

**LAND USE PERMIT**

**APPENDIX 16**

Guidance on Installation of Watch for Children Signs

**TRAFFIC ENGINEERING DIVISION**

# **MEMORANDUM**

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| **GENERAL SUBJECT:**Engineering & Administration | **NUMBER:**280.1 |
| **SUPERSEDES:**280 |
| **SPECIFIC SUBJECT:**Guidance on Installation of Watch For Children Signs | **DATE:**08/11/12 |
| **SUNSET DATE:**N/A |
| **DIRECTED TO:**District AdministratorsRegional Operations DirectorsResidency AdministratorsDistrict Land Use EngineersRegional Traffic EngineersRegional Operations Maintenance Managers | **SIGNATURE:**Raymond J. Khoury, P.E.  |

This updated memorandum is issued to address changes in the Code of Virginia and to provide additional guidance not contained in the current 2011 Edition of the Virginia Supplement to the MUTCD:

[**http://www.virginiadot.org/business/virginia\_mutcd\_supplement.asp**](http://www.virginiadot.org/business/virginia_mutcd_supplement.asp)

In the 2012 General Assembly, HB 914 was passed to amend §**33.1-210.2** of the Code of Virginia effective July 1, 2012. The amended code provides that the county or town may install and maintain “Watch for Children” warning signs (**W15-V1**) through an agreement with the Commissioner and that the county or town will pay for the associated purchase, installation & maintenance costs. The amended section deleted previous language stipulating the particular source of funding to be used by the County for such signs.

**[H 914] Approved March 8, 2012**

**The governing body of any county or town may enter into an agreement with the Commissioner allowing the county or town to install and maintain, at locations specified in such agreement, signs alerting motorists that children may be at play nearby. The cost of the signs and their installation shall be paid by the county or town.**

**The provisions of this section shall not apply to any county that has withdrawn its roads from the secondary system of state highways under the provisions of § 11 of Chapter 415 of the Acts of 1932 and has not elected to return.**

Guidance

The Commissioner may agree to install and/or maintain such signs on behalf of the county or town however; the county or town will pay all costs associated with the purchase, installation & maintenance.

The revised Code Section does not preclude VDOT initiating an installation of such signs however any request by the County for these signs should be executed only through an agreement with the County

Only the District Administrator is authorized to enter into agreements with localities on behalf of the Commissioner (not to exceed $50,000) therefore his or her signature is required and thus included on the agreement template attached.

Type of Sign to be used

* The sign to be used “alerting motorists that children may be at play nearby” is the W15-V1, detailed in the current 2011 Edition of the Virginia Supplement to the MUTCD at: [**http://www.virginiadot.org/business/virginia\_mutcd\_supplement.asp**](http://www.virginiadot.org/business/virginia_mutcd_supplement.asp)
* New installations of the **W15-V1** shall be fluorescent yellow-green background color.
* Replacement of previously installed W15-V1 signs may use any remaining inventories of the yellow background **W15-V1** sign.

Placement of Signs

* It is expected that in a residential setting motorists generally anticipate children, however, for locations or instances where there is activity or an extent of activity that would not generally be anticipated by motorists (other than as set forth below) a **W15-V1** sign may be installed at each approach to the area of concern.
* Since overuse or inappropriate use of a sign can severely limit its effectiveness where it is most needed, placement of **W15-V1** signs should be minimized to only those locations covered in this memorandum.

The new W15-V1 signs should not be installed, where indicated as follows:

* On a primary roadway where the speed limit is greater than 35 mph
* In lieu of a standard Playground Sign (**W15-1**), used to warn motorists of a designated playground
* At a location where School Warning Signs are in place
* Closer than 200 feet to any existing or intended regulatory or warning signs

Maintenance & Replacement of Existing Signs

* Existing standard yellow background **W15-V1** signs may remain until they reach the end of their useful life at which time they should be replaced in accordance with current standards.
* Inventories of the yellow background **W15-V1** may be utilized for maintenance replacements.

