



## MaineDOT Flash Facts

### Topic: Traffic Control Devices/Intersections

#### Crash Facts:

#### Maine

There were nearly 31,000 crashes at intersections from 2002-2004, resulting in 98 fatalities and 15,000 injuries.

#### Signalized Intersections

In Maine, there are about 600 traffic light controlled intersections.

- There were 9,000 crashes at these locations resulting in 8 fatalities and 4,300 injuries from 2002 through 2004.
- While Maine's total crashes at traffic lights have decreased by 20%, red light running crashes have increased 10% during recent years.

There are two common driver errors at Maine traffic lights:

- *Disregarding traffic signals* caused nearly 1,500 crashes and 1,000 injuries from 2002 through 2004.
- *Failing to yield the right of way* caused another 2,300 crashes and 1,300 injuries during the last three years.

#### National Trends

- In 2004, there were more than 2.7 million intersection-related crashes, resulting in 9,100 fatalities.
- In 2003, there were 26,000 red light running crashes resulting in more than 900 deaths and 176,000 injuries.
- Forty-two percent of all pedestrian injuries and twenty-one percent of pedestrian fatal injuries occurred at intersections.



In Maine, almost a third of all crashes take place at intersections. And the biggest reason is driver inattention. The second most common reason is drivers who don't yield the right of way. To reduce the number of crashes, the MaineDOT wants you to remember rules about the right of way.

- When two drivers approach an intersection without traffic lights or signs at the same time, the driver on the right has the right of way.
  - A driver going straight through an intersection has the right of way before an opposing driver turning left.
  - At a 4 way stop sign, the vehicle reaching the intersection first should proceed first. (But all vehicles must first come to a complete stop.)
  - At rotaries, vehicles already in the rotary have the right of way.
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Here in Maine, it's a great convenience to be able to turn right on a red light, but it's not legal 100% of the time. And since almost one-third of Maine crashes take place at intersections, the MaineDOT wants to make sure you know the rules. It's NOT legal to turn right on red when:

- A pedestrian or bicyclist is trying to cross in front of you.
  - Cars are streaming by on the intersecting roadway.
  - You haven't come to a full stop first.
  - A sign expressly prohibits right on red or a traffic signal red arrow is present.
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Intersections can be dangerous - almost one-third of vehicle crashes take place where two or more roads intersect. The MaineDOT has some tips to help you avoid these crashes.

- First and foremost - pay attention. The number one reason for these crashes is drivers who just aren't paying attention. There's a lot of opportunity to make mistakes at an intersection - don't let it happen to you.
- Where there's a traffic signal, don't assume the driver with a red light will stop. Check both ways before you enter the intersection, even if you've got the green.
- Don't assume the driver ahead of you will keep moving. Rear-end collisions are very common at intersections.
- When you're waiting to make a left turn, keep your wheels straight until you turn. That way you won't get pushed into oncoming traffic if you're rear-ended.
- Keep an eye on your mirrors so you can act before being struck from behind.

**Be a Road Model:** Be careful at intersections and always wear your seatbelt.