



## NEWS RELEASE

MARYLAND STATE POLICE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 12, 2012**

### **NEW NON-FUNCTIONING TRAFFIC LIGHT LAW TO TAKE EFFECT**

(PIKESVILLE, MD) – Maryland State Police are reminding motorists of a new law about to take effect regarding actions drivers must take when approaching intersections with non-functioning traffic signals.

Beginning October 1, 2012, a driver approaching a non-functioning traffic control signal **from any direction** at an intersection shall stop:

- at a clearly marked stop line;
- before entering any crosswalk; or
- before entering the intersection.

After stopping, the driver must:

- yield to any vehicle or pedestrian in the intersection; and
- remain stopped until it is safe to enter and continue through the intersection.

Intersection traffic control signals, most commonly called ‘red lights,’ or ‘stop lights,’ direct the safe and orderly flow of traffic in and through thousands of intersections across Maryland. Most are powered by electricity that can be interrupted because of storms, traffic crashes, or other incidents that cause power outages. Just because a traffic control signal is not functioning at an intersection does not mean drivers are relieved of their duty to exercise care and caution. The new law makes clear the procedures each driver must now follow.

Violations of the new law carry a fine of \$90 and two points if the offense does not contribute to an accident. If the violation contributes to a crash, the fine is \$130 and three points.

### **REMEMBER EXISTING LAWS:**

If two vehicles approach an intersection without a traffic control device or with a non-functioning traffic control signal from different roadways at the same time, there is existing motor vehicle law that applies. In this situation, the driver on the left must yield the right-of-way to the vehicle on his or her immediate right.

There are also times when a traffic control signal that normally operates green, yellow, and red lights may be in 'flashing' mode. This usually means red lights may be flashing in one direction and yellow lights are flashing in another direction. Flashing red and yellow lights on a traffic control signal do not mean the light is 'non-functioning.'

In this situation, the drivers approaching the red flashing light must stop and can only proceed when the intersection is clear. Drivers approaching the yellow flashing light should slow down and use caution, but are permitted to proceed through the intersection without stopping. Drivers are also reminded that if a police officer is directing traffic in the intersection, they should obey the directions of that officer, regardless of the signal indicated on the traffic control device.

It is difficult to describe every potential intersection situation. Above all, drivers are reminded that it is their duty to always drive with care and caution, especially when approaching an intersection with a non-functioning signal. If other drivers are present at the intersection, remember to be courteous, use caution, and do everything possible to try to determine the intentions of other motorists and communicate your intentions, if you are unsure of how to proceed. Even if you have the right of way, it is better to allow another driver to proceed if it appears he or she is going to do so, instead of risking an intersection crash.

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**ATTENTION!!  
NEW LAW RE:  
NON-FUNCTIONING TRAFFIC LIGHTS**



Effective October 1, 2012, a driver approaching a non-functioning traffic control signal from any direction at an intersection **MUST:**

**STOP AT A CLEARLY MARKED STOP LINE,  
BEFORE ENTERING ANY CROSSWALK, OR BEFORE  
ENTERING THE INTERSECTION.**

After stopping, the driver **MUST:**

**YIELD TO ANY VEHICLE OR PEDESTRIAN IN THE  
INTERSECTION AND REMAIN STOPPED UNTIL IT IS  
SAFE TO ENTER AND CONTINUE THROUGH THE  
INTERSECTION.**

Violations of this law carry a fine of \$90 and two points if the offense does not contribute to an accident. If the violation contributes to a crash, the fine is \$130 and three points.

**Remember – If a traffic light is out:  
STOP, YIELD, PROCEED WITH CAUTION**