



# National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices

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Item No.: 24B-RW-01

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## NCUTCD RECOMMENDATION FOR CHANGES TO THE MANUAL ON UNIFORM TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES

**COMMITTEE / TASK FORCE:** Regulatory and Warning Signs TC  
**ITEM NUMBER:** 24B-RW-01  
**TOPIC:** Weight Limit Signs  
**ORIGIN OF REQUEST:** RW Sign Technical Committee  
**AFFECTED SECTIONS OF MUTCD:** Section 2B.64, Weight Limit Signs

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### DEVELOPMENT HISTORY:

Approved by RWSTC: 06/26/2024 and 01/08/2025  
Approved by NCUTCD Council: 01/09/2025

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*This is a recommended change to the MUTCD that has been approved by the NCUTCD Council. This proposal does not represent a revision of the MUTCD and does not constitute official MUTCD standards, guidance, or options. It 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.*

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### 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.

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### 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.

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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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*[The “advance” weight limit signs in the 2009 MUTCD Standard referred to signs immediately in advance of the structure or applicable section of highway; whereas the “advance” weight limit signs in the NPA Standard were those in advance of a structure or applicable section of*

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36 *highway at a turn-around or detour point. The 11<sup>th</sup> Edition MUTCD includes both of these type of*  
37 *Advance weight limit signs as required by Standard.]*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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75 **RECOMMENDED MUTCD CHANGES:**

76 The following present the proposed changes to the current MUTCD within the context of the  
77 current MUTCD language. Proposed additions to the MUTCD are shown in blue underline and  
78 proposed deletions from the MUTCD are shown in ~~red strikethrough~~. Changes previously  
79 approved by NCUTCD Council (but not yet adopted by FHWA) are shown in green double  
80 underline for additions and ~~green-double-strikethrough~~ for deletions. In some cases,  
81 background comments may be provided with the MUTCD text. These comments are indicated  
82 by bracketed white text in shaded green.

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

85 **Standard:**

86 01 Except as provided in paragraph 01a of this section, the following ~~W~~weight limit signs (see  
87 **Figure 2B-30) shall be used as follows to indicate a section of highway or structure that has a**  
88 **vehicle weight restriction.**

- 89 A. Weight Limit sign located at the applicable section of highway or structure, and  
90 B. An additional Weight Limit sign, with an advisory distance and/or directional legend,  
91 located in advance of the applicable section of highway or structure, so that prohibited  
92 vehicles can detour or turn around prior to the limit zone.

93 Option:

94 01a Weight limit signs may be omitted for weight limits established statutorily and applied systematically  
95 to sections of highway and/or structures throughout a jurisdiction.

96 01b Where there is a need to inform drivers of prohibited vehicles of a weight restriction on an  
97 intersecting road or a freeway or expressway exit in advance of the applicable section of highway or  
98 structure a weight limit sign with an advisory distance and/or directional legend may be used.

99 *Guidance:*

100 02 *The units shown on any weight limit sign should be consistent within a State or region with respect*  
101 *to pounds or tons.*

102 *Option:*

103 03 *Where the restriction applies to axle weight rather than gross load, the legend AXLE WEIGHT*  
104 *LIMIT XX TONS or AXLE WEIGHT LIMIT XX LBS (R12-2) may be used.*

105 04 *In areas where multiple regulations are applicable, such as limiting both axle weight and gross*  
106 *vehicle weight, a WEIGHT LIMIT XX TONS PER AXLE, XX TONS GROSS (R12-4) sign combining*  
107 *the necessary messages on a single sign may be used.*

108 05 *Posting of specific load limits may be accomplished by use of the Weight Limit (R12-5) symbol*  
109 *sign. A sign containing the legend WEIGHT LIMIT on the top two lines, and showing up to three*  
110 *different truck symbols and their respective weight limits for which restrictions apply may be used, with*  
111 *the weight limits displayed to the right of each symbol as XX T. A bottom line of legend stating GROSS*  
112 *WT may be included if needed for enforcement purposes.*

113 *Support:*

114 06 *A specialized hauling vehicle is a single unit truck with multiple closely-spaced axles. Examples*  
115 *include dump trucks, construction vehicles, solid waste trucks and other hauling trucks. Specialized*  
116 *hauling vehicles typically have 4 to 7 axles.*

117 *Option:*

118 07 *The Weight Limit (R12-6) sign may be used to indicate vehicle weight restrictions for specialized*  
119 *hauling vehicles.*

120 **Standard:**

121 08 **The symbols shown on the R12-5 and R12-6 Weight Limit sign shall apply to all trucks of that**  
122 **configuration (single-unit, single-trailer or multi-trailer) regardless of the shape of the vehicle.**  
123 **Symbolic representations of other vehicle shapes or modifications of standard symbols shall not be**  
124 **used.**

125 *Option:*

126 09 *The facility type (such as “BRIDGE”) may be added to the legend of the sign to clarify the specific*  
127 *applicability of the weight limit.*

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130 **Standard:**

131 10 If the R12-5 sign depicts only one single-unit vehicle symbol, the weight limit associated with  
132 that single-unit vehicle symbol shall apply to all single-unit vehicles, regardless of number of axles.

133 11 The weight limit associated with the single-trailer vehicle symbol shall apply to all single-trailer  
134 vehicles, regardless of number of axles or vehicle shape.

135 12 The weight limit associated with the multi-trailer vehicle symbol shall apply to all multi-trailer  
136 vehicles with two or more trailers, regardless of number of axles or vehicle shape.

137 ~~13—A weight limit sign (see Figure 2B-30) shall be located at the applicable section of highway or  
138 structure.~~

139 ~~14—An additional weight limit sign, with an advisory distance or directional legend, shall be  
140 located in advance of the applicable section of highway or structure so that prohibited vehicles can  
141 detour or turn around prior to the limit zone.~~

142 **Support:**

143 15 An emergency vehicle is designed to be used under emergency conditions to transport personnel and  
144 equipment to support the suppression of fires and mitigation of other hazardous situations. Emergency  
145 vehicles are typically operated by fire departments and are primarily equipped for firefighting, but are  
146 also used to respond to and mitigate other hazardous situations in an emergency. They can create higher  
147 load effects compared to non-emergency vehicles of similar weight.

148 **Option:**

149 16 The Emergency Vehicle Weight Limit (R12-7) sign carrying the legend EMERGENCY VEHICLE  
150 WEIGHT LIMIT SINGLE AXLE XX TONS, TANDEM XX TONS, and GROSS XX TONS may be  
151 used to indicate vehicle weight restrictions for emergency vehicles.

152 **Standard:**

153 17 When the emergency-vehicle weight limit is displayed in the same assembly as the primary  
154 weight limit sign, the Emergency Vehicle Weight Limit (R12-7aP) plaque shall be mounted below.