

§ 234.211 Security of warning system apparatus.

Highway-rail grade crossing warning system apparatus shall be secured against unauthorized entry.

§ 234.213 Grounds.

Each circuit that affects the proper functioning of a highway-rail grade crossing warning system shall be kept free of any ground or combination of grounds that will permit a current flow of 75 percent or more of the release value of any relay or electromagnetic device in the circuit. This requirement does not apply to: circuits that include track rail; alternating current power distribution circuits that are grounded in the interest of safety; and common return wires of grounded common return single break circuits.

§ 234.215 Standby power system.

A standby source of power shall be provided with sufficient capacity to operate the warning system for a reasonable length of time during a period of primary power interruption. The designated capacity shall be specified on the plans required by § 234.201 of this part.

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§ 234.217 Flashing light units.

(a) Each flashing light unit shall be properly positioned and aligned and shall be visible to a highway user approaching the crossing.

(b) Each flashing light unit shall be maintained to prevent dust and moisture from entering the interior of the unit. Roundels and reflectors shall be clean and in good condition.

(c) All light units shall flash alternately. The number of flashes per minute for each light unit shall be 35 minimum and 65 maximum.

§ 234.219 Gate arm lights and light cable.

Each gate arm light shall be maintained in such condition to be properly visible to approaching highway users. Lights and light wire shall be secured to the gate arm.

§ 234.221 Lamp voltage.

The voltage at each lamp shall be maintained at not less than 85 percent of the prescribed rating for the lamp.

§ 234.223 Gate arm.

Each gate arm, when in the downward position, shall extend across each lane of approaching highway traffic and shall be maintained in a condition sufficient to be clearly viewed by approaching highway users. Each gate arm shall start its downward motion not less than three seconds after flashing lights begin to operate and shall assume the horizontal position at least five seconds before the arrival of any normal train movement through the crossing. At those crossings equipped with four quadrant gates, the timing requirements of this section apply to entrance gates only.

§ 234.225 Activation of warning system.

A highway-rail grade crossing warning system shall be maintained to activate in accordance with the design of the warning system, but in no event shall it provide less than 20 seconds warning time for the normal operation of through trains before the grade crossing is occupied by rail traffic.

§ 234.227 Train detection apparatus.

(a) Train detection apparatus shall be maintained to detect a train or railcar in any part of a train detection circuit, in accordance with the design of the warning system.

(b) If the presence of sand, rust, dirt, grease, or other foreign matter is known to prevent effective shunting, a railroad shall take appropriate action under § 234.105, "Activation failure," to safeguard highway users.

§ 234.229 Shunting sensitivity.

Each highway-rail grade crossing train detection circuit shall detect the application of a shunt of 0.06 ohm resistance when the shunt is connected across the track rails of any part of the circuit.

§ 234.231 Fouling wires.

Each set of fouling wires in a highway-rail grade crossing train detection

§ 234.233

circuit shall consist of at least two discrete conductors. Each conductor shall be of sufficient conductivity and shall be maintained in such condition to ensure proper operation of the train detection apparatus when the train detection circuit is shunted. Installation of a single duplex wire with single plug acting as fouling wires is prohibited. Existing installations having single duplex wires with a single plug for fouling wires may be continued in use until they require repair or replacement.

§ 234.233 Rail joints.

Each non-insulated rail joint located within the limits of a highway-rail grade crossing train detection circuit shall be bonded by means other than joint bars and the bonds shall be maintained in such condition to ensure electrical conductivity.

§ 234.235 Insulated rail joints.

Each insulated rail joint used to separate train detection circuits of a highway-rail grade crossing shall be maintained to prevent current from flowing between rails separated by the insulation in an amount sufficient to cause a failure of the train detection circuit.

§ 234.237 Reverse switch cut-out circuit.

A switch, when equipped with a switch circuit controller connected to the point and interconnected with warning system circuitry, shall be maintained so that the warning system can only be cut out when the switch point is within one-half inch of full reverse position.

§ 234.239 Tagging of wires and interference of wires or tags with signal apparatus.

Each wire shall be tagged or otherwise so marked that it can be identified at each terminal. Tags and other marks of identification shall be made of insulating material and so arranged that tags and wires do not interfere with moving parts of the apparatus. This requirement applies to each wire at each terminal in all housings including switch circuit controllers and terminal or junction boxes. This requirement does not apply to flashing light units, gate arm light units and other

49 CFR Ch. II (10-1-04 Edition)

auxiliary light units. The local wiring on a solid state crossing controller rack does not require tags if the wiring is an integral part of the solid state equipment.

§ 234.241 Protection of insulated wire; splice in underground wire.

Insulated wire shall be protected from mechanical injury. The insulation shall not be punctured for test purposes. A splice in underground wire shall have insulation resistance at least equal to that of the wire spliced.

§ 234.243 Wire on pole line and aerial cable.

Wire on a pole line shall be securely attached to an insulator that is properly fastened to a cross arm or bracket supported by a pole or other support. Wire shall not interfere with, or be interfered with by, other wires on the pole line. Aerial cable shall be supported by messenger wire. An open-wire transmission line operating at voltage of 750 volts or more shall be placed not less than 4 feet above the nearest cross arm carrying active warning system circuits.

§ 234.245 Signs.

Each sign mounted on a highway-rail grade crossing signal post shall be maintained in good condition and be visible to the highway user.

INSPECTIONS AND TESTS

§ 234.247 Purpose of inspections and tests; removal from service of relay or device failing to meet test requirements.

(a) The inspections and tests set forth in §§ 234.249 through 234.271 are required at highway-rail grade crossings located on in service railroad tracks and shall be made to determine if the warning system and its component parts are maintained in a condition to perform their intended function.

(b) If a railroad elects not to comply with the requirements of §§ 234.249 through 234.271 because all tracks over the grade crossing are out of service or the railroad suspends operations during a portion of the year, and the grade crossing warning system is also temporarily taken out of service, a full inspection and all required tests must be