

# HAVE YOU NOTICED THE “FLASHING” YELLOW TRAFFIC ARROWS?



The Missouri Department of Transportation, (MoDOT), has implemented a new traffic signal display to provide a safer, more efficient left turn for motorists. The flashing yellow arrow left-turn indication is a new type of display that can replace the circular green indication for left turns at selected signalized intersections.

## What are flashing yellow left-turn arrows?

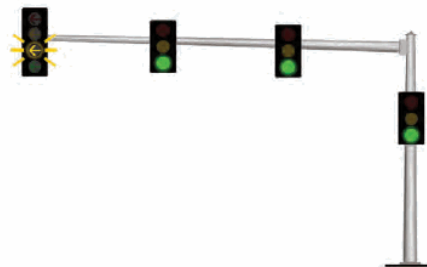
The Federal Highway Administration is now allowing departments of transportation to use flashing yellow left-turn signals as an option on certain roadway intersections.

MoDOT Traffic Operations Engineer Greg Owens says the new signal lights improve safety and reduce traffic delays. “With the new flashing left-turn arrow, drivers can make a left turn when this light is on, when it is safe to do so,” he says. “This essentially gives drivers two ‘chances’ to make it through the signal, resulting in less wait time at the intersection.”

MoDOT will consider installing these signals, where appropriate, as the department continues to upgrade its traffic signals across the state. About 50 other locations statewide are using this indication as of mid-2010.

## How does a flashing left-turn arrow work?

A flashing yellow arrow means left turns are permitted, but you must first yield to oncoming traffic and pedestrians and then proceed with caution. The flashing yellow arrow does not replace the solid yellow arrow and its meaning; it does replace the green “ball” indication as a signal for a yielding left turn.



**Drivers should always remember: a flashing yellow = turn with caution.**

## How should drivers approach a flashing yellow left-turn signal?

Drivers should stop at the intersection, and yield to oncoming traffic. If and when it is safe, make your left turn and proceed through the intersection. When the available time for the flashing yellow arrow ends, the solid yellow left-turn arrow begins. The solid yellow retains its standard meaning: the left turn signal is about to go to red and they should prepare to stop, or prepare to complete their left turn if they are in the intersection.

### **Why not use a solid green light instead of the flashing yellow arrow?**

The solid green light is often misunderstood as a left turn indicator. This is because drivers naturally think “green means go”. Traffic making a left turn on a solid green light some times does not yield to oncoming traffic, which can result in more crashes. The flashing yellow arrow allows left turns but at the same time communicates the “caution” message to drivers. The flashing yellow left-turn arrow is especially effective at intersections with high volumes of traffic.

The flashing yellow left-turn arrow will be operational when traffic volumes permit, typically during non-rush hours.

#### **For more information:**

Please contact MoDOT at 314-275-1500 or 1-888-ASK-MODOT