

TRAFFIC SECTION

The Department of Public Works is responsible for maintenance of over 115 signalized intersections, 20,000 signs, 1000 street lights and miles of pavement markings. Staff consists of traffic engineers, electricians and sign shop 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 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 on the basis of traffic engineering studies which involve analysis of roadway conditions, accident 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 WALK (or white light picturing a "person walking") is lit. After a pre-set time, the WALK light will turn off and the DON'T WALK (or flashing hand) light will start to flash. This means finish crossing the street if you are in the crosswalk. The time that this light is flashing is calculated to be adequate to finish crossing the street. Do not start crossing the street if the light is flashing. When the calculated clearance flashing DON'T WALK time is completed, the DON'T WALK face will stop flashing and remain lighted. During this phase no pedestrian should be in the crosswalk.

Q: How can I have a STOP sign placed on 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 accident 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 and speed enforcement. The Traffic Section works with the Police Department and other agencies in reviewing and implementing 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 Federal Highway Administration enacted legislation mandating minimum retro-reflectivity levels for most traffic signs. 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 Traffic Section. 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 light is out?

A: Please call the Department of Public Works at 832-5580. If after hours leave a message with the following information: Intersection, color of light, the street you were travelling on and your direction of travel.

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 1000 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, pedestrian accommodations, signal layout, signage, bike lanes, safety features, 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 sign, utility poles, etc.

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

A: No. Like most cities, 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.

* * * * *

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