

LED Crosswalk Signs Enhance Traffic Safety at Naval Station Mayport

Naval Station (NS) Mayport, Florida is the third largest Naval Facility in the continental United States. With over 3,400 acres, NS Mayport is host to more than 80 tenant commands, including 22 naval ships and six Light Airborne Multi-Purpose System (LAMPS) Mark III helicopter squadrons. NS Mayport is also the operational and training headquarters for the SH-60B Seahawk LAMPS MKIII with a primary mission of anti-submarine warfare.

Vehicular traffic at NS Mayport is very busy, especially on weekday mornings. Added to the mix of vehicles are pedestrians who need to cross the busy thoroughfares. The potential exists for drivers not to see pedestrians when they attempt to cross the street, especially where there are no designated crosswalks or poorly marked crosswalks.

The crosswalk leading to Southeast Regional Maintenance Center (SERMC) had long been a dangerous area for pedestrians. Most crosswalks on the base are situated at intersections with stop signs or street lights, which are safer for walkers. The SERMC



SERMC crosswalk at NS Mayport had been a dangerous area for pedestrians.



A solar/battery powered flashing LED traffic sign was installed to alert oncoming traffic to pedestrians in crosswalk.

crosswalk is in the middle of Massey Avenue, one of the busiest streets at Mayport. In the past, many SERMC military and civilian personnel experienced near mishaps with vehicles at this crosswalk.

"There used to be a stop light at the crosswalk, but it caused such a traffic backup that eventually it was disabled," said Mayport Assistant Traffic Safety Coordinator John Sifuentes. "The dangers no light created for pedestrians at the crosswalk was a situation impossible to ignore."

Sifuentes, who retired from SERMC, was well aware of the difficulties of the Massey Avenue crosswalk and worked with Base Safety to coordinate a campaign to make the crosswalk safer. During his research efforts to find a resolution, Mr. Sifuentes came across the *BlinkerSign*TM 1 - a

solar/battery-powered flashing LED traffic sign.



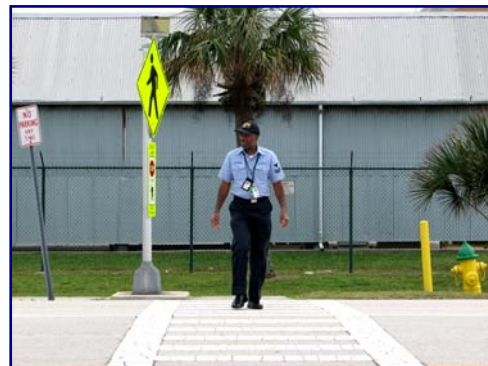
Warning sign has yellow ultra-bright LEDs that blink up to 60 times per minute.



"It took a long time to get approval to buy and install the sign. We first purchased a 110-volt sign that was going to be a nightmare to install because of its need for an electrical source. Eventually an agreement was made [with the manufacturer] to switch to the self-contained, solar-powered version,

which only required a rechargeable battery," said Sifuentes. The signs were purchased by the Mayport Public Works Department and installed by the NS Mayport repair and maintenance contractor.

The *BlinkerSign*TM is a top-of-the-line warning sign that meets all safety requirements of the Department of Transportation. The sign has yellow ultra-bright LEDs that blink up to 60 times per minute and remain on at all times. The *BlinkerSign*'s TM LEDs are each equipped with a light enhancing magnifying lens that increases the sign's visibility range up to twenty times, dramatically impacting drivers.



Prior to the installation of the *BlinkerSign*TM, Base Safety received regular complaints about the dangerous SERMC crossing area.

"The *BlinkerSign*TM we installed at the SERMC crosswalk will make such an impact for the pedestrians there. NAS Jacksonville installed one similar to the SERMC sign and an assessment of that intersection at NAS JAX says the *BlinkerSign*TM installed there reduced the accidents by 100 percent in the past ten months," said Sifuentes. "We hope to see that kind of incredible impact here at Mayport."

An article about the new sign was placed in the base's newspaper, and the electronic marquee at the front gate flashes reminders about pedestrian safety on a regular basis. The sign is a definite improvement at Mayport; however, the command realizes that reducing mishaps at pedestrian crosswalks is not just about impacting the drivers. NS Mayport has emphasized the importance of Operational Risk Management (ORM) for pedestrians.



Pedestrian crossing sign and its flashing LED lights are clearly visible to approaching vehicles

Said Sifuentes, "Pedestrians have to remember to wait for the cars to allow them to cross. They can't just walk into the intersection and expect the drivers to slow down and stop every time. Some drivers don't pay attention. It's all about using Operational Risk Management to assess the situation and handle it appropriately."

Prior to installation of the new sign, Base Safety received regular complaints about safety issues from personnel who had to cross the road and there were several near misses evidenced by skid marks in the crosswalk area. With the installation of the BlinkerSign™, SERMC employees have been impressed with the change at the crosswalk.

"This crosswalk is in clear view from my office window and I often watched SERMC employees fighting their way across the street in the past. The new bright yellow, lighted signs seem to grab drivers' attention and make them more aware of the crosswalk and of the pedestrians who use it. If these signs prevent even one accident, we've scored a touchdown," said Commander SERMC, Capt. Jim Green.

"It's great! People see the stop signs and the flashing lights and stop for me while crossing," said Fire Controlman 3rd Class Matthew Wehmeyer.

NS Mayport has already obtained funding for and installed a second set of lights on the busiest roadway on base. An enhancement consisting of additional lights is planned for a third BlinkerSign™, which will be installed in front of the command building. The additional solar-powered, in-pavement LED lights will be embedded on the white lines of the crosswalk and will blink for 21 seconds as pedestrians pass two sensing bollards.

¹ This safety success story does not constitute an endorsement of any particular product. Rather, it describes how Navy personnel have addressed a particular workplace safety issue. Neither the Navy, nor its employees and agents, warrant any product described in this report for any use, either general or particular.

Point of Contact: George E. Drake, MMC(SW) Environmental Safety &
Health Department Leading Chief, Naval Station Mayport, Florida
Phone: (904) 270-5216 ext 3204; DSN 960-5126 X3204
Email: george.e.drake@navy.mil