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3M Helps Make New Sign Requirements Easier to Implement

Changes to the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) for minimum levels of retroreflectivity for traffic signs went into effect on January 22, 2008. As a result, all state and local transportation agencies in the US must comply with new federal retroreflectivity standards for traffic signs. As of the effective date, agencies have:

- Four years to implement a method of assessment and management to maintain traffic sign retroreflectivity to the new standard.
- Seven years to replace non-compliant regulatory, warning and ground-mounted signs (except street name signs).
- Ten years to replace non-compliant street name signs and overhead guide signs.



The benefits that will be realized from the ruling are not inconsequential. Transportation agencies can expect an overall cost savings over the lifespan of the new signs as they require less maintenance and last longer, while improved night-time sign brightness and visibility will help decrease traffic accidents, reducing costs to the public, and the inestimable human cost of loss of life.

In the short term, however, the current economic environment may mean difficulty complying with the new standards for many state and local agencies. New mandatory standards for road sign visibility improvements will, no doubt, stretch already limited budgets.

3M Sign Grant Program

3M Traffic Safety Systems, a worldwide leader in the transportation safety market, has launched the 3M Sign Grant Program to assist state and municipal transportation agencies in meeting the new standard. 3M will partner with agencies to improve traffic sign brightness and visibility through top-of-the-line technology, while providing significant cost savings. The grants will be made available between January 5, 2009 and November 30, 2009. Please refer to [3M's press release](#) for more information about the grant program, and the online grant application is located at www.3msigngrants.com.

For more information about the new MUTCD, please visit www.minimumreflectivity.org.

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Editor

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