

5270000 DETECTABLE WARNINGS
COMMENTS FROM INTERNAL/INDUSTRY REVIEW

Randy DeMaris
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Comments: (12-28-20, Industry)

Section 527-4 states "Surfaces shall not deviate more than 0.10" from a true plane. If the curb ramps are left in place for a retro fit surface applied application, often times the surface can be uneven and may cause the detectable warning to dip or rise in some areas that may be more than the .10 that's being proposed. Will there be any other variance besides the .10? Section 527-2.3 Approved Product List: Methods or products used to form detectable warnings in place will not be permitted. I assume that this is referring to the liquid type of detectable warnings? Can you tell me if the new NTPEP test criteria will be added soon? I saw that whole section was crossed out.

Response:

Kevin Hayden
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Comments: (12-30-20, Industry)

In Section 527-2.1, language is added for both "permanent installations" and "temporary installations". However, it is not apparent what exactly either of these two terms mean. In the added paragraph for "permanent installations", the second sentence clarifies that asphalt or existing concrete can use surface-applied detectable warnings. Does this mean that "permanent installations" are only regarding new concrete surfaces that are part of the final layout, and "temporary installations" are regarding any type (e.g., concrete, asphalt, etc.) of allowable temporary surface? I would recommend clarifying these terms or remove these terms and instead specifically state the type of surface. Furthermore, in new Section 527-2.3 (previously 527-2.4), the first sentence says, "Methods or products used to form detectable warnings in place will not be permitted". This statement seems to contradict the newly added paragraph in Section 527-2.1 for "permanent installations", which says to "use detectable warnings that are cast in place...".

Response:

Rob Hager
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Comments: (1-6-21, Industry)

Please find the following comments regarding the newly proposed "detectable warning" changes (section 5270000) . As I read and understand this memorandum, it affectively removes SafetyStepTD from the Florida QPL for any new project applications. We are not sure of the reasoning for this as far as SafetyStepTD is concerned. We have performed over and above the Florida Department of Transportation specifications in the fact that we meet the ADA requirements and we also have training teams in the the State everyday teaching contractors and installation crews the proper way to install the SafetyStepTD systems. We also have a designated team that checks up on projects to make sure that they are in compliance with FDOT and

installed correctly. We are doing everything to partner and deliver FDOT a compliant product that delivers consistency, esthetic value, ease of installation and cost savings to the taxpayers of Florida. Should this proposal go into affect, it will eliminate the employment of 15 Floridians, closes down a new warehouse facility in process and cancel our plans to establish a manufacturing facility in Q2 of this year. This could also affect our opportunity and right to do business on national scale. SafetyStepTD has been on FDOT QPL over three years now and in this time there have been no failures of any kind, while solving many municipalities' and FDOT problems. SafetyStepTD has replaced every single product on the QPL at one time or another for various reasons and currently sells to FDOT direct on certain projects. One significant concern that SafetyStepTD addresses is that of a trip condition liability created by other retrofit brands and their inability to move at a similar rate of expansion and contraction with the substrate, thus creating a trip hazard. Another concern is addressing radius conditions, where our systems are installed with ease while the mandated ADA spacing requirements are met without structural destruction of the sidewalk. In these radius conditions we can offer custom completion to provide maximum directional benefit to the blind. Currently throughout the State, many "wet-set" tiles are being placed in concrete, which fall outside the directional mandates of ADA due to their structural rigidity creating limitations not experienced by SafetyStepTD. SafetyStepTD has also proven our systems provides the best option to service all of the unique climactic conditions of Florida including the harshest of weather throughout the State, including high water tables, high humidity, harsh UV environment and hurricane conditions, while still maintaining the integrity of our prefabricated mat. This change to the specification will cost the taxpayers greatly, along with removing all of the benefits that SafetyStepTD provides. SafetyStepTD is the best long-term solution as far as product cost, meeting the ADA requirements for directional guidance, maintenance and finally replacement costs. This negative cost impact in changing the specification may not be as apparent, so we ask that you would indulge the below bullet points that we present to FDOT, the taxpayers & the blind for your careful consideration. *A primary example: Wet-set ribbed box-style products, as well as SafetyStepTD can be installed and opened up to traffic 48 hours after cement concrete is installed. Currently, there has been a push by the competition's marketing departments to use only "wet-set" because it can be opened to traffic sooner than is allowed by proper installation practices and that of other products. This ploy has greatly harmed the businesses of SafetyStepTD/Rolhard-South Inc. by eliminating competitive products without justification. *Correct installation of a "wet-set" box-style must be weighted down by two 25 lb. sandbags for 48 hours in order to keep ramp from floating, creating air pockets and leaving raised product accessible to trip hazards, vehicle damage and other product malfunctions. *SafetyStepTD may be installed 24 hours after the cement concrete is poured; as such there is no benefit to one style product over the other. *SafetyStepTD is by far the most cost effective option to replace an install once warranty of 5 years has expired. No products warranty is longer than any other, thus taxpayers are liable for replacement of all locations eventually as any and all product will need replacement at some point. *A typical replacement for a failed wet-set ribbed boxstyle would require jackhammering out cement concrete, repouring and then a new tile installed, sandbagged for 48 hours. FDOT contractors have provided actual cost analysis of \$4,800.00- \$6,200.00 to replace each ADA Solutions and ArmorTile or any similar box-style ramp. (Source: FDOT contractors using typical low volume replacement on private jobs). FDOT has started with this practice approximately 1 year ago so results of negative impact will start to show in 2-3 years once warranties expire. *SafetyStepTD is restored or if need be, replaced on-site without destruction to substrate at a cost of \$380.00-\$700.00 per ramp at the end of the life cycle. There are no additional associated costs, such as lane closures or down traffic situations to FDOT or the municipality. Rolhard-South, Inc.,

