



MDOT PRESS RELEASE

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MDOT explains flashing yellow arrow with YouTube video

October 20, 2010 -- To help motorists understand the new flashing yellow left-turn signal, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) has posted an animated video on MDOT's YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/MichiganDOT.

For years, Michigan drivers have been making left turns from lanes where the signal light is flashing red. But soon, at a location near you, there will be a new traffic signal that offers a safer, more efficient way for traffic to turn left at busy intersections.

The signals are being introduced nationwide and ultimately will be required at all intersections where there is a separate left-turn arrow signal. This change is the result of a national study conducted by the Federal Highway Administration, which demonstrated that the new signal helps prevent crashes, moves more traffic through an intersection, and provides more flexibility in traffic management.

The flashing yellow arrow is part of a four-arrow light. What do you do when you see the flashing yellow? It's simple: be cautious, and after yielding to oncoming traffic and pedestrians, make your left turn.

After it flashes, the flashing yellow then turns to a solid yellow left-turn arrow, which means prepare to stop.

When the light turns to a solid green arrow, turn left. Oncoming traffic must stop.

Just remember: flashing yellow means turn with caution. More information, including a link to download a brochure and a demonstration of how the signal works, is available at www.michigan.gov/flashingyellowarrow.

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MDOT says: Construction work zones need your undivided attention.

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Flashing Yellow Arrow Left-Turn Signal


Remember: a flashing yellow arrow = turn with caution.

You may have begun to notice a new style of left-turn signal on Michigan's roads. Placed OVER the left-turn lane at a signalized intersection, this new signal display includes a flashing yellow arrow.

In coming years, this type of signal will replace all flashing red left-turn signals.

How will it work?

In most locations, the flashing yellow arrow will be part of a four-arrow signal. In areas where this is not possible, the bottom of a three-arrow signal will display either the flashing yellow arrow or a steady green arrow.

- [See how the new signal works.](#) 
- [Download the brochure.](#)

Signal phases:



Red: STOP.



Flashing yellow arrow: Left turns permitted. Yield to oncoming traffic and pedestrians. [Oncoming traffic has a green light.]



Green arrow: Safe to turn left. [Oncoming traffic must stop.]



Steady yellow arrow: The left-turn signal is about to change to red; prepare to stop, or prepare to complete your left turn if you are within the intersection.

Why the change?

This change is the result of a national study conducted for the Federal Highway Administration, which demonstrated that the new signals:

- help to prevent crashes
- move more traffic through an intersection
- and provide additional traffic management flexibility.

Why is it a better left-turn signal?

- It's safer. A national study demonstrated that drivers made fewer mistakes with the new signals than with traditional left-turn arrow signals.
- It's more efficient. The new signals provide traffic engineers with more options to handle variable traffic volumes.
- It's more consistent. You'll see the same signals in every state because the new signals are being introduced throughout the U.S.