

Virginia Highway Safety Improvement Program (VHSIP) Proactive Systemic Initiatives for VDOT-Maintained Roads: High-Visibility Signal Backplates



*High visibility signal
backplates in Virginia.*

VDOT works hard to provide a roadway network that operates safely, efficiently, and effectively. In 2019, the Commonwealth Transportation Board approved the deployment of highly effective, low-cost safety improvements to help reduce serious injury and fatal crashes across the Commonwealth. This data-driven strategy focuses on proactively targeting locations with higher crash risk. The goal is not to wait for crashes to occur before we proactively treat high-risk locations on the roadway network!

High-Visibility Signal Backplates (HVSBs) are a low-cost safety treatment that, when added to a traffic signal head, improve visibility of the illuminated signal face through a controlled-contrast background.¹ The treatment is comprised of a black colored plate that frames the signal head. For this

effort, the plates also include a retroreflective border, which can be incorporated by adding retroreflective tape to an existing signal backplate or purchasing a new backplate with a retroreflective border.

Headlights can illuminate the retroreflective border and the wider edge provides a contrast to distracting backgrounds or sun glare. HVSB's improve visibility, conspicuity, and orientation for both older and color vision deficient drivers. This countermeasure is also effective during power outages, providing a visible cue for motorists to stop at the intersection when the traffic lights are not operating.

Districts are eligible for HVSF funding on all VDOT-maintained traffic signals.

For any questions on inquiries on VHSIP, please email: hsiprogram@vdot.virginia.gov

Sign up for VHSIP email notifications to be notified of revised guidance, program updates, training opportunities, and more! Listserv Sign-up link: <http://eepurl.com/hY1DSj>

¹ <https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/provencountermeasures/backplate.cfm>