contractors and ourselves have all experienced this first hand in numerous replacement conditions involving both a “wet-set” and our own systems. We have done the cost analysis between the two and over time, these replacement cost savings are significant. In closing, we would like to mention that SafetyStepTD is very proud of the fact that we are 100% American made and all our materials are 100% American sourced. We import nothing from any foreign country and everything that is shipped and installed in the State of Florida comes completely from the USA! Not sure how many other companies under “detectable warnings”, meet this assessment. We would also reiterate that we present a very unique ADA truncated dome product that meets all ADA requirements and we definitely help eliminate many issues and liabilities that are inherent to other ADA products within our market. We stand behind our products and we value every relationship that we have with our customers, including FDOT, all municipalities within the State and the taxpayers of Florida. We would request a meeting to discuss these issues, whether it be via phone conference, a Zoom meeting or in person. We look forward to hearing back from FDOT. Sincerely, Rob Hager VP of Sales and Operations SafetyStepTD, Inc. 909/809-4018 rob@safetystep.com

Response:

David Smith
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Comments: (1-7-21, Industry)

The text proposed is as follows: For permanent installations, use detectable warnings that are cast in place for newly constructed concrete walking surfaces. For asphalt or existing concrete walking surfaces, surface-applied detectable warnings may be used. Please include the use of detectable warnings manufactured into concrete pavers and slabs. The detectable warnings are integral to each concrete paving unit. When assembled as a paving surface, the detectable warnings align in conformance to FDOT requirements. Here is a recommended text change: For permanent installations, use detectable warnings that are cast in place or manufactured as part of the surface of paving units for newly constructed concrete walking surfaces. For asphalt or existing concrete walking surfaces, surface-applied detectable warnings may be used. Thank you. David R. Smith Technical Director Interlocking Concrete Pavement Institute

Response:

Sydney Chase
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Comments: (1-7-21, Industry)

January 7, 2021 FLDOT Attn: Karen Byram 605 Suwannee St. Tallahassee, FL 32399 Please find the following comments regarding the newly proposed "detectable warning" changes (section ^[1]_{SEP}) Please accept the incorporation of the details below, which were included within the correspondence you received from Safety Step TD. As many of the proposed deviations contained within this proposed specification change would affect both of our companies in a similar devastating fashion, we have chosen to collaborate on our presentations. ^[1]_{SEP} Please, note that any such change to specifications suggesting a “wet-set only product be used in new construction” would be devastating to our businesses without structural benefit to FLDOT and actual harm to Florida taxpayers, as will be further discussed. Rollhard South, Inc. has been

