

SPECIAL ATTENTION

ROADSIDE SAFETY HARDWARE WORTHINESS COMPLIANCE WITH NCHRP REPORT 350 AND MASH

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) has published the Manual for Assessing Safety Hardware (MASH). The main objective of MASH is to present uniform guidelines for the crash testing of both permanent and temporary highway safety hardware and evaluation criteria to assess test results. The need for updated crash criteria was based primarily on the changes to the vehicle fleet since the publication of National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) Report 350. Highway safety hardware includes, but is not limited to, longitudinal barriers, crash cushions, attenuators, end terminals, breakaway supports, and work zone hardware/devices.

IMPORTANT: Any hardware that was designed, tested and accepted prior to January 1, 2011 under the NCHRP Report 350 criteria may continue to be used without retesting to MASH criteria. As of January 1, 2011, all new or revised highway safety hardware must be tested or retested and accepted using MASH criteria. If highway safety hardware that has been accepted by FHWA using criteria contained in NCHRP Report 350 fails testing using MASH criteria, AASHTO and FHWA will jointly review the test results and determine a course of action.

Hardware tested under MASH should be considered for use but there is no requirement to use or replace hardware that was accepted prior to January 1, 2011 under NCHRP Report 350. However, all highway safety hardware shall meet the appropriate NCHRP 350 or MASH requirements for the indicated test levels or be exempted by the FHWA from meeting this requirement. However, the Department may, in certain circumstances, require compliance to higher criteria if deemed appropriate.

WORK ZONE TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES:

The following is a summary of work zone traffic control devices categories, and their crash testing acceptance requirements, titled "Recommended Procedures for the Safety Performance Evaluation of Highway Features," testing and evaluation criteria as implemented by the AASHTO-FHWA Agreement (350 Agreement) dated July 1, 1998. These categories and associated requirements also apply to newly designed or revised devices that would now fall under MASH testing criteria.

Category I: Small, lightweight devices that are known to be crash-worthy from crash testing or years of demonstrable safe operational performance. These include plastic or rubber cones, tubular markers, flexible delineators, and plastic drums with no lights, batteries, signs, etc. added. For devices to be included in this category there must be virtually no potential that they will penetrate windshields, cause tire damage, or have a significant effect on the control or trajectory of an impacting vehicle. These devices will be allowed based upon developers self-certification.

Category II: Devices that are not expected to produce significant vehicular velocity change, but may be otherwise hazardous. All or parts of the devices may be substantial enough to penetrate a windshield or injure a worker or they may cause instability when driven over or become lodged under a vehicle. The total mass of a Category II device must be less than 45 kg. Examples of this category are barricades, portable sign supports, intrusion detectors and alarms and drums, vertical panels, or cones with lights.

Category III: Devices expected to cause significant velocity change or other potentially harmful reactions in impacting vehicles and Category II devices with a mass greater than 45 kg. Examples of this category are Truck-mounted attenuators (TMA), portable crash cushions and Portable concrete barrier (requires appropriate sized pin and loop or better connection).

Category IV: Crashworthy installations of Category IV devices are encouraged, though not mandated. Examples of this category are portable, usually trailer mounted devices such as area light supports, flashing arrow panels/arrows displays, temporary traffic signals and changeable message signs. However, these types of devices combined with TMA are considered Category III devices.

All category I, II, and III project work zone traffic control devices in use, except portable concrete barrier that transfers tension and moment from segment to segment, shall conform to the testing and evaluation criteria as outlined above. Devices not conforming to the criteria shall be replaced with conforming devices at no expense to the Department.