

Subpart B—Blue Signal Protection of Workers

- §218.21 Scope.
- §218.22 Utility employee.
- §218.23 Blue signal display.
- §218.24 One-person crew.
- §218.25 Workers on a main track.
- §218.27 Workers on track other than main track.
- §218.29 Alternate methods of protection.
- §218.30 Remotely controlled switches.

218.21

§218.21 Scope.

This subpart prescribes minimum requirements for the protection of railroad employees engaged in the inspection, testing, repair, and servicing of rolling equipment whose activities require them to work on, under, or between such equipment and subjects them to the danger of personal injury posed by any movement of such equipment.

218.22

§218.22 Utility employee.

218.22(a)

(a) A utility employee shall be subject to the Hours of Service Act, and the requirements for training and testing, control of alcohol and drug use, and hours of service record keeping provided for in parts 217, 219, and 228 of this chapter.

218.22(b)

(b) A utility employee shall perform service as a member of only one train or yard crew at any given time. Service with more than one crew may be sequential, but not concurrent.

218.22(c)

(c) A utility employee may be assigned to and serve as a member of a train or yard crew without the protection otherwise required by subpart D of part 218 of this chapter only under the following conditions:

218.22(c)(1)

(1) The train or yard crew is assigned a controlling locomotive that is under the actual control of the assigned locomotive engineer of that crew;

218.22(c)(2)

(2) The locomotive engineer is in the cab of the controlling locomotive, or, while the locomotive is stationary be replaced in the cab by another member of the same crew;

218.22(c)(3)

(3) The utility employee established communication with the crew by contacting the designated crew member on arriving at the train (as defined for the purpose of this section as one or more locomotives coupled, with or without cars) and before commencing any duties with the crew.

218.22(c)(4)

(4) Before each utility employee commences duties, the designated crew member shall provide notice to each crew member of the presence and identity of the utility employee. Once all crew members have acknowledged this notice, the designated crew member shall advise the utility employee that he or she

is authorized to work as part of the crew. Thereafter, communication shall be maintained in such a manner that each member of the train or yard crew understands the duties to be performed and whether those duties will cause any crew member to go on, under, or between the rolling equipment; and

218.22(c)(5)

(5) The utility employee is performing one or more of the following functions: set or release hand brakes; couple or uncouple air hoses and other electrical or mechanical connections; prepare rail cars for coupling; set wheel blocks or wheel chains; conduct air brake tests to include cutting air brake components in or out and position retaining valves; inspect, test, install, remove or replace a rear end marking device or end of train device. Under all other circumstances a utility employee working on, under, or between railroad rolling equipment must be provided with blue signal protection in accordance with §§ 218.23 through 218.30 of this part.

218.22(d)

(d) When the utility employee has ceased all work in connection with that train and is no longer on, under, or between the equipment, the utility employee shall notify the designated crew member. The designated crew member shall then provide notice to each crew member that the utility employee is being released from the crew. Once each crew member has acknowledged the notice, the designated crew member shall then notify the utility employee that he is released from the train or yard crew.

218.22(e)

(e) Communications required by § 218.22(c)(4) and (d) shall be conducted between the utility employee and the designated crew member. This communications shall be conducted either through direct verbal contact, by radio in compliance with part 220 of this chapter, or by oral telecommunication of equivalent integrity.

218.22(f)

(f) No more than three utility employees may be attached to one train or yard crew at any given time.

218.22(g)

(g) Any railroad employee who is not assigned to a train or yard crew, or authorized to work with a crew under the conditions set forth by paragraph (b) of this section, is a worker required to be provided blue signal protection in accordance with §§ 218.23 through 218.30 of this part.

218.22(h)

(h) Nothing in this section shall affect the alternative form of protection specified in § 221.16 of this chapter with respect to inspection of rear end marking devices.

[58 FR 43293, Aug. 16, 1993, as amended at 60 FR 11050, Mar. 1, 1995]

218.23

§218.23 Blue signal display.

218.23(a)

(a) Blue signals displayed in accordance with § 218.25, 218.27, or 218.29 signify that workers are on, under, or between rolling equipment. When so displayed-

218.23(a)(1)

(1) The equipment may not be coupled to;

218.23(a)(2)

(2) The equipment may not be moved, except as provided for in § 218.29;

218.23(a)(3)

(3) Other rolling equipment may not be placed on the same track so as to reduce or block the view of a blue signal, except as provided for in § 218.29 (a), (b) and (c); and
218.23(a)(4)

(4) Rolling equipment may not pass a displayed blue signal.
218.23(b)

(b) Blue signals must be displayed in accordance with § 218.25, 218.27, or 218.29 by each craft or group of workers prior to their going on, under, or between rolling equipment and may only be removed by the same craft or group that displayed them.

