



## TRAFFIC SIGNALS

### FOCUS

According to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, running a red light happens all too frequently and is often deadly. **In 2014, 709 people were killed and an estimated 126,000 were injured in crashes that involved running a red light.** Put it another way – more than one out of five traffic accidents are the result of drivers running red lights. If that wasn't bad enough, deaths caused by running red lights are increasing at three times the rate as all other Fatal car crashes.

### ANTICIPATE

Drivers who are courteous and continuously apply their understanding of traffic laws relating to intersections have the best likelihood of ensuring their continued safety in these dangerous driving environments. Whether approaching a red-light controlled intersection or an uncontrolled intersection, **it's always a good idea to heighten your awareness of hazards and potential hazards such as cross traffic, speeding, running red lights, pedestrians, rear end crashes, and other crashes caused by drivers' blind spots. Being able to judge distance, speed, and time is the key to proceeding through an intersection safely.** Drivers must be able to determine how much time it will take them to proceed through the intersection at their current speed of travel. Do they have the time at that speed to safely travel the required distance before a cross-traffic situation occurs?

### CORRECT

Follow these basic rules when approaching any intersection:

- **SMITH SYSTEM KEY 1-AIM HIGH IN STEERING- ANTICIPATE THE LIGHT CHANGE-KNOW YOUR POINT OF NO RETURN / DECISION POINT.**
- **Slow down and assess the situation. Assume that the light will change (if it is a controlled intersection) and be prepared to stop. Never speed up.**
- **Look both ways prior to proceeding. Look left first because cars approaching from your left are closer to you and are an immediate hazard to your continued safe travel.**
- **Don't rely on traffic signals. Remember, traffic signals serve only as "notices" to drivers of their required performance and compliance with traffic laws. A red light, in and of itself, never stopped a motor vehicle. Impaired or reckless drivers may disobey signals.**
- **Don't presume compliance with traffic signals. Ensure that the intersection is clear prior to entering.**
- **Obtain a good view of intersecting traffic. Traffic that is difficult to see, e.g., motorcycles and pedestrian traffic requires a good view of oncoming lanes to ensure that the intersection is clear.**
- **Make sure the right of way is yours-watch for green arrows changing or solid green to yield for on-coming traffic.**

You must be prepared to stop within the last 100 feet prior to an intersection. If you happen to pass these marks, do not back your vehicle up, as pedestrians may be walking behind your vehicle.

### TALK

- **SMITH SYSTEM KEY 5-MAKE SURE THEY SEE YOU-** When in Doubt use your horn, Lights, and turn signals to communicate.