



DASMA
Door & Access Systems
Manufacturers Association
International

GATE OPERATOR & ACCESS CONTROL POINT SYSTEMS DIVISION

TECHNICAL DATA SHEET

#380

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Automated Vehicular Gate Systems and the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices? It is a document that defines the standards used by road managers nationwide to install and maintain traffic control devices on all public streets, highways, bikeways, and private roads open to public traffic.

Who publishes the MUTCD? The Federal government, through the Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration.

When was the most recent edition published? On December 16, 2009, a final rule adopting the 2009 Edition was published in the Federal Register. Revisions were incorporated through 2017.

Note that a new 11th edition was proposed in 2020 with a target update date of May 15, 2023.

Where can the MUTCD be found? At the Federal Highway Administration web site:
<http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov>.

How is the MUTCD administered? States were required to adopt the National MUTCD as their legal state standard for traffic control devices by January 1, 2012.

Where can the individual state regulations be found? They can be found at
http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/resources/state_info/index.htm

Under what conditions does the MUTCD apply? The MUTCD does not apply unless States have adopted legislation to require traffic control devices on their private roadways open to the public to be in conformance with the MUTCD. The MUTCD encourages States to adopt a legislative code similar to Section 15-116 of the Uniform Vehicle Code which indicates that traffic control devices intended to regulate, warn, or guide traffic shall not be installed unless the devices conform to the State manual and the MUTCD.

Note: Technical Data Sheets are information tools only and should not be used as substitutes for instructions from individual manufacturers. Always consult with individual manufacturers for specific recommendations for their products and check the applicable local regulations.

This Technical Data Sheet was prepared by the members of DASMA's Operator & Electronics Division Technical Committee. DASMA is a trade association comprising manufacturers of rolling doors, fire doors, grilles, counter shutters, sheet doors, and related products; upward-acting residential and commercial garage doors; operating devices for garage doors and gates, sensing devices, and electronic remote controls for garage doors and gate operators; as well as companies that manufacture or supply either raw materials or significant components used in the manufacture and installation of the Active Members' products.

According to the MUTCD, what are traffic control devices? "All signs, signals, markings, and other devices used to regulate, warn, or guide traffic, placed on, over, or adjacent to a street, highway, pedestrian facility, or bicycle path by authority of a public agency having jurisdiction." Automatically or manually operated gates installed and operated under authorization of a public agency to control traffic accessing public streets are considered as traffic control devices based on this definition.

Where can information be found regarding the application of gates to restrict public travel? In the MUTCD 2009 edition Introduction, Section 1A.13, Definitions, and in Section 2B.68.

Do gated communities and entrances/exits of parking facilities fall under the MUTCD?

Yes, where the gate faces a road/street open to public travel even though travel beyond the gate is restricted in accordance with the Introduction to the MUTCD. Even though public travel is restricted beyond the gate, the gate itself must comply with the MUTCD as it closes the road to public travel.

What does "public travel" include? Access ways and parking lots of shopping centers.

Could office parks be included in the definition of a private property open to public travel? Yes.

What regulation addresses roads that are privately owned and also open to the public? The portion of MUTCD Section 1A.07 that reads as follows:

"The responsibility for the design, placement, operation, maintenance, and uniformity of traffic control devices shall rest with the public agency or the official having jurisdiction, or, in the case of private roads open to public travel, with the private owner or private official having jurisdiction."

How does the definition of private roads relate to automated vehicular gates? The definition of private roads (Section 1A.13) seems to make an exemption regarding automated vehicular gates when used in gated communities; however, since the authority having jurisdiction has the final authority in enforcing the MUTCD, there may be instances where automated vehicular gates across private roads may be subject to the standard.

What specific provisions of the MUTCD are relevant to automated vehicular gate systems? In Section 2B.68 on gates, two provisions are of note:

- Gate arms, if used, shall be fully retroreflectorized on both sides, and have vertical stripes alternately red and white at 16-inch intervals measured horizontally(similar to railroad crossing gates)
- Rolling sections of fence, if used, shall include either a horizontal strip of retroreflectorized sheeting on both sides of the fence with vertical stripes alternately red and white at 16-inch intervals measured horizontally to simulate the appearance of a gate arm in the horizontal position, or one or more Type 4 object markers (see Section 2C.66), or both. If a horizontal strip

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of retroreflectorized sheeting is used, the bottom of the sheeting shall be located 3.5 to 4.5 feet above the roadway surface.

What is the minimum vertical height of the striping tape? Although there is no specification for such height, 2 inches can be used as a minimum logical starting point for height of retroreflective tape used on a barrier arm or a gate sheeting surface.

Does the MUTCD apply to swinging gates? Swinging gates appear to be omitted; however, it is possible that the MUTCD developers assumed that swinging gates have wheels and roll as well. Section 05 specifically states that the standard applies to vertical and horizontal type gate arms. Section 15 applies the standard to rolling sections of fence (sliding gates.)

Where can I find more information on where the MUTCD is applied and not applied? Some guidance can be found at the following link: http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/knowledge/faqs/faq_general.htm.