servicing this industry for over 10 years nationally and using Safety Step TD, which was first used in since 2002. Rolhard South, Inc has never been removed from any Specification nationwide nor have any complaints or corrective actions ever been filed against the company. Once all its benefits are known we would hope that you would remove the mandate to "wet-set" all new applications and allow our products to continue to be used as it has served you well for the past 3-1/2 years. Please let me start by explaining why Safety Step TD has been providing such a value added to customers for two decades. Originally, a concern with most surface applied products were that they were known to be unreliable in consistency, dome height, width and that they would occasionally detach from substrate. Since they were completely fabricated in the field this type product was subject to many variables that caused these field problems, and the eventual removal from FLDOT Specifications. The reason Safety Step TD, in 20 years has never experienced any significant problems is due to the fact that it is primarily factory fabricated, under controlled pressures and conditions perfecting the dome height, spacing and product integrity. None of the problems associated with the other myriad of surface applied products apply to our product as you will note in our unblemished 3-1/2 year of service to FLDOT. Moreover, Rolhard South, Inc uses only trained and certified installers which are either in our direct employment or utilized to train and certify contractors employees free of charge in order to assure consistency. Therefore, all of the benefits that originally had FLDOT using this ilk product are present and none of the problems experienced remain. The Safety Step TD directional guide allocation while maintaining structural integrity is superior to that of any any product on the market. This product design allows complete compliance to ADA Specifications without cutting up the material damaging structural integrity or in most situations a complete failure to meet ADA requirements on initial install. Moreover, Safety Step TD may be installed 24 hours after initial pour. The lack of any need for sand bags for 48 hours in order to keep any box style wet set products from floating, gives Safety Step TD the clear advantage from a value perspective. This is explained further below. Rolhard South, Inc., employs up to 15 Florida residents, from second chance backgrounds. This will increase significantly as we open our facility the second quarter, only if we are allowed to continue to service this market in a meaningful way. The specification will greatly affect our business, we will be closed. Rolhard South, Inc. provides excellent service to all its customers by providing an actual means by which FLDOT could collect on any warranty since manufacturing and field installs are direct and not through multi-step out of State or Country fabricators, then sold through distribution and on to contractors, which creates a veil shielding ultimate manufacturer from FLDOT collecting on any warranty. Rolhard South, Inc. unlike any other company, offers maintenance programs as well. This includes cataloguing, record keeping, and refurbishments or replacements for any and all of its installed ramps providing excellent protections from any potential litigation or replacements in distant future. Rolhard South, Inc. also, repairs any style panel bringing it up to meet your code, which may include total replacement, then could be folded into the Rolhard South, Inc. maintenance program. Each ramp is photographed catalogued dated and inspected, for the 5 year or 10 year inspection program, a report provided to each division that opts to purchase this program with the product with the initial installation of the product or an initial inspection and assessment report for a predetermined area of existing ramps. Rolhard South, Inc. new Florida manufacturing facility, slated for 2Q would be in jeopardy as nearly any meaningful business would be removed from our participation, thus in affect closing our doors. As I read and understand this memorandum, it affectively removes Safety Step TD from the Florida QPL for any new project applications. We are not sure of the reasoning for this. As far as Safety Step TD is concerned, we have performed over and above the Florida Department of Transportation specifications in the fact that we meet the ADA requirements

