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**Title 49: Transportation**

**PART 222—USE OF LOCOMOTIVE HORNS AT PUBLIC HIGHWAY-RAIL GRADE CROSSINGS**

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**Subpart C—Exceptions to the Use of the Locomotive Horn**

**§ 222.31 [Reserved]**

**Silenced Horns at Individual Crossings**

**§ 222.33 Can locomotive horns be silenced at an individual public highway-rail grade crossing which is not within a quiet zone?**

(a) A railroad operating over an individual public highway-rail crossing may, at its discretion, cease the sounding of the locomotive horn if the locomotive speed is 15 miles per hour or less and train crew members, or appropriately equipped flaggers, as defined in 49 CFR 234.5, flag the crossing to provide warning of approaching trains to motorists.

(b) This section does not apply where active grade crossing warning devices have malfunctioned and use of the horn is required by 49 CFR 234.105, 234.106, or 234.107.

**Silenced Horns at Groups of Crossings—Quiet Zones**

**§ 222.35 What are the minimum requirements for quiet zones?**

The following requirements apply to quiet zones established in conformity with this part.

(a) *Minimum length.* (1)(i) Except as provided in paragraph (a)(1)(ii) of this section, the minimum length of a New Quiet Zone or New Partial Quiet Zone established under this part shall be one-half mile along the length of railroad right-of-way.

(ii) The one-half mile minimum length requirement shall be waived for any New Quiet Zone or New Partial Quiet Zone that is added onto an existing quiet zone, provided there is no public highway-rail grade crossing at which locomotive horns are routinely sounded within one-half mile of the New Quiet Zone or New Partial Quiet Zone.

(iii) New Quiet Zones and New Partial Quiet Zones established along the same rail line within a single political jurisdiction shall be separated by at least one public highway-rail grade crossing, unless a New Quiet Zone or New Partial Quiet Zone is being added onto an existing quiet zone.

(2)(i) The length of a Pre-Rule Quiet Zone or Pre-Rule Partial Quiet Zone may continue unchanged from that which existed as of October 9, 1996.

(ii) With the exception of combining adjacent Pre-Rule Quiet Zones or Pre-Rule Partial Quiet Zones, the addition of any public highway-rail grade crossing to a Pre-Rule Quiet Zone or Pre-Rule Partial Quiet Zone shall end the grandfathered status of that quiet zone and transform it into a New Quiet Zone or New Partial Quiet Zone that must comply with all requirements applicable to New Quiet Zones and New Partial Quiet Zones.

(iii) The deletion of any public highway-rail grade crossing from a Pre-Rule Quiet Zone or Pre-Rule Partial Quiet Zone, with the exception of a grade separation or crossing closure, must result in a quiet zone of at least one-half mile in length in order to retain Pre-Rule Quiet Zone or Pre-Rule Partial Quiet Zone status.

(3) A quiet zone may include grade crossings on a segment of rail line crossing more than one political jurisdiction.

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(b) *Active grade crossing warning devices.* (1) Each public highway-rail grade crossing in a New Quiet Zone established under this part must be equipped, no later than the quiet zone implementation date, with active grade crossing warning devices comprising both flashing lights and gates which control traffic over the crossing and that conform to the standards contained in the MUTCD. Such warning devices shall be equipped with constant warning time devices, if reasonably practical, and power-out indicators.

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(2) With the exception of public highway-rail grade crossings that will be temporarily closed in accordance with appendix A of this part, each public highway-rail grade crossing in a New Partial Quiet Zone established under this part must be equipped, no later than the quiet zone implementation date, with active grade crossing warning devices comprising both flashing lights and gates which control traffic over the crossing and that conform to the standards contained in the MUTCD. Such warning devices shall be equipped with constant warning time devices, if reasonably practical, and power-out indicators.

(3) Pre-Rule Quiet Zones and Pre-Rule Partial Quiet Zones must retain, and may upgrade, the grade crossing safety warning system which existed as of December 18, 2003. Any upgrade involving the installation or renewal of an automatic warning device system shall include constant warning time devices, where reasonably practical, and power-out indicators. In no event may the grade crossing safety warning system, which existed as of December 18, 2003, be downgraded. Risk reduction resulting from upgrading to flashing lights or gates may be credited in calculating the Quiet Zone Risk Index.