Agreement with County

A template for an agreement between VDOT and a county or town which incorporates all of the requirements outlined above has been established for handling all such requests.

AGREEMENT FOR THE INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE

OF

WATCH FOR CHILDREN SIGNS

IN

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

**WHEREAS, it is the desire of the COUNTY/TOWN OF \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,**

**to enter into an agreement with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), to install and maintain the W15-V1 “Watch for Children” sign(s), on certain roads in accordance with VDOT permitting requirements and as stipulated below:**

Type of Sign to be used

* The **W15-V1** sign is to be used to “alert motorists that children may be at play nearby”. The sign detail can be found in the current 2011 Edition of the Virginia Supplement to the MUTCD at: [**http://www.virginiadot.org/business/virginia\_mutcd\_supplement.asp**](http://www.virginiadot.org/business/virginia_mutcd_supplement.asp)
* New installations of the **W15-V1** shall be fluorescent yellow-green background color.
* Replacement of previously installed **W15-V1** signs may use any remaining inventories of the yellow background W15-V1 sign.

Placement of Signs

* It is expected that motorists would generally anticipate children in a residential setting however, for locations or instances where there is activity or an extent of activity that would not generally be anticipated by the motorists (other than as set forth below) a **W15-V1** sign may be installed at each approach to the area of concern.
* Since overuse or inappropriate use of a sign can severely limit its effectiveness where it is most needed, placement of **W15-V1** signs should be minimized to only those locations covered in this agreement.

The **W15-V1** signs **should not be installed** at the following locations:

* On a primary roadway where the speed limit is greater than 35 mph
* In lieu of a standard Playground Sign (**W15-1**), to warn motorists of a designated playground
* At a location where School Warning signs are in place
* Closer than 200 feet to any existing or intended regulatory or warning signs

Maintenance & Replacement of Existing Signs

* Existing standard yellow background **W15-V1** signs may remain until they reach the end of their useful life at which time they should be replaced in accordance with current standards.
* Inventories of the yellow background **W15-V1** may be utilized for maintenance replacements.

**Indicate the intended action (X) as follows:**

**[ ] COUNTY/TOWN of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ shall conduct the purchase, installation and maintenance of W15-V1 signs and shall maintain any such previously installed signs as outlined in this agreement.**

**[ ] The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) agrees to install and maintain the W15-V1 signs and maintain any previously installed such signs on behalf and at the expense of the COUNTY/TOWN.**

**THEREFORE, it is mutually agreed between the COUNTY/TOWN and VDOT that all W15-V1 signs shall (1) conform to requirements indicated in this agreement, in the Manual for MUTCD, and the Virginia Supplement to the MUTCD and; (2) the COUNTY/TOWN will bear all costs in connection with the purchase, installation and maintenance of such sign(s) and accessories necessary for proper erection of the signs and; (3) in the event the COUNTY/TOWN should fail to install and maintain such sign(s) according to this agreement, the signs will be removed by VDOT at the expense of the COUNTY/TOWN.**

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| **Signature of COUNTY OR TOWN REPRESENTATIVE****\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |
| **Title****\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |
| **Date** |

(The Locality shall submit this AGREEMENT to the Residency Administrator, or the Regional Traffic Engineer’s Office, or the Area Land Use Engineer’s office as directed)

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For VDOT Use Only

Recommended for Approval: **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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| --- |
| Residency Administrator Date |
| OR |
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Recommended for Approval: **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

|  |
| --- |
| Regional Traffic Engineer Date |

OR

Recommended for Approval: **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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| --- |
| Area Land Use Engineer Date |

**Reference**

* Code of Virginia, §§ [**33.1-210.2**](http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+cod+33.1-210.2)
* FHWA's Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)
* Virginia Supplement to the MUTCD

CC: Mr. Greg Whirley

 Mr. Charles Kilpatrick, P.E.

Ms. Constance S. Sorrell

Mr. Malcolm T. Kerley, P.E.

Regional Traffic Engineers

District Land Use Development Engineers

Regional Operations Maintenance Managers

Residency Administrators