



I-Highway Flag Program

Our Interstate Highway flag program began soon after “9-11”. It was initiated by patriotic Americans outraged at the 2011 attack on our country, but as time went on—many of the flags were not maintained. St. Joseph Council in High Bridge stepped in.

For several years, local Boy Scouts worked with the council to mount flags purchased by our council on I-78 overpasses in Somerset County from west of I-287 through Hunterdon County—two flags on each overpass so that one flag faced both the eastbound and westbound lane. Nearly two decades later, the Interstate Highway flag program continues, now coordinated by the Knights of Columbus Pope John Paul II Assembly 3293. Members of St. Joseph Council in High Bridge, Our Lady of Lourdes Council 6930 in Whitehouse Station and St. Catherine of Siena Council 15217 in Pittstown pay for the flags and do the work.

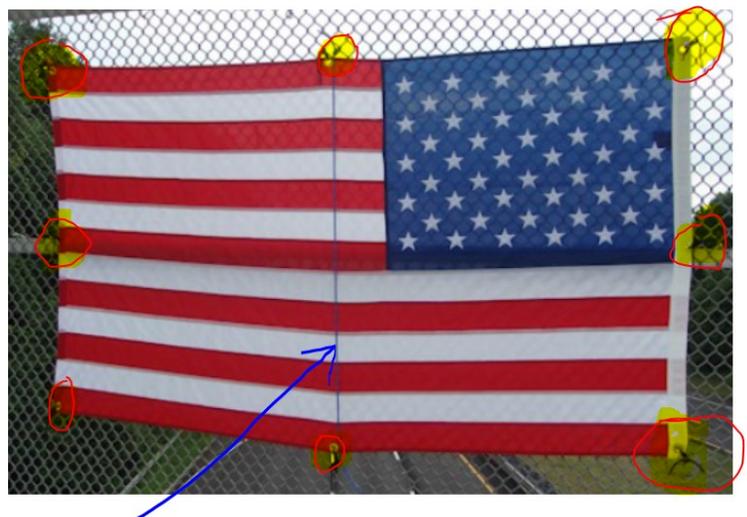


Different mounting materials and techniques have been tried and we’ve determined that the best way to mount them is by securing the flags so they remain very tightly held to the ‘chain link’ material above the overpasses. Each flag is secured at *eight spots* with 1/8 inch (‘325’ 2mm) ‘para cord’. It’s easy, the flags ‘stay put’ and require almost no maintenance. By keeping them tight against the chain link, the flags remain cleaner because they shed rain and snow and dry faster.

We begin with good-quality, 3’ X 5’ US made flags (which come with 2 grommets at one side of the flag for standard mounting). Sewn nylon flags are a better value than poly flags and look better-longer. (Inexpensive, printed flags are not a good option!) We add 1/8” holes in the middle of each horizontal and vertical edge of the flag and in the corners where there are no grommets. An electric soldering iron works well to ‘drill’ the little holes. A 16” long section of “para cord” is then tied (*tightly*) at each of eight tie-down spots, leaving enough cord to tie to the steel mesh at the overpasses. The ends of the tie downs are melted with a torch to reduce fraying. The tie-downs are placed on the flags before going to the overpasses so that all that remains is to tie the flag to the steel mesh.

Additionally, a separate 1/8” or thicker para cord is added vertically at the middle of each flag to act as a shock absorber and help hold the flag against the steel mesh on the overpass. The vertical cord is tied to the chain link (not to the flag). When flags are replaced we just slide the replacement flag behind the vertical cord and tie the new flag to the chain link. (*The mounting positions can be seen in the photo.*)

The secure mountings and vertical cord reduce billowing and strain on the corners from the incessant winds. *The more tightly the flag is tied to the chain link, the more resistant it is to tearing or pulling away, the cleaner the flag will remain and it will last many months.*



- ◆ One good flag is the sewn nylon Valley Forge Flags from www.united-states-flag.com for about \$16.
- ◆ Para cord is available in a wide variety of colors and prices. Typical prices are 5 to 6 cents/foot, adding less than \$1 cost per flag for 8 tie-downs and the vertical cord. One source is www.paracord.com