bolts, nuts, and washers, avoiding excessive torque that will deform the sign.

If mast mounted, stainless steel straps with sign brackets shall be used. All attachments bolts shall be stainless steel.

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DOT INVENTORY NUMBER

The ENS sign shall exhibit clearly the uniquely assigned DOT number for the road crossing where it is displayed. The six (6) digits and one (1) letter of the DOT number shall be acquired from the regulation-required U.S. DOT National Crossing Inventory. The 1-800 emergency telephone number displayed on the ENS sign must be the toll free number established to receive reports pursuant to CFR 234.303 for the road crossing where it is displayed.

The toll free number selected shall be as follows:

Territory	Toll Free Number	Remarks
Chicago Union Station	1-800-390-3346	Will ring in Chicago Central Control Center, CUS North Train Director
Michigan Line	1-800-870-9764	Will ring in Chicago Central Control Center, Amtrak Michigan Line Dispatching Center
New England Division	1-800-243-1255	Will ring in Boston CETC Dispatching Center
Mid-Atlantic Division	1-800-446-9672	Will ring in Wilmington CETC Dispatching Center
Metropolitan Division	1-800-530-2075	Will ring in New York CETC Dispatching Center


CONSTRUCTION DETAILS

The ENS sign sample is shown in Fig. 1. The sign must use HIP retro-reflective sheeting and be 20" wide and 18" high with a one (1) inch minimum character height. The text must be white on a blue background with a 1/2" white border. The U.S. DOT number may be black text on a white background. The 1-800 telephone number that is displayed shall be of a two (2) inch font size. The sign shall be constructed from 0.080" aluminum and have FHWA standard rounded corners.

ENS SIGN ORIENTATION

The sign orientation shall be at right angles to the direction of and face the traffic on the approach intended to serve. Signs should minimize exposure to vehicular traffic.

The mounting should not interfere with legibility nor should it intrude into pedestrian walkways. (See Standard plan SP-462-4). Post mounted signs should be mounted to the

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right of the approach with a minimum lateral offset of 12 feet from the traveled edge of the roadway. If the roadway shoulder is greater than 6 feet, then a minimum offset for post mounted signs should be 6 feet from the edge of the shoulder. On conventional roads where the stated offset is impractical, then a lateral offset of 2 feet may be used, or in business, commercial, or residential areas where sidewalks or poles are close to the curb, a lateral offset of at least 1 foot from the curb may be used (See MUTCD Manual Section 2A.19).

MATERIAL SOURCES

Emergency Signs may be purchased from:

1. Railway Signs, 2077 Hwy 32 Halfway Mo 65663. Toll Free 855-537-0275; Telephone: 417-445-3618; E-mail: kyla.vest@railwaysigns.com
2. Lyle Signs, Inc., 6294 Bury Drive, Eden Prairie, MN 55346 Telephone: 952-934-7653; E-mail: mikerussell@lylesigns.com

Breakaway sign posts and supports may be purchased from:

1. Sign Support System Corp., P.O. Box 8041. Greensboro, NC 27419. Telephone: 866-549-7706; E-mail: sales@signsupports.com

Mounting Hardware and Stainless Steel Straps may be purchased from:

1. Traffic Signal Mounting Hardware: Telephone: 1-800-236-0112; www.tapcosignal.com
2. ISO (It Straps On, Inc.) Telephone: 1-800-893-1996 www.isostainless.com

RESPONSIBILITY

C&S Department employees involved in maintenance or new construction shall comply with this Engineering Practice. The signs must be kept in good condition, unobstructed and be legible. Faded or damage signs must be promptly replaced. Spare breakaway hardware must be maintained for quick replacement in the event of a knockdown.

TYPICAL INSTALLATION

For typical installation and dimension details in accord with this Engineering Practice see the Standard plan SP-462-4.

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FIG. 1

