SHARING THE ROAD

Foreword

Now more than ever, we, as horse and buggy drivers, need to be careful and observe the basic rules of safety when traveling on today's busy roads. There is more traffic going much faster than ever before and we must do what we can to assure our own safety as well as that of motorists with whom we must share the road. We've created a horse and buggy driver safety manual to assist in this effort. Proper operation of your horse and buggy on these busy roads can greatly reduce accidents.

The manual is intended for horse and buggy drivers operating on public roadways. However, this manual can also be useful for motor vehicle drivers, especially out-of-town visitors and tourists, not familiar with encountering horse and buggies traveling on the road. We hope that you will find this information useful and will do your part to make our roadways safe.

Acknowledgements

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Members of the Plain Community
Members from Green Lake County
Members from Columbia County
Members from Marquette County
Wisconsin Department of Transportation

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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DAY AND NIGHT DRIVING - BUGGY OPERATORS

DO think about safety for yourself and others.

DO stay alert at all times while driving

DO be sure your buggy is well equipped with lights and reflective tape.

DO begin using your lights in plenty of time. Dusk and dawn are dangerous times as well as inclement weather.

DO have lights on at all times at night and during low visibility.

DO stay as far to the right as possible when you see a vehicle approaching from the rear.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DAY AND NIGHT DRIVING – MOTORISTS

DO move over and slow down when approaching a buggy.

DO dim your headlights when approaching a buggy.

DO avoid loud noises when in the vicinity of the horse and buggy.

Courtesy and Conduct

"Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

1. Pull off the road to let traffic pass whenever it is safe.
2. Keep as far to the right of roadway, as possible.
3. Be visible day and night at all angles by using lights and reflective tape.
4. Use horses that are safe to be on the road.
5. Never try to race a motor vehicle at a crossroad. Be patient and wait until it is safe to cross.
6. Always be careful when making left turns. Signal first then proceed to make the turn when traffic is clear.

There are a lot of our children and adults walking, bicycling, and horseback riding along today's busy highways. Let's be courteous, respectful, and visible in these situations as well.

Whenever traffic from the rear is unable to pass you because of a hill, curve, or oncoming traffic in the passing lane, be courteous and pull off to the side of the road when it is safe to do so and let other traffic pass.

Drive on the shoulder of the road or as far to the right side of the road as possible and keep a close watch in your mirror to avoid hindering a fellow traveler.

Remember, being respectful and courteous on the road is an excellent opportunity for all travelers, in our small way, to improve safety on our roadways.

Accidents

If you are involved in a traffic accident:

1. Move off the road, if possible, so you don't block traffic
2. Call the police if someone is injured, dies, or if a vehicle needs to be towed. If the drivers are hurt and cannot call the police, witnesses should call for help
3. Write down the information listed below for all of the drivers involved in the accident:
    - Name, address, and telephone number
    - Driver's license number
    - Registration number
    - Insurance company name and policy number
    - Presence
    - Accident
    - Location
4. Write down the names and addresses of witnesses and other people involved in the accident
5. If you hit a parked car, stop immediately and look for the owner. If you cannot find the owner, call the police and leave a note on the car with the following information:

- Name, address, and telephone number
- Driver's license number
- Registration number
- Insurance company name and policy number
- Date and time of crash
- Presence
- Accident
- Location

6. If the police do not investigate an accident, send a Driver's Accident Report (Form MV-4000) within five days to:

Wisconsin Department of Transportation
PO Box 7950
Madison, WI 53707

Driver's Accident Reports are available from your local or State Police.

If you witness an accident, find a safe place to pull off the road and wait for the police to arrive. Give the police your name and address and your statement of what you witnessed.

Traffic Signs, Signals, and Pavement Markings

Although some of these signs do not apply to horse and buggy drivers, it is still important to know what they mean.

Traffic Signs

Regulatory Signs - this type of sign tells you what you are and are not allowed to do. Many of these signs are red.

At an intersection with a STOP sign, you must come to a complete stop at the stop line and allow pedestrians to cross. Once the intersection is clear, you may proceed. If you are unable to see the traffic after you have stopped at the stop line, you may move forward until you are able to see the traffic. Wait for pedestrians to cross and then proceed when the intersection is clear.

When you are approaching a YIELD sign, you must slow down and give the right of way to pedestrians and to through traffic. You may proceed when it is safe to do so and when you won't be interfering with the normal traffic flow.

