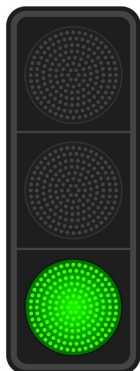


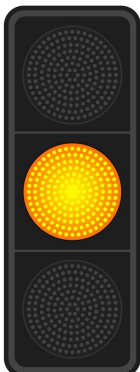
Driver Responsibility at Inoperable Traffic Control Signals

Connecticut Public Act 21-61

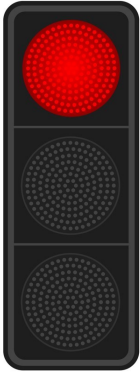
According to the **Federal Highway Administration**, the purpose of a traffic control signal is to safely assign the right of way to avoid conflicts. Traffic signals are designed to maintain an orderly flow of traffic for vehicles, pedestrians, and other roadway users. This goal is accomplished by reducing conflicts between vehicles and other roadway users that arrive at an intersection from different approaches. To assist in meeting this goal, drivers in Connecticut are required to know the rules of the road prior to obtaining their driver's license. **The State of Connecticut Driver's Manual** advises drivers what to do when encountering the following traffic signals:



Green traffic lights mean you can go through the intersection. You must yield to emergency vehicles and others as required by law. If you are stopped and then the light turns green, you must allow crossing traffic to clear the intersection before you go ahead. If you are turning left, a steady green traffic light means you may turn, but only when safe to do so. If you are turning right, yield to pedestrians crossing the street.

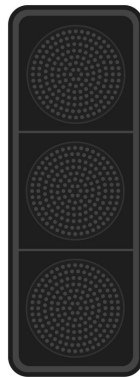


Yellow traffic lights mean the traffic light is about to change to red. You must stop if it is safe to do so. If you are in the intersection when the yellow light comes on, do not stop—continue through the intersection.



Red traffic lights mean stop. You must wait until the traffic light turns green and there is no crossing traffic before you may move ahead. If you are turning right on red, you may turn after coming to a full stop and checking to make sure that there is no oncoming traffic and no sign prohibiting the turn on a red light. Watch out for pedestrians crossing in front of your vehicle.

But what should you do if you see this traffic signal?



Inoperative traffic signals can be caused by power outages from crashes, inclement weather, or other malfunctions. In 2021, Connecticut passed **Public Act 21-61** which, in part, states:

“The driver of a vehicle approaching an intersection controlled by a traffic control signal that is inoperative shall stop such vehicle and proceed in the same manner as though a stop sign were facing in each direction at the intersection, unless otherwise directed by a police officer.”

This means that all drivers should do the following when approaching an inoperative traffic signal:

- Come to a complete stop as though all approaches are governed by a stop sign
- Proceed cautiously when all other drivers have stopped and the intersection is clear
- Know that other drivers may not know how to react to an inoperative traffic signal, so always be alert
- When safe to do so, notify the local authorities about the traffic signal, as they may not know the signal is not working
- Follow any temporary traffic control measures established by the local authorities while the signal is inoperative (i.e., stop signs, traffic officers, etc.)
- Regardless of the traffic signal, drive safely and obey all the rules of the road to keep yourself and all other roadway users safe

References:

- **An Act Concerning Driver Responsibility at Inoperable Traffic Control Signals:**
- <https://www.cga.ct.gov/2021/act/Pa/pdf/2021PA-00061-R00HB-05420-PA.PDF>
 - **FHWA's Measures of Effectiveness and Validation Guidance for Adaptive Signal Control Technologies:**
- <https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/fhwahop13031/chap2.htm>
 - **CT Department of Motor Vehicles Driver's Manual:**
- <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DMV/20/29/r12eng122019.pdf>
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