

# BASIC SIGNAL BASICS

Condensed basic signal information you need for train  
operation on the Eagle River Division



# Just the basics, please...

Ask some model railroaders to explain *basic* railroad signals and they will give you a five chapter report on absolute and permissive signals, dwarf signals, high signals, doll posts, signal bridges, lunar aspects, semaphores, signal naming, interlocking, and a plethora of other information, as if you were studying for a position on a real railroad.



# We will have none of that.



- What follows is some truly basic information about signals on the Eagle River Division.
- We'll try very hard to keep it simple.
- Background information you need to know:
  - *Which way is left and which way is right*
  - *Diverging vs Normal or straight ahead*
  - *Your colors – the basic red, green & yellow*
  - *Stop means stop*
  - *Reduced speed means slower than you were going before you slowed down.*

# The Right Signal

Signals that are not attached to signal bridges are placed immediately to the right of the track they pertain to.

The only exception to this will be if there is not sufficient clearance on the right, and a signal bridge or signal mast was not used.



The red signal is for the track the switch engine occupies. The signal is located to the right of the track to which it applies.



**If there is only one color displayed on a given signal mast:**

**SOLID RED** means stop your train and remain stopped at the signal until it changes to any non-red color, or the dispatcher verbally authorizes you to proceed beyond that signal.

**DARK SIGNAL:** If no signal lights are lit, treat this signal as if it were displaying RED. Stop and contact the dispatcher for instructions.

# FLASHING RED



Flashing RED: bring your train to a complete stop, then proceed at reduced speed, being prepared to stop quickly if needed. (There may be other traffic in the immediate area.)

# If there is more than one color displayed on a given signal mast:

The top signal or signal group applies to the normal or non-diverging route and the lower signal or signal group applies to the diverging route.

Image at right: Top signal is NOT RED and lower signal is solid RED:

Proceed past the signal, expecting to take the non-diverging route.

*“If a signal is not all red, then it is not red at all.”*



# STOP

- Signal at Right – Both the top and lower aspects are solid RED: Stop and remain stopped until one of the two signals/signal groups is NOT RED.







TIP: If you are stopped at a red signal for an unusually long period of time without any explanation or obvious reason, and you have not done anything to suffer the wrath of an angry dispatcher, contact the dispatcher and see if he/she can clear the signal for you.

(Changing a signal to a non-red color is called “clearing” the signal.)



## QUESTION #1

What should you do at a signal that is displaying two non-flashing RED lights and no other colors?

# Answer #1

- Answer: STOP and REMAIN STOPPED.





## QUESTION #2

If a signal mast contains 2 signal groups and the top group displays **RED** while the lower group displays **FLASHING YELLOW**, should I stop?

# Answer #2

- No. Since one of the signals is not displaying solid or flashing RED, you may proceed onto the diverging route.
- *“If a signal is not all red, it is not red at all.”*



## QUESTION #3

Can I continue past a signal where the only active light is flashing RED?

# Answer #3

- Yes, but only after making a complete stop first. Come to a full stop and then proceed at a reduced speed, being prepared to stop if needed.



Obey all signals so no persons or equipment incur unnecessary injury or damage.