All vehicles at a four-way intersection must stop. The first vehicle that arrives at the intersection goes first. If two vehicles arrive at the same time, you should yield to the driver on your right.

No U-turns

The center turn lane is only for left turning vehicles in either direction. This lane may not be used as a through lane or to pass another vehicle.

A left turn is permitted during the green light, but you must yield to oncoming
traffic.

This sign indicates that you are not allowed to pass another vehicle in this area.

Warning Signs - tell you what conditions to expect on or near the roadway. These signs are posted before the condition so that you have time to react. These signs are yellow except for construction zone signs, which are orange.

This sign indicates that the road curves to the left with a road entering from the right.

Narrow bridge or underpass ahead

Stop sign ahead. Start to slow down.

Railroad crossing ahead. Slow down. Look and listen for an oncoming train.

School crossing ahead. Slow down and watch for children crossing. Obey the crossing guard if one is present

Horse and buggies use the roads in this area. Be alert.

Traffic Signals

A red light means you must stop and wait behind the stop bar for the light to turn green. After a complete stop, Wisconsin law allows a vehicle to proceed into a right turn if no one is approaching from the left.

A yellow light indicates that the light is about to turn red. If you are not at the intersection, slow down and stop. If you are already crossing the intersection, proceed through the intersection.

A green light means you may proceed through the intersection or turn when traffic is clear. Yield to pedestrians who are also crossing the intersection.

A green arrow indicates the way you may turn. Usually this is an advanced green, protected left turn phase. Your lane may turn left while all other traffic is stopped (except for the oncoming vehicles that are also turning left). If the green turn arrow disappears but the green light is on, you may still turn but you must yield to the oncoming through traffic.

A flashing yellow arrow means turns are permitted, but you must first yield to oncoming traffic and pedestrians and then proceed with caution.

A single flashing red light is the same as a stop sign. You must come to a complete stop before proceeding through the intersection

A single flashing yellow light means you should slow down and make sure the traffic is clear before proceeding through the intersection.

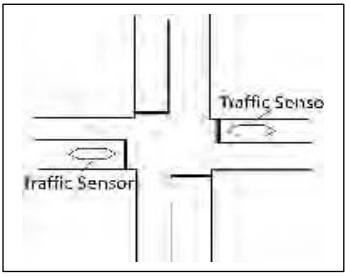
If the traffic signal at an intersection is not working, come to a complete stop and proceed when traffic is clear, just as you would do at an intersection with a stop sign.

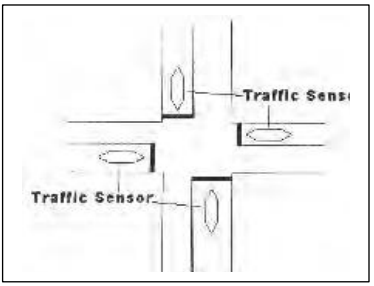
Types of Traffic Signals

Pre-timed

Length of green and red lights is a fixed time, regardless of the amount or lack of traffic. Cycle lengths are preset with several timing patterns. The pattern is usually changed for peak hour or rush hour traffic.

Semi-Actuated
Only the side roads have traffic sensors. The major road will continue to have a green light until traffic is detected on the side road.





Fully Actuated
All four approaches have traffic sensors. A vehicle must activate the detector in the road to get the signal to change. The light will stay green until traffic is detected on the cross road.

Pedestrian Crossing Signals

There are two types of pedestrian crossing signals: ones with symbols and ones with words. They operate the same way and you cross the road the same way.

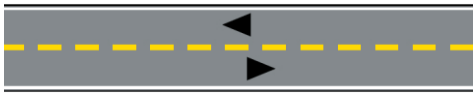
When a steady or a flashing WALK or person walking appears, you may cross in the crosswalk. Be aware of turning vehicles. You have the right-of-way but cars do not always yield to pedestrians.

A flashing DON'T WALK or hand indicates the signal will soon change. If you are in the crosswalk, finish crossing the street. If you have not left the curb, do not cross. Wait for the next signal to cross.

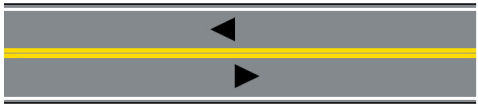
When a steady DON'T WALK or hand is shown, do not cross.

An audible beep may accompany pedestrian crossing signals at some intersections to assist disabled persons. Also, a blind pedestrian with a white cane or a guide dog will require more time to cross the street. Drivers must yield to them and wait until they have completely crossed the street.

