

TRAFFIC SECTION

The Department of Public Works is responsible for maintenance of approximately 115 signalized intersections, 20,000 signs, 1,200 street lights, and many miles of pavement markings. Staff consists of traffic engineers, electricians and traffic sign technicians.

Q & A

Q: How can I get a speed limit sign on my street so cars slow down?

A: Speed limits are set using guidelines provided in the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*. Wisconsin laws specify that there are specific un-posted, fixed speed limits. This includes the 25 MPH speed limit on any street within the city limits, except where posted differently. Speed limits higher than 25 MPH are established based on traffic engineering studies which involve analysis of roadway conditions, crash reports and the prevailing speed of prudent drivers.

Q: Why isn't there enough time to cross the street before the walk light changes?

A: A pedestrian should start to cross the street when the white light picturing a "walking person" is lit. After a pre-set time, the "walking person" light will turn off and the orange "raised hand" light will start to flash. While the "raised hand" light is flashing, any pedestrians that are already in the process of crossing should continue to the other side. The length of time that the hand flashes is calculated to be adequate for pedestrians to finish crossing the street. Only then will the flashing hand become solid. Pedestrians should not *start* crossing the street when the hand is flashing or solid.

Q: How can I have a STOP sign placed at the end of my street?

A: Appleton uses several criteria to determine where intersection traffic controls are necessary. Several crucial factors taken into consideration are vehicle volume, sight distance and crash rates. Often the review reveals that other measures are needed to maintain a safe situation, such as parking restrictions, tree or hedge trimming, pavement markings or speed enforcement. The Traffic Section works with the Police Department and other agencies to review and implement recommendations. Citizen requests for intersection control studies can be made by contacting the Traffic Section at 832-5580.

Q: Signs in my neighborhood look perfectly fine Why is the City replacing them?

A: The FHWA (Federal Highway Administration) enacted legislation mandating minimum retro-reflectivity levels for most traffic signs to ensure that they are visible at night. We are replacing our signs in a systematic fashion as streets are reconstructed and in an area-by-area approach.

Q: How can I change the parking situation on our street?

A: Requests for specific parking restrictions such as no parking zones, time limit parking and handicap parking can be directed to the City Traffic Engineer. Requests are reviewed for their impact on safety, traffic flow, engineering standards and neighborhood acceptance. Recommendations are made to the Municipal Services Committee and then forwarded to the Common Council for approval.

Q: Who do I call if a traffic signal is malfunctioning?

A: Please call the Department of Public Works at 832-5580. If after hours, leave a message with the following information: Intersection, nature of the problem, time of day, and direction of travel (if applicable).

Q: Who do I call if a street light is burned out?

A: Most street lights mounted on wooden poles are leased from WE Energies. Outages should be reported directly to We Energies at 1-800-662-4797 or on their website at <https://www.we-energies.com/slo/default.aspx>. In addition to leased lights, the City owns and maintains approximately 1,200 street lights on aluminum and concrete poles. Outages should be reported to the Department of Public Works at 832-5580.

Q: Who determines what is done when a new street is constructed, or an existing street is reconstructed?

A: All street construction and reconstruction projects are reviewed by the Traffic Section. Input is provided on street widths, parking restrictions, intersection design, signal layout, signage, bike lanes, etc. Recommended designs are shared at informational meetings providing the public with an opportunity to weigh in on the proposed design. Recommendations are then made to the Municipal Services Committee and then forwarded to the Common Council for approval.

Q: Why was my rummage sale sign removed from the traffic sign post I taped it to?

A: Private signs, such as rummage sale signs, are prohibited on the terrace and everywhere else in the public right-of-way. Signs, notices, posters, etc. may not be placed on traffic control boxes, traffic signs, utility poles, etc.

Q: Can we have a “Children at Play” sign installed in our block?

A: The City of Appleton does not install “Children at Play” signs. Studies have shown that these types of signs fail to achieve the desired safety benefits. Since there are children in virtually every neighborhood in Appleton, signs would have to be placed in all blocks losing any effectiveness these signs might have. The City does post recreation areas and school pedestrian crossings where warranted.

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For more information please visit: www.appleton.org or call 832-5580.