

diagonally across the interchange/intersection guide signs to enhance the information provided to road users. The FHWA received one comment from the City of Tucson, Arizona, in support of this new GUIDANCE statement, and five comments from the NCUTCD, the Wisconsin DOT, Caltrans, the City of Charlotte, North Carolina, and a private citizen opposed to it. The NCUTCD suggested that the GUIDANCE be changed to an OPTION, because ramp closures may occur for only a short period of time, and installing EXIT CLOSED panels on freeway guide signs involves significant effort.

Caltrans and the Wisconsin DOT suggested that the diagonal orientation of the sign would be especially confusing on guide signs with more than one exit, because a portion of the street name would be covered and unreadable for road users desiring to use the exit that is open. The City of Charlotte, North Carolina, and a private citizen suggested that the size of the panel be changed to better cover the sign. The FHWA disagrees with the opposing comments because it is very important, particularly for unfamiliar road users, to know that an exit is closed, and covering only a portion of the message by using the diagonal placement of the sign gives road users a visual clue as to what exit is closed. Because this sign may be used for other applications, the sign size, as proposed in the NPA, is appropriate.

The FHWA adds the EXIT ONLY sign (E5-3) to Figure 6F-5, and changes the title of the figure to "Exit Open and Closed and Detour Signs." The EXIT ONLY sign has been in the "Standard Highway Signs" book for many years and is used in some applications, so the FHWA determines that it is to be included in this section to correct an earlier omission.

247. The FHWA adds a new section numbered and titled, "Section 6F.34 Motorized Traffic Signs (W8-6, W11-10)." The FHWA adds this section in this final rule for consistency with Section 2C.36 Motorized Traffic Signs (W8-6, W11-10) and to address comments received in Section 6F.15 Warning Sign Function, Design, and Application. This new section mirrors text in Section 2C.36 Motorized Traffic Signs (W8-6, W11-10) and includes OPTION and SUPPORT statements clarifying the use of the Motorized Traffic (W8-6, W11-10) signs to alert road users to locations where unexpected use of the roadway by construction vehicles might occur. The FHWA rennumbers the subsequent sections accordingly.

248. In Section 6F.38 Signs for Blasting Areas (numbered Section 6F.37 in the NPA), the FHWA removes the GUIDANCE statement from this section. The GUIDANCE statement included a minimum safe distance of 300 m (1000 ft) for placing warning signs, however this information is stated as a STANDARD in Sections 6F.40 and 6F.41 (numbered 6F.38 to 6F.40 in the NPA). The FHWA received comments from the City of Charlotte, North Carolina, and a private citizen requesting that this inconsistency be resolved. The FHWA agrees that the STANDARD should take precedence and removes the GUIDANCE from Section 6F.38.

249. In Section 6F.40 TURN OFF 2-WAY RADIO AND CELL PHONE Sign (W22-2) (numbered Section 6F.39 in the NPA), the FHWA received two comments from the City of Charlotte, North Carolina, and a private citizen opposed to adding the word "CELL" to the legend of the W22-2a sign. The commenters suggested that other mobile phones have the same risk of causing premature firing of detonators. These commenters also suggested that the sign needed to be more readable with larger letter sizes and only three lines of text. The FHWA believes that the sign, as proposed in the NPA with the word "CELL", is appropriate. The Temporary Traffic Controls Committee of the NCUTCD supported the sign proposed in the NPA based on information received from representatives of the blasting industry and the Federal Communication Commission. Even though there are some other types of mobile phones and radios that can potentially cause premature firing of detonators, two-way radios and cell phones constitute the bulk of the devices in use in vehicles today, and the FHWA believes the terminology is best understood by the public. The FHWA changes the sign designation from W22-2a to W22-2 in this final rule, because there is no sign currently designated W22-2.

250. In the NPA, the FHWA proposed combining Sections 6F.41 and 6F.42 (as numbered in the 2000 MUTCD) into one section numbered and titled, "Section 6F.41 Shoulder and UNEVEN LANES Signs (W8-4, W8-9, W8-9a, and W8-11)." Although the FHWA received comments from a private citizen and the Motorcycle Safety Foundation in support of combining these sections, the NCUTCD suggested that these two sections should not be combined because they each describe unique applications and having two separate sections enhances practitioners' understanding. The FHWA agrees and

separates these sections in this final rule into Section 6F.42 Shoulder Signs (W8-4, W8-9, W8-9a) and Section 6F.43 UNEVEN LANES Sign (W8-11).

In Section 6F.42 Shoulder Signs (W8-4, W8-9, W8-9a), the FHWA includes an OPTION statement to allow the use of the SOFT SHOULDER sign to warn of a soft shoulder condition and the LOW SHOULDER sign to warn of a shoulder condition where there is an elevation difference of less than 75 mm (3 in) between the shoulder and the travel lane. The FHWA received two comments in support of these changes from a private citizen and the Motorcycle Safety Foundation, and adopts these changes.

The FHWA received two comments from the Illinois DOT and a traffic engineering consultant opposed to mandating the use of SHOULDER DROP OFF signs. Those opposed expressed that the text should be a GUIDANCE, because requiring the use of SHOULDER DROP OFF signs at all locations that meet the criteria would be a considerable hardship on agencies to properly identify all locations and sign them at all times. The FHWA agrees and revises this as to a GUIDANCE and adds clarifying text consistent with Chapter 2C in this final rule.

In Section 6F.43 UNEVEN LANES Sign (W8-11) (numbered Section 6F.42 in the 2000 MUTCD), the FHWA maintains the GUIDANCE statement from the 2000 MUTCD text, and adds the phrase "that are open to travel" at the end of the sentence to address a comment received in Section 2C.26 Shoulder Signs suggesting additional information be included regarding the use of the UNEVEN LANES sign. In the NPA, the FHWA proposed including the word "substantial" in the description of the difference in elevation between adjacent lanes. The FHWA received four comments from the NCUTCD, the Illinois DOT, the City of Charlotte, North Carolina, and a private citizen suggesting that the word "substantial" be removed, because it is vague. The FHWA agrees and adopts the GUIDANCE with modifications in this final rule.

251. The FHWA adds a new section numbered and titled, "Section 6F.45 Double Reverse Curve Signs (W24 Series)." (This section was numbered Section 6F.43 in the NPA.) This section contains an OPTION statement regarding the use of the Double Reverse Curve sign when the tangent distance between two reverse curves is insufficient for a second Reverse Curve sign to be placed between the curves. The FHWA received two comments from ATSSA and the City of Tucson,