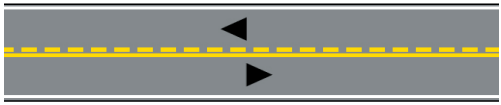
Pavement Markings



This is a two-way, two-lane road with a dashed yellow line indicating that passing is allowed by either vehicle.

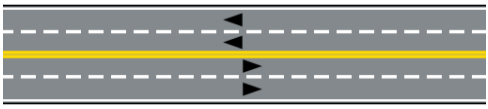


This is a two-way, two-lane road with a solid double yellow line indicating that passing is not allowed.

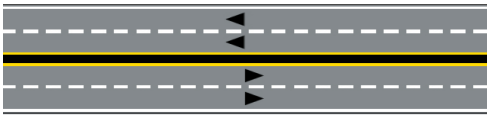


This is a two-way, two-lane road with a solid yellow line and a dashed yellow line indicating that a vehicle may pass when you have the dashed yellow line on your side. The vehicle with the solid yellow line on his side may not pass.

This is a two-way, three-lane road with two lanes of travel and a center turn lane. Vehicles may not use the center lane to pass another vehicle. The center lane is for left turns only



This is a two-way, four-lane road with two lanes of traffic traveling each direction. The dashed white lines allow you to pass a vehicle that is going in the same direction as you. You may not cross the solid double yellow line to pass.



This is a two-way, four lane access controlled highway with two lanes of traffic traveling in each direction separated by a physical barrier called a median. The median can be concrete, grass, or guide rail, anything to prevent vehicles from crossing over into oncoming traffic.

Horses on Roadways

As live horsepower is the form of energy used to pull buggies and wagons on our roadways, let us remember that a horse is a living being. While the driver of a motor vehicle has only to keep his vehicle and himself under control, the horse and buggy/wagon driver must also control an animal, with a mind of its own, that weighs ten times as much as the driver. A horse has been described as "a large mass of nerve endings connected to a small brain". A horse can't reason or understand the way we can. Things that seem simple to us may confuse or frighten a horse.

Things that may frighten a horse: flapping tarps on trucks/trailers etc; air brake releasing; large trucks/equipment; noise such as engine brakes, sudden acceleration, honking, sirens etc; vehicle passing on right side as in an intersection.

Buggy Lighting and Markers

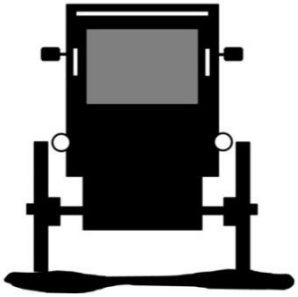
It's important for slow moving vehicles to be well lighted and readily identifiable both by day and by night.

Automobile drivers are concerned more about our nighttime driving than most other driving we do. For our safety and for the safety of others who share the road with us, we need to be well equipped with lights and reflectors.

It is our responsibility as horse and buggy drivers to make ourselves as visible as possible, so long as it is within reason and church standards.

This is the recommended way the front of a buggy should be lighted.

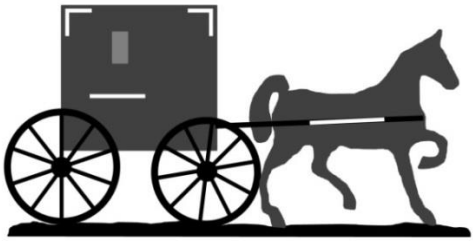
- One white light on each side approximately 42" high inside the wheel line.
- One reflective strip 1" x 36" across the top.
- One vertical reflective strip on each side of windshield 1" x 8".
- As soon as you notice it is getting dark or visibility is limited, turn on your lights. Vehicle drivers may use their high beams when it is very dark out. Drivers are required to use their low beams whenever they are within 500 feet of an oncoming vehicle or 300 feet behind another vehicle. If the vehicle coming towards you does not change from their high beams to low beams, look at the right side of the road so you are not blinded.
- Do not leave your lights turned off then suddenly turn them on when you see a vehicle approaching.



This is the recommended way the side of a buggy should be illuminated.

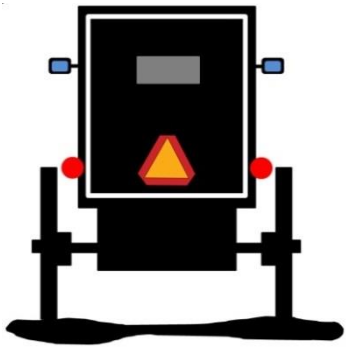
- A 1" reflective strip on the shafts, on the back upper corner, and on the side of the seat.
- Reflectors are important for the side of the buggy and the horse. It is difficult for other drivers to tell what a buggy is from the side, especially at night.

