



National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices

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Item No.: 24B-RW-01

NCUTCD PROPOSAL FOR CHANGES TO THE MANUAL ON UNIFORM TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES

COMMITTEE / TASK FORCE: Regulatory and Warning Signs Technical Committee
ITEM NUMBER: 24B-RW-01
TOPIC: Weight Limit Signs
ORIGIN OF REQUEST: RW Technical Committee (Task Force Members: James Sullivan (Chair), Robert Seyfried, Jeff Wolfe, Scott Leary)
AFFECTED SECTIONS OF MUTCD: Section 2B.64

DEVELOPMENT HISTORY:

Approved by RWSTC: 06/26/2024
Approved by NCUTCD Council:

This is a proposal for recommended changes to the MUTCD that has been developed by a technical committee or joint task force of the NCUTCD. The NCUTCD is distributing it to its sponsoring organizations for review and comment. Sponsor comments will be considered in revising the proposal prior to NCUTCD Council consideration. This proposal does not represent a revision of the MUTCD and does not constitute official MUTCD standards, guidance, or options. If approved by the NCUTCD Council, the recommended changes will be submitted to FHWA for consideration for inclusion in a future MUTCD revision. The MUTCD can be revised only through the federal rulemaking process.

SUMMARY:

This proposal came out of the objectionable content review conducted in January 2024. It was determined there was content included that did not appear in the NPA. Other issues were identified including weight limits established on a jurisdiction-wide basis and providing advance signing at crossroads at the detour/turn-around point.

DISCUSSION:

The first issue the Task Force evaluated was the fact that the NPA contained no Standard requiring the placement of weight limit signs at the applicable section of highway or structure. The NPA only contained a Standard requiring the placement of a weight limit sign in advance of the section, *if used (emphasis added)*, at a detour or turn-around point.

However, the 2009 MUTCD did include a Standard statement on which weight limit signs to use – those shown in “Figure 2B-29” (of the 2009 MUTCD) – and that the signs, “If used, . . . shall be in advance of the applicable section of highway or structure.”

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36 *[The “advance” weight limit signs in the 2009 MUTCD Standard referred to signs immediately in*
37 *advance of the structure or applicable section of highway; whereas the “advance” weight limit*
38 *signs in the NPA Standard were those in advance of a structure or applicable section of*
39 *highway at a turn-around or detour point. The 11th Edition MUTCD includes both of these type of*
40 *Advance weight limit signs as required by Standard.]*

41
42 The 2009 MUTCD also included a Guidance statement recommending the use of *Weight Limit*
43 *signs, “If used”, “...with an advisory distance legend... ..placed at approach road intersections*
44 *or other points where prohibited vehicles can detour or turn around.”*

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46 In the view of the Task Force, the fact that the NPA did not include a standard requiring the
47 prescribed weight limit signs be used (as shown in Figure 2B-30) nor a standard requiring the
48 placement of weight limit signs at the applicable section of highway or structure was an
49 oversight. It stands to reason that 1) only prescribed weight limit signs be used; and 2) If a
50 weight limit sign, with an advisory distance or directional legend, is required in advance of the
51 structure or applicable section of highway at a detour or turn-around point then it should also be
52 required at the specific point in question. Law enforcement might find it difficult to enforce the
53 weight limit restriction if the immediate area is not signed with weight limits.

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55 During the Task Force review, two other issues were raised and for which it was determined
56 MUTCD changes would be appropriate.

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58 The first was regarding weight limits that are statutorily established over a broad area of an
59 agency’s jurisdiction (for example, the Federal maximum vehicle weights for the Interstate
60 system). It was determined by the Task Force that MUTCD language should be drafted
61 specifically excepting the need to sign these types of weight limit restrictions, especially given
62 that not only are signs required at the applicable sections but also in advance of those sections
63 at a detour or turn-around point.

64
65 The other issue was the need to inform drivers of overweight vehicles on the crossroads at
66 certain intersections where the advance weight limit signs are placed at a detour point. It was
67 determined that agencies may deem it necessary to install the weight limit signs on the
68 crossroad, with a directional and distance plaque, before the overweight vehicle turns into the
69 section of highway headed towards the weight limited zone. This would be based on
70 engineering judgment depending on the type of crossroad and the type of traffic coming from
71 the crossroad. It was determined this would fit well as an Option statement in the MUTCD.

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73 Finally, the Task Force proposes to rearrange the content in this section to consolidate the three
74 (3) general Standard statements related to Weight Limit signs into one paragraph. This should
75 benefit practitioners by allowing them to see all the general standard statements related to
76 Weight Limit signs in one paragraph.

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78 **RECOMMENDED MUTCD CHANGES:**

79 The following present the proposed changes to the current MUTCD within the context of the
80 current MUTCD language. Proposed additions to the MUTCD are shown in blue underline and
81 proposed deletions from the MUTCD are shown in ~~red strikethrough~~. Changes previously
82 approved by NCUTCD Council (but not yet adopted by FHWA) are shown in green double
83 underline for additions and ~~green double strikethrough~~ for deletions. In some cases,
84 background comments may be provided with the MUTCD text. These comments are indicated
85 by bracketed white text in shaded green. Deletions made by a technical committee or task
86 force after initial distribution to sponsoring organizations are shown in ~~highlighted red~~
87 ~~strikethrough and Helvetica text~~. Additions made by a technical committee or task force after
88 initial distribution to sponsoring organizations are shown in underline blue and Helvetica text.