and we also have training teams in the field everyday teaching contractors and installation crews the proper way to install the Safety Step TD systems. We also have a designated team that checks up on projects to make sure that they are in compliance with FDOT and installed correctly. We are doing everything to partner and deliver FDOT a compliant product that delivers consistency, esthetic value, ease of installation and cost savings to the taxpayers of Florida. Should this proposal go into effect, it will eliminate the employment of 15 Floridians, closes down a new warehouse facility in the process and cancel our plans to establish a manufacturing facility in Q2 of this year. This could also affect our opportunity and right to do business on a national scale. Safety Step TD has been on FDOT QPL over three years now and in this time there have been no failures of any kind, while solving many municipalities' and FDOT problems. Safety Step TD has replaced every single product on the QPL at one time or another for various reasons and currently sells to FDOT direct on certain projects. One significant concern that Safety Step TD addresses is that of a trip condition liability created by other retrofit brands and their inability to move at a similar rate of expansion and contraction with the substrate, thus creating a trip hazard. Another concern is addressing radius conditions, where our systems are installed with ease while the mandated ADA spacing requirements are met without structural destruction of the sidewalk. In these radius conditions we can offer custom completion to provide maximum directional benefit to the blind. Currently throughout the State, many "wet-set" tiles are being placed in concrete, which fall outside the directional mandates of ADA due to their structural rigidity creating limitations not experienced by Safety Step TD. Safety Step TD has also proven our systems provides the best option to service all of the unique climactic conditions of Florida including the harshest of weather throughout the State, including high water tables, high humidity, harsh UV environment and hurricane conditions, while still maintaining the integrity of our prefabricated mat. This change to the specification will cost the taxpayers greatly, along with removing all of the benefits that Safety Step TD provides. Safety Step TD is the best long-term solution as far as product cost, meeting the ADA requirements for directional guidance, maintenance and finally replacement costs. This negative cost impact in changing the specification may not be as apparent, so we ask that you would indulge the below bullet points that we present to FDOT, the taxpayers & the blind for your careful consideration. *A primary example: Wet-set ribbed box-style products, as well as Safety Step TD can be installed and opened up to traffic 48 hours after cement concrete is installed. Currently, there has been a push by the competition's marketing departments to use only "wet-set" because it can be opened to traffic sooner than is allowed by proper installation practices and that of other products. This ploy has greatly harmed the businesses of Safety Step TD/Rolhard South Inc. by eliminating competitive products without justification. *Correct installation of a "wet-set" box-style must be weighted down by two 25 lb. sandbags for 48 hours in order to keep ramp from floating, creating air pockets and leaving raised product accessible to trip hazards, vehicle damage and other product malfunctions. *Safety Step TD may be installed 24 hours after the cement concrete is poured; as such there is no benefit to one style product over the other. *Safety Step TD is by far the most cost-effective option to replace and install once warranty of 5 years has expired. No products warranty is longer than any other, thus taxpayers are liable for replacement of all locations eventually as any and all product will need replacement at some point. *A typical replacement for a failed wet-set ribbed box- style would require jackhammering out cement concrete, re- pouring and then a new tile installed, sandbagged for 48 hours. FDOT contractors have provided actual cost analysis of \$4,800.00- \$6,200.00 to replace each ADA Solutions and Armortile or any similar box-style ramp. (Source: FDOT contractors using typical low volume replacement on private jobs) FDOT has started with this

practice approximately 1 year ago so results of negative impact will start to show in 2-3 years once warranties expire. *Safety Step TD is restored or if need be, replaced on-site without destruction to substrate at a cost of \$380.00-\$700.00 per ramp at the end of the life cycle. There are no additional associated costs, such as lane closures or down traffic situations to FDOT or the municipality. Rolhard South, Inc., contractors and ourselves have all experienced this first hand in numerous replacement conditions involving both a "wet-set" and our own systems. We have done the cost analysis between the two and over time, these replacement cost savings are significant. In closing, we would like to mention that Safety Step TD is very proud of the fact that we are 100% American made and all our materials are 100% American sourced. We import nothing from any foreign country and everything that is shipped and installed in the State of Florida comes completely from the USA! Not sure how many other companies under "detectable warnings", meet this assessment. We would also reiterate that we present a very unique ADA truncated dome product that meets all ADA requirements and we definitely help eliminate many issues and liabilities that are inherent to other ADA products within our market. We stand behind our products and we value every relationship that we have with our customers, including FDOT, all municipalities within the State and the taxpayers of Florida. We would request a meeting to discuss these issues, whether it be via phone conference, a Zoom meeting or in person. We look forward to hearing back from you soon. [SEP] Respectfully, Sydney D Chase President Rolhard South Inc. 121 S. Orange Ave., Suite 1500, Orlando, FL 32801

Response:

Kevin Earley
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Comments: (1-7-21, Industry)

The proposed change does not recognize the use of unit concrete pavers and slabs manufactured with truncated domes in conformance with ADA and FDOT requirements. These products are used throughout Florida and satisfy State and Federal requirements as detectable warnings. These manufactured concrete products, detectable warning pavers, have been successfully used for decades in Florida. Please include the use of detectable warnings manufactured into concrete pavers and slabs since the detectable warnings are integral to each concrete paving unit, providing proven durability and performance. On behalf of Oldcastle Architectural Products Group, the largest producer of concrete paver products in Florida, please consider amending this to include unit concrete as follow: For permanent installations, use detectable warnings that are cast in place "or manufactured as part of the surface of paving units" for newly constructed concrete walking surfaces. Thank You

Response:
