



<b>Subject: Countdown Pedestrian Signals</b>	
<b>Date:</b> March 14, 2013	<b>Author:</b> Steve Drew
<b>Bulletin Number:</b> TE-2013-02 <b>Bulletin Type:</b> Requirement	<b>Effective Date:</b> March 14, 2013
<b>Audience</b>	<b>Standards Affected</b>
Ministry Managers, Electrical Services; all holders of the Electrical and Traffic Engineering Manual; all Project Managers and Traffic Engineers; all Design Consultants	Electrical & Traffic Engineering Manual, Electrical & Signing Materials Standards, Standard Specification for Highway Construction

### Background:

The previous policy addressing the installation of countdown pedestrian signals permitted their use if requested and funded by a local jurisdiction. Under this policy the Ministry did not, as a standard practice, install countdown pedestrian signals. The Ministry has since recognized the value of the countdown display and will change the policy so that the installation of countdown pedestrian signals is standard practice at signalized intersections.

### Policy:

Countdown pedestrian signals should be installed at new signalized intersections and, as funding permits, retrofitted to existing signalized intersections. This replaces the policy described in TE-2006-05 for initiating the installation of countdown pedestrian signals, but does not affect the policy for cost sharing if the installation is initiated by a local jurisdiction. Exceptions to this policy are at the discretion of the Regional Traffic Engineer.

### Procedure:

New traffic signals should include countdown pedestrian signals as part of the initial design. Existing signals should have countdown pedestrian signals added as funding becomes available through rehabilitation and upgrade programs. The Regional Traffic Engineer should consult with the Manager, Electrical Services and local jurisdictions to prioritize the installation for existing intersections.

Pedestrian actuation information provided by the cast aluminum **PS-015-1D** sign may continue to be used unless the Regional Traffic Engineer requests the use of the more educational **ZPS-015-5** sign.

### Standard:

Note: As defined in Sub-clause 402.5.7 of the Electrical and Traffic Engineering Manual, the *countdown time* is the same as the *pedestrian clearance time*.

Signalized intersections using countdown pedestrian signals shall be designed to operate as follows:

- Countdown pedestrian signals shall be configured so that the numerical display is enabled and begins counting down simultaneously with the flashing "DONT WALK" at the start of the pedestrian clearance time. After counting down to zero the numerical



---

display shall blank and remain blank through all signal phases until the beginning of the next pedestrian clearance interval.

- If the pedestrian clearance time cannot be provided, which may be the case for many railway pre-emption sequences, a pedestrian countdown signal shall not be implemented.
- When a signal receives a pre-emption call, the walk indication time may be shortened as required, however the pedestrian clearance time shall not be altered.
- If the controller pre-empts during the “WALK” indication the controller shall immediately change the “WALK” display to flashing “DON’T WALK” and enable the numerical display which shall begin counting down and reach zero at the same time as the flashing “DON’T WALK” becomes solid.
- If the controller pre-empts during the flashing “DON’T WALK,” the countdown shall continue to count down without interruption and reach zero at the same time as the flashing “DON’T WALK” becomes solid.
- The next cycle following the pre-emption event shall use the normal programmed values for the pedestrian timings.
- When countdown pedestrian signals are to be installed at a signalized intersection they should be installed on all signalized pedestrian legs.

#### Signal Display Conventions:

- ⇒ “WALK” indication = “walking person”
- ⇒ flashing “DON’T WALK” indication = flashing “upraised hand”
- ⇒ solid “DON’T WALK” indication = solid “upraised hand”

#### Contact:

Steve Drew, Senior Electrical Standards Technologist  
Traffic, Electrical, Highway Safety and Geometric Design Section  
Engineering Branch  
Phone: (250) 387-7688  
Email: [steve.drew@gov.bc.ca](mailto:steve.drew@gov.bc.ca)