90 **Section 2B.64 Weight Limit Signs (R12-1 through R12-7)**

91 **Standard:**

92 01 **Weight limit signs (see Figure 2B-30) shall be used to indicate a section of highway or structure**
93 **that has a vehicle weight restriction except for weight limits established statutorily and applied**
94 **systematically to highways and structures throughout a jurisdiction. For such weight limits, the**
95 **following signs shall be installed:**

96 A. Weight Limit signs located at the applicable section of highway or structure, and

97 B. Additional Weight Limit signs, with an advisory distance or directional legend, located in
98 advance of the applicable section of highway or structure, so that prohibited vehicles can
99 detour or turn around prior to the limit zone.

100 Option:

101 01a Where there is a need to inform prohibited vehicles of a weight restriction from an intersecting road
102 or off a freeway or expressway exit in advance of the applicable section of highway or structure, a
103 regulatory sign plaque with the advisory distance and directional arrow may be used to supplement the
104 applicable weight limit sign.

105 *Guidance:*

106 02 *The units shown on any weight limit sign should be consistent within a State or region with respect*
107 *to pounds or tons.*

108 *Option:*

109 03 Where the restriction applies to axle weight rather than gross load, the legend AXLE WEIGHT
110 LIMIT XX TONS or AXLE WEIGHT LIMIT XX LBS (R12-2) may be used.

111 04 In areas where multiple regulations are applicable, such as limiting both axle weight and gross
112 vehicle weight, a WEIGHT LIMIT XX TONS PER AXLE, XX TONS GROSS (R12-4) sign combining
113 the necessary messages on a single sign may be used.

114 05 Posting of specific load limits may be accomplished by use of the Weight Limit (R12-5) symbol
115 sign. A sign containing the legend WEIGHT LIMIT on the top two lines, and showing up to three
116 different truck symbols and their respective weight limits for which restrictions apply may be used, with
117 the weight limits displayed to the right of each symbol as XX T. A bottom line of legend stating GROSS
118 WT may be included if needed for enforcement purposes.

119 *Support:*

120 06 A specialized hauling vehicle is a single unit truck with multiple closely-spaced axles. Examples
121 include dump trucks, construction vehicles, solid waste trucks and other hauling trucks. Specialized
122 hauling vehicles typically have 4 to 7 axles.

123 *Option:*

124 07 The Weight Limit (R12-6) sign may be used to indicate vehicle weight restrictions for specialized
125 hauling vehicles.

126 **Standard:**
127 08 The symbols shown on the R12-5 and R12-6 Weight Limit sign shall apply to all trucks of that
128 configuration (single-unit, single-trailer or multi-trailer) regardless of the shape of the vehicle.
129 Symbolic representations of other vehicle shapes or modifications of standard symbols shall not be
130 used.

131 Option:
132 09 The facility type (such as “BRIDGE”) may be added to the legend of the sign to clarify the specific
133 applicability of the weight limit.

134 **Standard:**
135 10 If the R12-5 sign depicts only one single-unit vehicle symbol, the weight limit associated with
136 that single-unit vehicle symbol shall apply to all single-unit vehicles, regardless of number of axles.
137 11 The weight limit associated with the single-trailer vehicle symbol shall apply to all single-trailer
138 vehicles, regardless of number of axles or vehicle shape.
139 12 The weight limit associated with the multi-trailer vehicle symbol shall apply to all multi-trailer
140 vehicles with two or more trailers, regardless of number of axles or vehicle shape.
141 ~~13 A weight limit sign (see Figure 2B-30) shall be located at the applicable section of highway or~~
142 ~~structure.~~
143 ~~14 An additional weight limit sign, with an advisory distance or directional legend, shall be~~
144 ~~located in advance of the applicable section of highway or structure so that prohibited vehicles can~~
145 ~~detour or turn around prior to the limit zone.~~

146 Support:
147 15 An emergency vehicle is designed to be used under emergency conditions to transport personnel and
148 equipment to support the suppression of fires and mitigation of other hazardous situations. Emergency
149 vehicles are typically operated by fire departments and are primarily equipped for firefighting, but are
150 also used to respond to and mitigate other hazardous situations in an emergency. They can create higher
151 load effects compared to non-emergency vehicles of similar weight.

152 Option:
153 16 The Emergency Vehicle Weight Limit (R12-7) sign carrying the legend EMERGENCY VEHICLE
154 WEIGHT LIMIT SINGLE AXLE XX TONS, TANDEM XX TONS, and GROSS XX TONS may be
155 used to indicate vehicle weight restrictions for emergency vehicles.

156 **Standard:**
157 17 When the emergency-vehicle weight limit is displayed in the same assembly as the primary
158 weight limit sign, the Emergency Vehicle Weight Limit (R12-7aP) plaque shall be mounted below.