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Subject: Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices
Date: Friday, December 11, 2020 1:13:26 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

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Dear Coordinators,

The FHWA issued a notice today that they plan to impose new restrictions that will limit the ability of states to sign for alternative fueling stations in the future.

The Southeast Corridor Council is prepared for this because we have been studying the issue for two years.

We are inviting any interested parties to sign up to join a Zoom call where we will provide a briefing about the proposed updates and offer suggestions of action that can be taken.

If you are interested in learning more, please sign up using the form below. Next week, a Zoom meeting invite will be sent to interested parties.

Please feel free to forward this to your contacts outside of Clean Cities who may also be interested.

SIGN UP HERE: <https://forms.gle/4EeRqA2rGAYr5NUCA>

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What happened today?

The USDOT announced a proposed rule to revise standards, guidance, options, and supporting information relating to the traffic control devices in all parts of the MUTCD.

Comments will be received for a 90 day period that will begin when the notice is published in the federal register, expected on 12/14/2020.

Unfortunately, the notice released today is VERY NEGATIVE.

What does this mean for alternative fuel signing?

Alternative Fuel appears 18 times in the Notice of Proposed Amendment released by the FHWA today. <https://public-inspection.federalregister.gov/2020-26789.pdf>

Those 18 excerpts are included below.

Among changes proposed is a prohibition of logos on interstate exit signs for any stations that do not sell gasoline. The FHWA also seeks to prohibit any type of business other than a

gasoline station (hotel, restaurant, etc.) from including a supplemental message on their logo on an interstate exit sign to indicate they offer fueling services (electric, propane, etc.).

EXCERPTS FROM NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULE

Discussion of Proposed Amendments to Chapter 2H General Information Signs

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257. In Section 2H.01 (existing Section 2H.02) retitled, “Scope,” FHWA proposes to add a Standard indicating there are circumstances where descriptive messages not relevant to navigation and orientation shall not be included in the legends of General Information signs. This clarification is needed to ensure that traffic control devices are employed only for their intended purpose of regulating, warning, and guiding road users.

FHWA proposes to revise existing P3 to provide an exception for the color and shape of State Welcome signs, Acknowledgement signs, and **Alternative Fuels** Corridor signs, rather than jurisdictional boundary signs.

271. FHWA proposes to add a new section numbered and titled, “Section 2H.14 **Alternative Fuels** Corridor Sign” to provide Standard, Option, Guidance, and Support provisions for the use of **Alternative Fuels** Corridor signs. FHWA also proposes new Figures 2H-9 and 2H-10 to illustrate **Alternative Fuels** Corridor Sign Assembly examples and an **Alternative Fuels** Corridor Signing layout example, respectively. This section adds the provisions of FHWA policy memorandum entitled, “MUTCD - Signing for Designated **Alternative Fuels** Corridors,” dated December 21, 2016.49

Discussion of Proposed Amendments to Chapter 2I General Service Signs

273. In Section 2I.03 General Service Signs for Freeways and Expressways, FHWA proposes a new Guidance paragraph recommending the use of D9-18 or D9-18a signs for numbered interchanges. FHWA also proposes new Support and Option statements regarding motorist expectations for facilities providing **alternative fuels**, as well as policy criteria for **alternative fuel** vehicles to address issues specific to **alternative fuel** vehicles.

Discussion of Proposed Amendments to Chapter 2J Specific Service Signs

284. In Section 2J.01 Eligibility, FHWA proposes to delete the 24-hour Pharmacy Specific Service category because there has been little demand and most pharmacies that did obtain a logo on a Specific Service sign have since withdrawn from the associated agency program. Instead, the 24-hour pharmacy would remain as General Service only. FHWA also proposes to remove references to 24-hour pharmacies from Section 2J.02.

FHWA also proposes to remove **alternative fuels** from the qualifications for a GAS business identification sign panel to eliminate any potential driver expectancy confusion should a facility offer one or more of the many **alternative fuels** only and not gasoline. FHWA also

proposes to change existing Guidance P10 to Standard, because it is important for States to have a statewide policy for Specific Signing for the program to be successfully implemented in a consistent manner. Such policies already exist in a majority of the States.

285. In Section 2J.02 Application, FHWA proposes to delete 24-hour Pharmacy Specific Service category from Standard P2 because there has been little demand and most pharmacies that did obtain a logo on a Specific Service sign have since withdrawn from the associated agency program. FHWA also proposes to revise existing P2 to address the display of distances explicitly to eligible facilities on the Specific Service signs on the approach to the interchange. While this practice has never been allowed, FHWA proposes this language to provide clarification based on the results of official experimentation and studies demonstrating that the display of distances requires too much time to read and reduces the effectiveness of these signs.