218.24

§218.24 One-person crew.

218.24(a)

(a) An engineer working alone as a one-person crew shall not perform duties on, under, or between rolling equipment, without blue signal protection that complies with § 218.27 or § 218.29, unless the duties to be performed are listed in § 218.22(c)(5) and the following protections are provided:

218.24(a)(1)

(1) Each locomotive in the locomotive engineer's charge is either:

218.24(a)(1)(i)

(i) Coupled to the train or other railroad rolling equipment to be assisted; or

218.24(a)(1)(ii)

(ii) Stopped a sufficient distance from the train or rolling equipment to ensure a separation of at least 50 feet; and

218.24(a)(2)

(2) Before a controlling locomotive is left unattended, the one-member crew shall secure the locomotive as follows:

218.24(a)(2)(i)

(i) The throttle is in the IDLE position;

218.24(a)(2)(ii)

(ii) The generator field switch is in the OFF position;

218.24(a)(2)(iii)

(iii) The reverser handle is removed (if so equipped);

218.24(a)(2)(iv)

(iv) The isolation switch is in the ISOLATE position;

218.24(a)(2)(v)

(v) The locomotive independent (engine) brake valve is fully applied;

218.24(a)(2)(vi)

(vi) The hand brake on the controlling locomotive is fully applied (if so equipped); and

218.24(a)(2)(vii)

(vii) A bright orange engineer's tag (a tag that is a minimum of three by eight inches with the words ASSIGNED LOCOMOTIVE-DO NOT OPERATE) is displayed on the control stand of the controlling locomotive.

218.24(b)

(b) When assisting another train or yard crew with the equipment the other crew was assigned to operate, a single engineer must communicate directly, either by radio in compliance with part 220 of this

chapter or by oral telecommunication of equivalent integrity, with the crew of the train to be assisted. The crews of both trains must notify each other in advance of all moves to be made by their respective equipment. Prior to attachment or detachment of the assisting locomotive(s), the crew of the train to be assisted must inform the single engineer that the train is secured against movement. The crew of the train to be assisted must not move the train or permit the train to move until authorized by the single engineer.

218.25

§218.25 Workers on a main track.

When workers are on, under, or between rolling equipment on a main track:

218.25(a)

(a) A blue signal must be displayed at each end of the rolling equipment; and

218.25(b)

(b) If the rolling equipment to be protected includes one or more locomotives, a blue signal must be attached to the controlling locomotive at a location where it is readily visible to the engineman or operator at the controls of that locomotive.

218.25(c)

(c) When emergency repair work is to be done on, under, or between a locomotive or one or more cars coupled to a locomotive, and blue signals are not available, the engineman or operator must be notified and effective measures must be taken to protect the workers making the repairs.

[44 FR 2175, Jan. 10, 1979, as amended at 48 FR 6123, Feb. 10, 1983]

218.27

§218.27 Workers on track other than main track.

When workers are on, under, or between rolling equipment on track other than main track-

218.27(a)

(a) A blue signal must be displayed at or near each manually operated switch providing access to that track;

218.27(b)

(b) Each manually operated switch providing access to the track on which the equipment is located must be lined against movement to that track and locked with an effective locking device; and

218.27(c)

(c) The person in charge of the workers must have notified the operator of any remotely controlled switch that work is to be performed and have been informed by the operator that each remotely controlled switch providing access to the track on which the equipment is located has been lined against movement to that track and locked as prescribed in § 218.30.

218.27(d)

(d) If rolling equipment requiring blue signal protection as provided for in this section is on a track equipped with one or more crossovers, both switches of each crossover must be lined against movement through the crossover toward that rolling equipment, and the switch of each crossover that provides access to the rolling equipment must be protected in accordance with the provisions of paragraphs (a) and (b), or (c) of this section.

218.27(e)

(e) If the rolling equipment to be protected includes one or more locomotives, a blue signal must be attached to the controlling locomotive at a location where it is readily visible to the engineman or operator at the controls of that locomotive.

218.29

§218.29 Alternate methods of protection.

