

## **New Minimum Reflectivity Ruling Changes Current Traffic Sign Standards; Creates Sales Opportunities for Sign Companies.**

### **New Minimum Reflectivity Requirements**

In January 2008, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) amended the United States Code introducing new standards in sign reflectivity. The new ruling states that Type 1 Enclosed Lens (Engineer Grade) reflective is no longer to be used on many MUTCD traffic signs. The purpose of the new minimum reflectivity level requirements and maintenance methods is to promote safety on the nation's streets and highways. All of the following are affected by these new standards; roads open to the public, private roads and parking lots for shopping malls and restaurants, office complexes, apartment and residential developments, sports and recreation facilities, and other similar businesses open to the public.

The FHWA's 2007 amendment to the United States Code clarifies that private roads open to public travel are required to comply with MUTCD sign standards. Section 15-116 of the Uniform Vehicle Code states that "No person shall install or maintain in any area of private property used by the public a sign, signal, pavement marking or other devices intended to regulate, warn or guide traffic unless it conforms with the State manual and specifications." In simple terms this means that all owners or managers of private property open to public traffic must install signs and other traffic control devices that comply with all State and Federal regulations, including the new minimum reflectivity laws. The use of regulated traffic control devices not only ensures compliance to the Federal Standards but also minimizes insurance costs and tort liability risk.

### **Resulting Sales Opportunities**

As a result of these rulings, many traffic signs will need to be upgraded to meet both MUTCD and new reflectivity standards. This allows sign companies an excellent opportunity to educate public and private entities utilizing traffic control devices on the new standards and provide them with upgraded signs to replace non-compliant ones.

In order to help simplify this ruling Grimco, Inc., 3M Reflective Distributor, suggests the following simple guidelines to determine which signs need to meet the minimum reflectivity standards

1. If it is a parking control sign (No Parking, Disabled Parking, etc) Type 1 reflective is acceptable
2. If the sign directs traffic (One way, Dead End, etc) a Prismatic High Intensity Type III or higher reflective sign is recommended

3. Street Name Signs on roadways with a speed limit of 35 mph or higher require a Prismatic High Intensity Type III or higher reflective

In addition traffic control devices must comply with the following standards

- Size, shape, and color
- Sign placement and mounted height
- Design and legibility

The passing of this regulation also means that if someone is injured or worse yet, loses their life in an area where the traffic signs do not meet Federal Standards there will be a substantial exposure to tort liability.

Everyone will eventually be required to meet these new standards and in order to simplify this transition the time to start upgrading signs is now. Signs made with 3M™ High Intensity Prismatic Sheeting are bright, durable and offer excellent life-cycle value, making them a great choice for FHWA Standard compliance on both public and private roads.

If you have questions about the ruling and compliance, helpful information is available on the following websites:

**[www.grimco.com](http://www.grimco.com)**

**[www.minimumreflectivity.org](http://www.minimumreflectivity.org)**

**[mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov](http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov)**

**[safety.fhwa.dot.gov/roadway\\_dept/retro](http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/roadway_dept/retro)**