

Street Sign Changes 2011-2018



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As you may have heard, the 2009 Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) has new standards for street name signs. The federal government is requiring communities around the country to update their current “all uppercase” street signs to a new version that consists of both Upper and Lowercase lettering. These changes allow for easier reading, which will assist an aging U.S. population and make for safer driving conditions.

“As drivers get older, we want to make sure they’re able to read the signs,” says FHWA administrator Victor Mendez. “Research shows that older drivers are better able to read signs when they’re written in both capital and small letters. It’s really driven by safety.”

Reflectivity requirements have also been changed, requiring all signs that fail to meet the minimum standards be replaced. Reflectivity is the term used to describe how well a sign directs light from an approaching cars headlights back to the source.

Cities and communities will have until 2015 to implement these changes bringing their roads up to code. See the example below that illustrates the change from an outdated street sign compared to the updated version meeting federal requirements.

The lettering for names of streets and highways on Street Name signs shall be composed of a combination of lower-case letters with initial upper-case letters. Lettering on post-mounted Street Name signs should be composed of initial upper-case letters at least 6 inches in height and lower-case letters at least 4.5” in height. On local two-lane streets with speed limits of 25 mph or less, 4-inch initial upper-case letters with 3-inch lower-case letters may be used. See the table below for more detailed information from the 2009 MUTCD (Karen Stippich, Street Name Sign Changes,10).

The change to upper and lower case signs should occur as roads are constructed or reconstructed or as part of a systematic upgrading program in accordance with 23 CFR 655.603. When a non-compliant device is replaced or refurbished it shall be replaced with a compliant device per the introduction of the 2009 MUTCD. A compliant device meets all the standards of the MUTCD including size, retroreflectivity, height, lateral offset and breakaway requirements.

Click [here](#), for a link to the 2009 MUTCD 2009 manual, and a complete description on all new sign and marking requirements. If you have questions, or need help with adding or replacing street and traffic signs within your community call Signature Streetscapes today. Signature Streetscapes is a manufacturer of high quality decorative street and traffic signs for use in upscale residential communities and downtown business districts. We also manufacture a full line of residential curbside mailboxes, address plaques, decorative and commercial lighting and custom wayfinding solutions. Visit our website to view our product line and download our catalogues.



Outdated Version



New Version