Instead of providing blue signal protection for workers in accordance with § 218.27, the following methods for blue signal protection may be used:

218.29(a)

(a) When workers are on, under, or between rolling equipment in a locomotive servicing track area:

218.29(a)(1)

(1) A blue signal must be displayed at or near each switch providing entrance to or departure from the area;

218.29(a)(2)

(2) Each switch providing entrance to or departure from the area must be lined against movement to the area and locked with an effective locking device; and

218.29(a)(3)

(3) A blue signal must be attached to each controlling locomotive at a location where it is readily visible to the engineman or operator at the controls of that locomotive;

218.29(a)(4)

(4) If the speed within this area is restricted to not more than 5 miles per hour a derail, capable of restricting access to that portion of a track within the area on which the rolling equipment is located, will fulfill the requirements of a manually operated switch in compliance with paragraph (a)(2) of this section when positioned at least 50 feet from the end of the equipment to be protected by the blue signal, when locked in a derailing position with an effective locking device, and when a blue signal is displayed at the derail;

218.29(a)(5)

(5) A locomotive may be moved onto a locomotive servicing area track after the blue signal has been removed from the entrance switch to the area. However, the locomotive must be stopped short of coupling to another locomotive;

218.29(a)(6)

(6) A locomotive may be moved off of a locomotive servicing area track after the blue signal has been removed from the controlling locomotive to be moved and from the area departure switch;

218.29(a)(7)

(7) If operated by an authorized employee under the direction of the person in charge of the workers, a locomotive protected by blue signals may be repositioned within this area after the blue signal has been removed from the locomotive to be repositioned and the workers on the affected track have been notified of the movement; and

218.29(a)(8)

(8) Blue signal protection removed for the movement of locomotives as provided in paragraphs (a) (5) and (6) of this section must be restored immediately after the locomotive has cleared the switch.

218.29(b)

(b) When workers are on, under, or between rolling equipment in a car shop repair track area:

218.29(b)(1)

(1) A blue signal must be displayed at or near each switch providing entrance to or departure from the area; and

218.29(b)(2)

(2) Each switch providing entrance to or departure from the area must be lined against movement to the area and locked with an effective locking device;

218.29(b)(3)

(3) If the speed within this area is restricted to not more than 5 miles per hour, a derail capable of restricting access to that portion of a track within the area on which the rolling equipment is located will fulfill the requirements of a manually operated switch in compliance with paragraph (a)(2) of this section when positioned at least 50 feet from the end of the equipment to be protected by the blue signal, when locked in a derailing position with an effective locking device and when a blue signal is displayed at the derail;

218.29(b)(4)

(4) If operated by an authorized employee under the direction of the person in charge of the workmen, a car mover may be used to reposition rolling equipment within this area after workers on the affected track have been notified of the movement.

218.29(c)

(c) Except as provided in paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section, when workers are on, under, or between rolling equipment on any track, other than a main track:

218.29(c)(1)

(1) A derail capable of restricting access to that portion of the track on which such equipment is located, will fulfill the requirements of a manually operated switch when positioned no less than 150 feet from the end so such equipment; and

218.29(c)(2)

(2) Each derail must be locked in a derailing position with an effective locking device and a blue signal must be displayed at each derail.

218.29(d)

(d) When emergency repair work is to be done on, under, or between a locomotive or one or more cars coupled to a locomotive, and blue signals are not available, the engineman or operator at the controls of that locomotive must be notified and effective measures must be taken to protect the workers making the repairs.

[44 FR 2175, Jan. 10, 1979, as amended at 48 FR 6123, Feb. 10, 1983]

218.30

§218.30 Remotely controlled switches.

218.30(a)

(a) After the operator of the remotely controlled switches has received the notification required by § 218.27(c), he must line each remotely controlled switch against movement to that track and apply an effective locking device to the lever, button, or other device controlling the switch before he may inform the employee in charge of the workers that protection has been provided.

218.30(b)

(b) The operator may not remove the locking device unless he has been informed by the person in charge of the workers that it is safe to do so.

218.30(c)

(c) The operator must maintain for 15 days a written record of each notification which contains the following information:

218.30(c)(1)

(1) The name and craft of the employee in charge who provided the notification;

218.30(c)(2)

(2) The number or other designation of the track involved;

218.30(c)(3)

(3) The date and time the operator notified the employee in charge that protection had been provided in accordance with paragraph (a) of this section; and

218.30(c)(4)

(4) The date and time the operator was informed that the work had been completed, and the name and craft of the employee in charge who provided this information.