

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

TRAFFIC OPERATIONS
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November 10, 1998

Mr. Ray Mellen
Chairperson CTCDC
Auto Club of Southern California
3333 Fairview Road, A131
Costa Mesa, CA 92626

Dear Mr. Mellen:

This is to let you know that the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has approved the use of fluorescent yellow green (FYG) color as an optional background color on warning signs for pedestrian crossings, bicycle crossings, school zones, and school bus stops. This approval makes California consistent with national policy as adopted by the Federal Highway Administration in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. Enclosed is a copy of this revision as it will appear in the next update of the Caltrans Traffic Manual.

I realize that the California Traffic Control Devices Committee, at the October 22, 1998 meeting, voted not to recommend to Caltrans the adoption of FYG as an optional color. However the Committee's vote was 5 to 3 (6 votes needed for approval) in favor of this recommendation which, at least, shows support for use of FYG. Also, some local agencies have already posted signs using the new color and others have plans to do so. This will allow a choice by local agencies on local roads.

At this time, Caltrans does not plan to use FYG in its signing practices. However, if a local agency requests FYG on a state highway, Caltrans will also have the option.

Sincerely,

Original Signed by
Gerry Meis

Gerry Meis
Chief, Office of Signs and Delineation

Enclosure

c: All CTCDC Members
All District Division Chiefs for Traffic Operations

bc: H. Benouar
M. Schmitz FHWA
R. Iwasaki Maintenance
G. Edwards
✓ J. Kletzman
P. Rogers

WHITE is used as a background color for regulatory signs (except STOP signs), some route markers, some guide signs, the FALLOUT SHELTER directional sign, and for the legend on brown, green, blue, black and red background signs. Wherever white is specified herein as a sign color, it is understood to include silver-colored reflecting coatings or elements that reflect white light.

ORANGE is used as the background color for construction and maintenance work zone signs and shall not be used for any other purpose.

YELLOW is used as the background color on warning signs except in work zones where orange is specified.

FLUORESCENT YELLOW GREEN may be used as an optional background color on warning signs for pedestrian crossings, bicycle crossings, school zones and school bus stops.

BROWN is used as a background color for guide and informational signs related to points of recreational or cultural interest.

GREEN is used as a background color for guide signs (other than those using brown or white), and is a legend color with a white background for permissive parking regulation and signal ahead signs.

BLUE is used as a background color for information signs related to highway user services (including police services and rest areas), handicapped parking regulation, and the evacuation route marker.

4-01.12 Size

The dimensions prescribed in the "Traffic Sign Specifications", are the standard sizes for application on public streets and highways. The "Traffic Sign Specifications" publication is available from the Caltrans Publication Distribution Unit, 1900 Royal Oaks Drive, Sacramento, California 95815. Larger sizes may be used where greater legibility or emphasis is needed. Special signs or large signs are prescribed for freeways and expressways. Under special conditions such as alleys, limited parkway widths, parking facilities, parks, etc., the use of approved sizes smaller than standard

size signs may be justified based on engineering judgement. When sign sizes are changed, standard shapes and colors shall be used and standard proportions shall be retained insofar as practicable.

4-01.13 Symbols and Educational Plates

Symbol designs shall, in all cases, be essentially like those shown in this chapter and the sign specification sheets. A broader use of symbols in preference to word messages is desirable.

Sometimes a change from word messages to symbols requires a significant time for public education and transition. Consequently, this chapter includes educational plates to accompany some new symbol signs. All symbol signs which are readily recognizable by the public may be erected with out educational plates. New warning or regulatory symbol signs not readily recognizable by the public shall be accompanied by a educational plate which is to remain in place for at least three years after initial installation. No special effort need be made to remove educational plates as long as they are in serviceable condition.

4-01.14 Word Messages

Where applicable, standard wordings as shown in this manual shall be used for sign legends. Word messages should be as brief as possible, and the lettering should be large enough to provide the necessary legibility for the speeds and distances involved.

Abbreviations should be kept to a minimum, and should normally include only those that are commonly recognized and understood, such as Ave., Blvd., N. (for north), R. R., or Jct.

4-01.15 Lettering

Sign lettering shall be in upper case letters of the type approved by Caltrans, except that destination names may be in lowercase lettering, with the initial letter in each word in the upper case lettering. Upper and lower case California Standard alphabets are available from Caltrans.

Use of the series B alphabet is restricted to street name signs, parking signs, and other similar signs where limited breadth and stroke widths are required for design purposes.