Federal Guidelines for Plain Language

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“Write as you talk”

Offices that have adopted this document:

• Structures Office
• Specifications Office
• Roadway Office
• Environmental Management Office
What is “Plain Language” – Seven musts:

1. **Instead of using “shall”, use:**
   - “must” for an obligation,
   - “must not” for a prohibition,
   - “may” for a discretionary action, and
   - “should” for a recommendation.
What is “Plain Language” – Seven musts:

5. Short sentences  6. Omit unnecessary words  
7. Place “only” or “always” next to word modified

**Old:** Throughout this design process, quality control will be exercised by those responsible for the engineering design and plans preparation activities by having a plan-do-check routine for each and every significant task or operation.

**New:** Exercise quality control throughout the design process by conducting a plan-do-check routine for each significant task.
Implementation of “Plain Language” –

- Structures Manual complete
- Standard Specifications in progress
- PPM in progress
- PD&E Manual next release will be complete
- Drainage Manual not started
- Pavement Design Manual complete
- Florida Greenbook has not adopted PL
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Questions?