

NEW COUNTY ROAD AGENCY GUIDELINES

Green lights on road maintenance vehicles



The Law

In early June of 2016, Governor Snyder signed into law PA 161 of 2016, allowing state and local road agencies to equip roadway maintenance vehicles with green flashing lights along with the amber lights previously used.

P.A. 161 states: *"Flashing, rotating, or oscillating amber or green lights, placed in a position as to be visible throughout an arc of 360 degrees, shall be used by a state, county, or municipal vehicle engaged in the removal of ice, snow, or other material from the highway and in other operations designed to control ice and snow, or engaged in other non-winter operations."*

Installing green lights on maintenance vehicles is optional. Local road agencies can continue to use standard amber lights, or use amber and green lights together. A maintenance vehicle should not be equipped with only green lights.

Why Green

The green cone in the human eye is the most sensitive and has the largest wavelength. This means green lights appear brighter and can be seen from farther away than other colored lights. This makes them better-suited for enhanced visibility in inclement conditions such as in snow storms and road dust.

Who Can Use Them

A county road agency is allowed to install green lights on its entire fleet and use them throughout the year. However, green lights may be only be activated when roadwork is actually taking place. Green lights are reserved for official government road agencies actively working on the road or right-of-way. Green lights may not be used by private contractors working on roads, parking lots or elsewhere.

For more on **PA 161** and green lights on vehicles, visit

[http://legislature.mi.gov/
doc.aspx?mcl-257-698-amended](http://legislature.mi.gov/doc.aspx?mcl-257-698-amended)

When to Use Them

Examples of when a county road agency could consider using green lights include snowplowing, grading and other maintenance work.

Partner organizations such as the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) recommend using *flashing* green lights on trucks to distinguish from *solid* green traffic lights.

Educating the Public

Green lights on road vehicles are new to Michigan, and could be confusing to motorists. Some public relations recommendations for educating the motoring public include:

- Creating a special website section on the homepage that discusses green lights and shows pictures of the trucks with the new addition;
- Sharing an informational flyer at public meetings and events; and
- Offering to do an on-air demonstration of the trucks with green lights for the media.

For more information contact:

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