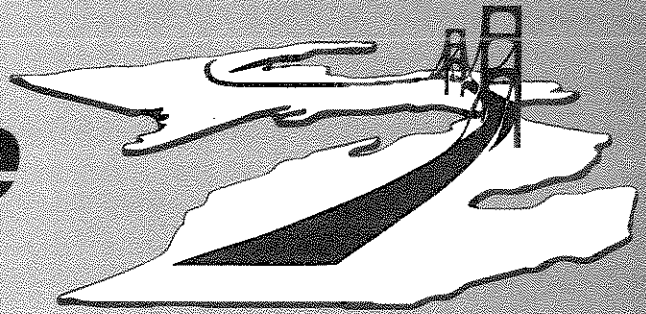


# The Bridge

Linking Transportation Research and Practice



## New Flashing Yellow Arrow Left-Turn Signal

Adapted by John Velat from the MDOT, Office of Communications' brochure *INTRODUCING...the New Flashing Yellow Arrow Left-Turn Signal*. See <[http://www.MichiganLTAP.org/Bridge/21\\_2/](http://www.MichiganLTAP.org/Bridge/21_2/)> for more information on this new signal.

You may notice this 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 in Michigan and throughout the USA.

### How Will the New Signals Operate?

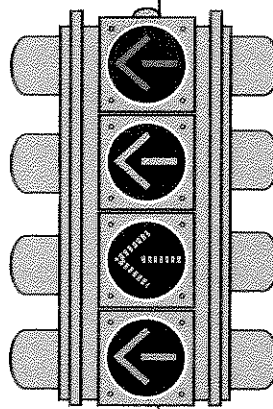
In most locations, the flashing yellow arrow display will be part of a four-arrow display. In areas where a total signal replacement is not possible, a three-section signal would be used where the bottom display will display either the flashing yellow arrow or steady green arrow.

### 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 will be mandated throughout the USA.



### New Left-Turn Signal Phases

Red arrow: 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.

Yellow flashing 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.]

### And, a National Study Confirms It's a Better Left-Turn Signal

The new signals are known as "flashing yellow arrow left-turn signals," and offer a safer, more efficient way to handle traffic turning 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 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 for road agencies.

### Where Will These Signals Be Installed?

MDOT and other roadway agencies will be converting signals that have a flashing red ball for left-turns to the flashing yellow arrow. You will begin to see flashing yellow arrow left-turn signals at intersections across the United States. The Federal Highway Administration has begun the process of making these signals the standard for signalized left-turns. It will, however, likely take several years for the standard to be adopted and implemented by all road agencies and municipalities nationwide.

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