- A rearview mirror is needed to see the traffic behind you. Make sure the mirror is tilted so that there are no blind spots.



This is the recommended way the back of a buggy should be lighted.

- One red light on each side approximately 42" high also inside the wheel line.
- A continuous 1" reflective strip outlining the buggy.



What to do if your turn signals are not working

If the buggy does not have turn signals or if the turn signals are not working, you should use the hand signals shown below.

These graphics show an open buggy so that the hand signals can be easily seen. Hand signals could also be used in a closed buggy, but turn signals are recommended.

Right Turn

Left Turn

Slow or Stop

Slow Moving Vehicle Emblems

- Sign must be 16" wide and visible at all distances between 100 and 600 feet.
- Sign shall be placed 2-6 feet above ground level.
- The sign does not replace other required lamps or reflectors

Driving on the Road

Intersections
Right-of-Way at Intersections

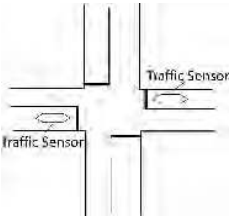
It is recommended that any horse drawn vehicle yield the right of way to motorized vehicle.

Stop Sign Intersection

When you are stopped at a 4-way stop intersection, you are to yield the right-of-way to the vehicle on your right, if all of the vehicles arrived at the same time. If you arrived at the intersection before any other vehicles, you have the right of way to go through the intersection first. At a two-way stop intersection, the traffic on the main road (without a stop sign) has the right of way. You may go after you have stopped and when traffic is clear. If there is a vehicle at the opposite stop sign, the driver that arrived first should go first. It is foolish and dangerous to insist upon one's right of way. Regardless of who has the right-of-way, it is important to be watchful at all times. A vehicle driver may not see you or may not respect your right-of-way.

Here lies the body of William Gray
He died preserving his right-of-way
He was right (dead right) as he sped along
But he's just as dead as if he had been wrong.

Traffic Signal Intersection



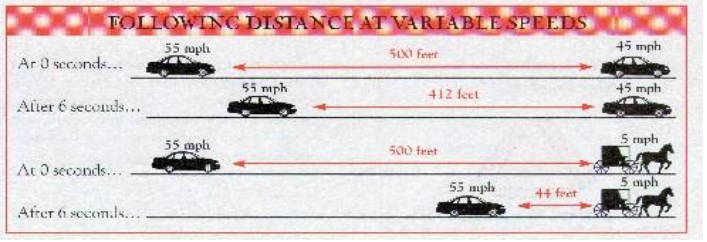
At a traffic signal intersection, the traffic signal governs who has the right-of-way. If the traffic signal is inoperative, then treat the signal as a stop sign and proceed with caution.

Maintaining a Safe Distance

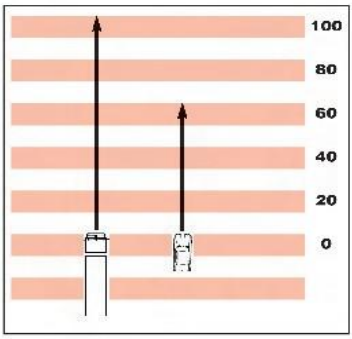
You should always maintain a distance of several hundred feet between you and the buggy ahead of you, allowing plenty of space for a motor vehicle to get between the two buggies if they need to.

Buggy drivers need to be aware of the safe stopping distance motor vehicles need to stop for a buggy.

The diagram below illustrates how quickly a vehicle approaches another vehicle after only six seconds. The distance is even greater when the vehicle approaches a buggy. Buggy drivers should be aware of this danger. Don't pull out in front of a vehicle expecting it to stop immediately. Wait until a safe break in traffic before pulling onto the road.



Extra precaution should be taken when pulling out in front of trucks and tractor-trailers. Trucks require an even greater distance to stop than vehicles do. A tractor-trailer with a full load can weigh up to 40 tons; an average vehicle weighs about 2 tons. On dry roads, a tractor-trailer going 55 mph takes at least 100 yards to stop while a vehicle takes about 60 yards to stop. (See diagram below). The distance needed to stop increases as speed increases. For example, the stopping distance increases almost 50% when the speed is increased from 55mph to 65mph.