(c) *Advance warning signs.* (1) Each highway approach to every public and private highway-rail grade crossing within a New Quiet Zone shall be equipped with an advance warning sign that advises the motorist that train horns are not sounded at the crossing. Such sign shall conform to the standards contained in the MUTCD.

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(2) Each highway approach to every public and private highway-rail grade crossing within a New Partial Quiet Zone shall be equipped with an advance warning sign that advises the motorist that train horns are not sounded at the crossing or that train horns are not sounded at the crossing between the hours of 10 p.m. and 7 a.m., whichever is applicable. Such sign shall conform to the standards contained in the MUTCD.

(3) Each highway approach to every public and private highway-rail grade crossing within a Pre-Rule Quiet Zone shall be equipped by June 24, 2008 with an advance warning sign that advises the motorist that train horns are not sounded at the crossing. Such sign shall conform to the standards contained in the MUTCD.

(4) Each highway approach to every public and private highway-rail grade crossing within a Pre-Rule Partial Quiet Zone shall be equipped by June 24, 2008 with an advance warning sign that advises the motorist that train horns are not sounded at the crossing or that train horns are not sounded at the crossing for a specified period of time, whichever is applicable. Such sign shall conform to the standards contained in the MUTCD.

(5) This paragraph (c) does not apply to public and private highway-rail grade crossings equipped with wayside horns that conform to the requirements set forth in §222.59 and Appendix E of this part.

(d) *Bells.* (1) Each public highway-rail grade crossing in a New Quiet Zone or New Partial Quiet Zone that is subjected to pedestrian traffic and equipped with one or more automatic bells shall retain those



bells in working condition.

(2) Each public highway-rail grade crossing in a Pre-Rule Quiet Zone or Pre-Rule Partial Quiet Zone that is subjected to pedestrian traffic and equipped with one or more automatic bells shall retain those bells in working condition.

(e) All private highway-rail grade crossings within the quiet zone must be treated in accordance with this section and §222.25 of this part.

(f) All pedestrian grade crossings within a quiet zone must be treated in accordance with §222.27 of this part.

(g) All public highway-rail grade crossings within the quiet zone must be in compliance with the requirements of the MUTCD.

#### **§ 222.37 Who may establish a quiet zone?**

(a) A public authority may establish quiet zones that are consistent with the provisions of this part. If a proposed quiet zone includes public highway-rail grade crossings under the authority and control of more than one public authority (such as a county road and a State highway crossing the railroad tracks at different crossings), both public authorities must agree to establishment of the quiet zone, and must jointly, or by delegation provided to one of the authorities, take such actions as are required by this part.

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(b) A public authority may establish quiet zones irrespective of State laws covering the subject matter of sounding or silencing locomotive horns at public highway-rail grade crossings. Nothing in this part, however, is meant to affect any other applicable role of State agencies or the Federal Highway Administration in decisions regarding funding or construction priorities for grade crossing safety projects, selection of traffic control devices, or engineering standards for roadways or traffic control devices.

(c) A State agency may provide administrative and technical services to public authorities by advising them, acting on their behalf, or acting as a central contact point in dealing with FRA; however, any public authority eligible to establish a quiet zone under this part may do so.

#### **§ 222.38 Can a quiet zone be created in the Chicago Region?**

Public authorities that are eligible to establish quiet zones under this part may create New Quiet Zones or New Partial Quiet Zones in the Chicago Region, provided the New Quiet Zone or New Partial Quiet Zone does not include any highway-rail grade crossing described in §222.3(c) of this part.

#### **§ 222.39 How is a quiet zone established?**

(a) *Public authority designation.* This paragraph (a) describes how a quiet zone may be designated by a public authority without the need for formal application to, and approval by, FRA. If a public authority complies with either paragraph (a)(1), (a)(2), or (a)(3) of this section, and complies with the information and notification provisions of §222.43 of this part, a public authority may designate a quiet zone without the necessity for FRA review and approval.

(1) A quiet zone may be established by implementing, at every public highway-rail grade crossing within the quiet zone, one or more SSMs identified in appendix A of this part.

(2) A quiet zone may be established if the Quiet Zone Risk Index is at, or below, the Nationwide Significant Risk Threshold, as follows:

(i) If the Quiet Zone Risk Index is already at, or below, the Nationwide Significant Risk Threshold without being reduced by implementation of SSMs; or

(ii) If SSMs are implemented which are sufficient to reduce the Quiet Zone Risk Index to a level at, or below, the Nationwide Significant Risk Threshold.