

CHAPTER 4L. FLASHING BEACONS

Section 4L.01 General Design and Operation of Flashing Beacons

Support:

01 A Flashing Beacon is a highway traffic signal with one or more signal sections that operates in a flashing mode. It can provide traffic control when used as an intersection control beacon (see Section 4L.02) or it can provide warning when used in other applications (see Sections 4L.03, 4L.04, and 4L.05).

Standard:

02 **Flashing Beacon units and their mountings shall comply with the provisions of Chapter 4D, except as otherwise provided in this Chapter.**

03 **Beacons shall be flashed at a rate of not less than 50 or more than 60 times per minute. The illuminated period of each flash shall be a minimum of 1/2 and a maximum of 2/3 of the total cycle.**

04 **A beacon shall not be included within the border of a sign except for SCHOOL SPEED LIMIT sign beacons (see Sections 4L.04 and 7B.15).**

Guidance:

05 *If used to supplement a warning or regulatory sign, the edge of the beacon signal housing should normally be located no closer than 12 inches outside of the nearest edge of the sign.*

Option:

06 An automatic dimming device may be used to reduce the brilliance of flashing yellow signal indications during night operation.

Section 4L.02 Intersection Control Beacon

Standard:

01 **An Intersection Control Beacon shall consist of one or more signal faces directed toward each approach to an intersection. Each signal face shall consist of one or more signal sections of a standard traffic signal face, with flashing CIRCULAR YELLOW or CIRCULAR RED signal indications in each signal face. They shall be installed and used only at an intersection to control two or more directions of travel.**

02 **Application of Intersection Control Beacon signal indications shall be limited to the following:**
A. Yellow on one route (normally the major street) and red for the remaining approaches, and
B. Red for all approaches (if the warrant described in Section 2B.07 for a multi-way stop is satisfied).

03 **Flashing yellow signal indications shall not face conflicting vehicular approaches.**

04 **A STOP sign shall be used on approaches to which a flashing red signal indication is displayed on an Intersection Control Beacon (see Section 2B.04).**

05 **If two horizontally aligned red signal indications are used on an approach for an Intersection Control Beacon, they shall be flashed simultaneously to avoid being confused with grade crossing flashing-light signals. If two vertically aligned red signal indications are used on an approach for an Intersection Control Beacon, they shall be flashed alternately.**

Guidance:

06 *An Intersection Control Beacon should not be mounted on a pedestal in the roadway unless the pedestal is within the confines of a traffic or pedestrian island.*

Option:

07 Supplemental signal indications may be used on one or more approaches in order to provide adequate visibility to approaching road users.

08 Intersection Control Beacons may be used at intersections where traffic or physical conditions do not justify conventional traffic control signals but crash rates indicate the possibility of a special need.

09 An Intersection Control Beacon is generally located over the center of an intersection; however, it may be used at other suitable locations.

Section 4L.03 Warning Beacon

Support:

01 Typical applications of Warning Beacons include the following:

- A At obstructions in or immediately adjacent to the roadway;
- B As supplemental emphasis to warning signs;
- C As emphasis for midblock crosswalks;

- D. As supplemental emphasis to regulatory signs, except STOP, DO NOT ENTER, WRONG WAY, and SPEED LIMIT signs; and
- E. In conjunction with a regulatory or warning sign that includes the phrase WHEN FLASHING in its legend to indicate that the regulation is in effect or that the condition is present only at certain times.

Standard:

02 **A Warning Beacon shall consist of one or more signal sections of a standard traffic signal face with a flashing CIRCULAR YELLOW signal indication in each signal section.**

03 **A Warning Beacon shall be used only to supplement an appropriate warning or regulatory sign or marker.**

04 **Warning Beacons, if used at intersections, shall not face conflicting vehicular approaches.**

05 **If a Warning Beacon is suspended over the roadway, the clearance above the pavement shall be a minimum of 15 feet and a maximum of 19 feet.**

Guidance:

06 *The condition or regulation justifying Warning Beacons should largely govern their location with respect to the roadway.*

07 *If an obstruction is in or adjacent to the roadway, illumination of the lower portion or the beginning of the obstruction or a sign on or in front of the obstruction, in addition to the beacon, should be considered.*

08 *Warning Beacons should be operated only during those periods or times when the condition or regulation exists.*

Option:

09 Warning Beacons that are actuated by pedestrians, bicyclists, or other road users may be used as appropriate to provide additional warning to vehicles approaching a crossing or other location.

10 If Warning Beacons have more than one signal section, they may be flashed either alternately or simultaneously.

11 A flashing yellow beacon interconnected with a traffic signal controller assembly may be used with a traffic signal warning sign (see Section 2C.36).

Section 4L.04 Speed Limit Sign Beacon**Standard:**

01 **A Speed Limit Sign Beacon shall be used only to supplement a Speed Limit sign.**

02 **A Speed Limit Sign Beacon shall consist of one or more signal sections of a standard traffic control signal face, with a flashing CIRCULAR YELLOW signal indication in each signal section. The signal indications shall have a nominal diameter of not less than 8 inches. If two signal indications are used, they shall be vertically aligned, except that they shall be permitted to be horizontally aligned if the Speed Limit (R2-1) sign is longer horizontally than vertically. If two signal indications are used, they shall be alternately flashed.**

Option:

03 A Speed Limit Sign Beacon may be used with a fixed or variable Speed Limit sign. If applicable, a flashing Speed Limit Sign Beacon (with an appropriate accompanying sign) may be used to indicate that the displayed speed limit is in effect.

04 A Speed Limit Sign Beacon may be included within the border of a School Speed Limit (S5-1) sign (see Section 7B.15).

Section 4L.05 Stop Beacon**Standard:**

01 **A Stop Beacon shall be used only to supplement a STOP sign.**

02 **A Stop Beacon shall consist of one or more signal sections of a standard traffic signal face with a flashing CIRCULAR RED signal indication in each signal section. If two horizontally aligned signal indications are used for a Stop Beacon, they shall be flashed simultaneously to avoid being confused with grade crossing flashing-light signals. If two vertically aligned signal indications are used for a Stop Beacon, they shall be flashed alternately.**

03 **The bottom of the signal housing of a Stop Beacon shall be not less than 12 inches or more than 24 inches above the top of a STOP sign.**