

**National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices  
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

**Approved by NCUTCD Council January 7, 2005**

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE: **Regulatory/Warning Signs TC**

DATE OF ACTION:

REQUEST NUMBER:

TOPIC: **Size of Regulatory Signs and Warning Signs, Sections 2B.03 and 2C.04.**

Reference MUTCD 2003, pages 2B-1 and page 2C-1.

DISCUSSION:

The FHWA Urbanization Needs Survey and a number of City Traffic Engineers have noted that the MUTCD does not adequately address sign sizes and application for alley installations. Discussions with City Traffic Engineers indicate that alleys do present some special problems but given the flexibility of applying engineering judgment most of the installation restrictions can be resolved. However, they have expressed a concern that the minimum MUTCD sign sizes could be a problem.

Alleys are provided in a street system to provide access to properties for delivery of goods, service vehicles, parking access, trash collection, utility services, and emergency vehicles. The use of the alley is low volume and low speed on limited rights-of-way of 15 to 20 foot in width. In some cases, the alley is restricted to one way operation to reduce vehicle conflict. The alley rights-of-way in business districts may be defined by building walls constructed at the property line. The narrow right-of-way and commercial vehicle usage may limit the lateral space available for the installation of traffic control devices.

In residential areas, alleys provide access for parking, location of utility services, and emergency vehicle access. The lateral space for traffic control is not as restrictive but there is usually little need for traffic control since the alley is for local use and generally self-policing. However, the revival of alleys in neo-traditional neighborhoods and their use may create new requirements for alley signing in the future.

The need for traffic control devices in alleys is very limited and generally used in business districts where it is necessary to regulate commercial or service vehicles that are not frequent users. The traffic control devices normally used are a limited number of regulatory signs and occasionally special warning signs. The signs can be of reduced size recognizing the low speed usage of the alley roadways. Typical signing would be STOP, YIELD, Turn Restrictions, DO NOT ENTER, ONE WAY, vehicle restrictions and parking restrictions. The minimum sign sizes in Table 2B-1 and Table 2C-2 are recommended if sufficient lateral space exists for the sign installation while

accommodating the alley vehicle usage. Recognizing that the vehicle speeds in alleys are very low, a smaller sign and legend size would still provide adequate legibility. Therefore, where physical conditions limit the use of the minimum sign size, it is recommended that an option be provided to reduce these special alley signs by an additional 6 inches.

**RECOMMENDED WORDING:** It is recommended that Section 2B.03 Size of Regulatory Signs be revised by adding the following text:

Option:

The Minimum size may be used on low-speed roadways and alleys where the reduced legend size would be adequate for the regulation or where physical conditions preclude the use of other sizes. For alleys with restrictive physical conditions and vehicle usage that limits installation of the minimum size sign, the minimum overall sign size may be decreased an additional 150 mm ( 6 inches).

It is recommended that Section 2C.04 Size of Warning Signs be revised by adding the following text:

Option:

The Minimum size may be used on low-speed roadways and alleys where the reduced legend size would be adequate for the warning or where physical conditions preclude the use of the other sizes. For alleys with restrictive physical conditions and vehicle usage that limits installation of the minimum size sign, the minimum overall sign size may be decreased an additional 150 mm ( 6 inches).

VOTE June 24, 2004

Approved by Regulatory and Warning Sign Technical Committee for transmittal to Sponsors for comments.