



## Flagging Safely

Each year, many workers are injured or killed in the highway and street construction industry.

- Highway work zones are divided into five separate areas: The advanced warning area, the transition area, the buffer zone, the work area, and the termination area.

**Sometimes traffic can be controlled by signs and barricades, but flaggers are often needed in addition.**

- Flaggers must wear safety apparel with the background (outer) material of either fluorescent orange-red or fluorescent yellow-green.
- In addition, they should wear hard hats and work boots.
- Most flaggers use radio communication devices but also have devices like a horn or loud whistle to warn workers in the area.

**The STOP/SLOW paddle should be the primary and preferred hand-signaling device—use of flags should be limited to emergency situations.**



To stop road users



To let traffic proceed



To alert and slow traffic

**Other safety practices are as follows:**

- The flagger should stand *facing* traffic either on the shoulder adjacent to the road being controlled or in the closed lane prior to stopping road users.
- A flagger should *only* stand in the lane being used by moving road users *after* road users have stopped.
- The flagger should be *clearly visible* to the first approaching road user at all times and also be visible to other road users.
- The flagger should be stationed sufficiently in advance of the workers to warn them (for example, with audible warning devices such as horns or whistles) of approaching danger by out-of-control vehicles.
- The flagger should stand *alone*, never permitting a group of workers to congregate around the flagging station.

**The construction crew needs to take precautions as well. They should:**

- Know the layout of the work zone, including the buffer zone.
- Know the sound of the flagger's signal warning them of danger.
- Keep a watchful eye on the heavy construction equipment moving in the work area.