

STATE OF DELAWARE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DESIGN CRITERIA

Overhead Mounted Street Name Signs

1. All new traffic control signals, and traffic control signals that are undergoing significant retrofits, should include overhead Street Name Signs (SNS) unless otherwise noted in this document, or other valid engineering or community involvement reasons are documented (i.e., DelDOT and a municipality agree that overhead SNSs are not needed in a specific low speed, downtown area due to aesthetic concerns).
2. All SNSs on span wires and on mast arms should have the following characteristics:
 - a. Be dual-sided (except for one-way streets)
 - b. Be hung below the span wire or mast arm
 - c. Have a maximum width of 120 inches (10 feet)
 - d. Have an initial upper-case height of eight inches (8”), and a lower-case height of six inches (6”), Highway Gothic D Lettering
 - e. Have 17 feet minimum clearance from roadway surface to bottom of the sign
 - f. Be installed only when the angle of the mast arm or span wire perpendicular to the direction of travel is less than 30 degrees. Regulatory signs can be hung with a pivot bracket.
3. Overhead SNSs conforming to the design criteria outlined above may incorporate a route shield when the roadway meets the conditions set out in the **DE MUTCD Section 2D.43 Paragraph 02**. State Route and US Route markers can be added to the left portion of the SNS but shall not extend the length beyond 120 inches or increase the height of the sign. The symbol should be proportioned on the sign, so as not to distort the State Route or US Route symbol. If the length of the road name is so long that the 120 inches maximum width will be exceeded, the state or US route shield with the GREEN border measuring 18” X 18” overall, may be used without the street name (see page 5).
4. The designer should avoid overhead street name signs with two lines of lettering. Typically, if a cross street has different names on either side of the intersection; two separate one-line signs should be used.
5. SNSs should not be tethered.
6. Note that regulatory signs mounted on mast arms should be rigid mounted to the mast arm (not hanging). Proposed new hardware should be used to mount regulatory signs mounted on span wires. Such span-mount signs will not be tethered unless special circumstances, such as size, dictate so.
7. The combination of possible geometric intersection designs (i.e., number of approaches, skew angles, etc.) and signal designs (e.g., “box” design, “suspended box” design, “twin” mast arm, diagonal design, alternative designs, etc.) make it impractical to develop a specific policy that will show exactly where every overhead sign should be located. The following principles should be followed:

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- a. Avoid placing the SNS between traffic signal heads. Generally, place overhead SNSs to the right of the far-right traffic signal head, e.g., over the paved shoulder
 - b. For an undivided roadway with good visibility in both directions (e.g., not a skewed intersection), generally only one SNS is needed which can serve both directions of travel. So, for the intersection of two undivided roadways that do not change names at the intersection, intersecting at a 90-degree angle without other site obstructions, typically only two SNSs are needed – one for each roadway. Sometimes even if the intersection is skewed, one sign may be visible from both directions if properly placed.
 - c. When the cross street has different names on either side of the intersection, or if one SNS does not result in good visibility in both directions, two signs for the roadway may be needed. If possible, the first option is to place the SNSs on the far-side right and rear-side left. The next option is near-side right and/or far-side left. The road to the right is shown on both sides (forward and reverse) on the right side SNS (whether far- or near-side), and the road to the left is shown on the left side SNS. Arrows should be included to indicate the direction in which the road name is valid
 - d. Divided highways should typically have one SNS for each direction of travel, generally following the placement guidelines noted in (c) above. Arrows should not be used if the cross-street name is the same on either side.
 - e. For Installations where the vertical support is on the right AND is in proximity to the edge of the roadway AND the SNS would conflict with signal heads on the mast arm or span wire, the SNS may be mounted on the vertical support. If any portion of the SNS will extend over the roadway, the 17 feet minimum clearance will apply.
 - f. If overhead SNSs properly convey all street names at an intersection, then ground mount SNSs should be omitted or, if existing, removed. If one or more streets cannot feasibly be signed with overhead SNSs, then all streets should be designated with ground mount SNSs (even if one street has redundant overhead and ground mounted SNSs).
8. Before the Project Process Meeting, the designer shall confirm the official street names for all SNSs:
- a. New Castle County – <https://arcg.is/CD5XO>
 - b. Kent County – <http://www.co.kent.de.us/Apps/KentCountyMapping/>
 - c. Sussex County – <https://maps.sussexcountyde.gov/OnlineMap/Map.html>
 - d. Statewide Administrator at 302-744-2682