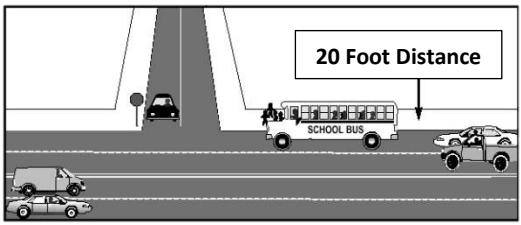


Highway Stops

If you must stop along the highway, pull to the far right and activate flashing tail lights if available.

Stopping for School Buses

When a school bus starts flashing its yellow lights, it is an indication that it is going to stop to pick up children. When the bus stops, its red lights flash and a stop arm extends from the front of the bus. You are required to stop at least 20 feet away from the bus whether you are behind the bus or if you are in the opposite lane of oncoming traffic. You should remain stopped until the red lights stop flashing, the stop arm goes in, and any children are safely off the road. You are not required to stop for a school bus if you are in the opposite lane on a separate road or a divided highway.



Emergency Vehicles

You should pull off to the side of the road when and where it is safe to do so and remain there until the emergency vehicle has passed.

Pay attention to how your horse reacts to the sirens and lights. Try to get him under control as soon as possible if he gets spooked.

Railroad crossings

Obey all railroad crossing signs and signals. You may proceed with caution if the tracks are clear in both directions. Do not stop on railroad tracks even if a train is not seen. If the traffic is backed up over the tracks, stop where you are completely off the tracks.

If there aren't signals or crossing gates, you should stop and look both ways before going through the crossing. You should also listen for a train whistle. Do not attempt to cross if you have heard the train whistle. Wait for the train to pass, and then proceed through the crossing.

Pedestrians and Non-Motorized use of Public Roads

A pedestrian is a person who travels on foot or on in-line skates. Be especially aware walking or when using in-line skates, one must use the left side of the road at all times. It is recommended to move off the road when a vehicle approaches. Beware of vehicles coming behind you that might be passing another vehicle and therefore be in your lane. Reflective clothing or devices and the use of a flashlight is recommended after dark. Walk in single file. When crossing the road always use caution and be sure the road is clear before you cross.

When riding a bicycle, you are considered a vehicle under the law, and as such, you are expected to obey all vehicle traffic laws and regulations. Ride in the right lane, close to the edge of the road, or on the shoulder if it is in good condition. Ride with the flow of traffic and use hand signals (see Page 10) to indicate when you are turning or stopping. The hand signals for bicyclists are the same for horse and buggy drivers. You may ride with two people side by side, but it may be safer, due to traffic and narrow shoulders, to ride in a single file so that other traffic may pass. If you are riding a bicycle and need to pass a horse and buggy or another slow moving vehicle, you should pass on the left, just as a motor vehicle would do. Be cautious before passing in case a motor vehicle is trying to pass both you and the horse and buggy. Bicycle riders are also strongly encouraged to use reflective material such as reflectors in the spokes, a safety vest, and reflective ankle straps (which also keep your pant leg from getting caught in the chain).

Other Travel

Information

When We Hire Drivers

- Respect your driver's load and passenger capacity limits
- Do not ask your driver to go too long or far with minimum sleep. A tired driver is an accident waiting to happen.
- Honor seat belt and car seat laws.
- Last but not least, let us treat our drivers with respect and courtesy and not take them for granted.

Car Seats

Children must be in a car seat until they reach age 4 and 40 pounds, and in a booster seat until they reach age 8, more than 80 pounds in weight, or more than 4ft. 9in. tall.

Tiered structure applies:

- Less than 1 year old, or less than 20 lbs, must be in a rear facing child seat in the back seat (if so equipped)
- If at least one year old and 20 pounds, but less than four years old or less than 40 pounds, must be in a forward or rear facing child seat in the back seat (if so equipped)
- Age 4 to age 8, and between 40-80 lbs., and no more than 4ft. 9in. must be in a forward or rear facing child seat in the back seat (if so equipped) or a booster seat.
- 80 pounds and over – normal seat belt use

There are no exemptions from these rules allowing removal of a child from a restraint to attend to personal needs (such as feeding or diapering)

It is also recommended to use car seats in buggies. A properly restrained child or baby can make driving much safer, especially for a mother driving by herself.

More information:
Wisconsin State Statutes 347.48 (2016 current statute)
www.wcpsa.com/Seats%20Checked.html