FHWA also proposes to add a new Standard statement prohibiting the inclusion of business identification sign panels for **alternative fuel facilities** on GAS Specific Service Signs for those facilities that offer only **alternative fuels**, but not gasoline. This addition is because driver expectancy for businesses on the GAS sign is that the business sells gasoline, even if one of the several **alternative fuels** might also be available. In concert with this change, FHWA also proposes to add a Support paragraph identifying the option to sign for **alternative fuel** facilities with General Service signs and directing users to Chapter 2I for more information on those provisions.

FHWA also proposes Standard, Guidance, and Support statements limiting the allowable number of business identification sign panels for each Specific Service to six and recommending that when there are more than six eligible facilities for one or more categories of service, General Service signs for those services should be used instead. The proposed Support statement explains that Specific Service signs are intended for areas primarily rural in character, and that when services at an interchange are abundant, the character of the area is no longer primarily rural and the need to identify specific types or brands of facilities is generally unnecessary and General Service signs would be more appropriate.

FHWA also proposes to add a Guidance statement recommending that the ATTRACTION Specific Service sign should have no more than four business identification sign panels. FHWA proposes to explain in the Support statement that, because of the considerable variation in the types of attractions found on these signs, and the fact that many do not include well known services or national logos, it is generally more difficult and requires significantly more time to decipher between types of attractions shown on an ATTRACTION sign than for other categories of Specific Service signs where the types of facilities are more uniform.

FHWA also proposes to revise existing Standard P3 to clarify that configurations or arrangements of logo sign panels other than those listed are not allowed.

FHWA proposes to add a new Guidance and a new Option statement recommending that if a service is no longer available from an interchange or intersection, then the legend displaying the service type and direction information should be removed, or may only be covered if there is indication that this service may become available in the near future. This is proposed so that the road user does not misinterpret the sign as indicating that this type of service is still available, similar to the message on a General Service sign. Finally, FHWA proposes to add a new Figure 2J-1 to illustrate an example of General Service Signs in Conjunction with Specific Service Signs.

286. In Section 2J.03 Logos and Business Identification Sign Panels, FHWA proposes to add a Guidance statement recommending that graphic or trademarked logos used on a logo sign panel should be consistent with the on-premise business identification signs at the location of the business that are visible from the roadway. FHWA proposes this recommendation to provide consistency between the logo sign panel and the signing on the business and accommodate driver expectancy and positive guidance.

FHWA also proposes to delete the Option allowing the border to be omitted where business identification symbols or trademarks are used alone for a logo. FHWA proposes this change to ensure consistent apparent size and visibility of the individual logos.

FHWA also proposes to revise the Standard regarding supplemental messages on logo sign panels to prohibit specifically additional amenities or products unrelated to the service category because those items are considered promotional advertising. FHWA proposes this revision to clarify the existing provisions, which do not allow for such messages.

FHWA also proposes to add a new Standard explicitly prohibiting the display of messages related to the promotion or availability of logo space on Specific Service signs.

Further, FHWA proposes to add an Option to clarify that supplemental messages identifying an **alternative fuel** available may be added only to the business identification sign panels on the GAS Specific Services sign for a gas facility that provides that **alternative fuel** in addition to, rather than in lieu of, gasoline. FHWA proposes this change as a clarification of the Option provision allowing supplemental messages for essential motorist information and to accommodate driver expectancy of the nature of the services displayed.

FHWA also proposes to revise the Guidance provision regarding the legend and background colors of the supplemental messages, recommending they be a black legend on a yellow background for that portion of the business identification sign panel. FHWA proposes this change to make it easier for motorists to recognize supplemental information that is critical to their decision making.

FHWA also proposes to delete the Option and Standard for the alternative circular RV ACCESS supplemental message to standardize the RV ACCESS supplemental message for consistency.

Finally, FHWA proposes to revise the Standard regarding business identification sign panel displays to prohibit a panel from displaying more than one name or identification logo/trademark for the same business and to prohibit marketing slogans. This Standard also does not allow a sign panel to be used to display messages related to the promotion or availability of adding a business identification sign panel. FHWA proposes this change because promotional advertising is not allowed on traffic control devices.

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The Alabama Clean Fuels Coalition (ACFC), is a nonprofit membership-based organization and is the state's principal coordinating point for alternative fuels and advanced technology vehicles. ACFC is a designated Clean Cities coalition by the U.S. Department of Energy. The promotion of clean, renewable, domestic energy sources helps reduce our dependence on foreign oil, improves local air quality, and increases economic development investments in our local communities. For more information, please visit www.alabamacleanfuels.org or call 205-402-2755.