



**CHEVY CHASE
VILLAGE
POLICE
DEPARTMENT**

Police Chief: John Fitzgerald

GENERAL ORDER: 5-18 TRAFFIC DIRECTION AND CONTROL

DATE: 11/21/2016 Pages: 3 ◇ New ◇ Amended ◆ Revised 5-18

I. POLICY

It is the policy of the Department to provide for the safe and efficient movement of vehicular and pedestrian traffic by directing or otherwise controlling such traffic as necessary.

- A. Any officer encountering a traffic problem, including those at collision scenes, shall take all reasonable actions to control the problem by requesting whatever assistance the officer deems necessary to restore the flow of traffic.
- B. If necessary, the officer will direct traffic and/or arrange for Public Works to deliver traffic cones, barricades, and/or portable signs.
- C. Situations in which officers are authorized to perform manual traffic direction include, but are not limited to:
 - Any Fire/Rescue operation
 - Any hazardous road condition
 - Any situation in which utilities are affected, i.e., downed power lines, light pole down, broken gas or water main, etc.
 - A collision scene
 - A disabled vehicle
 - An arrest situation until the scene is stabilized

II. TRAFFIC DIRECTION AND CONTROL PROCEDURES

- A. When directing traffic, officers will use standardized gestures and signals to have motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists stop, turn or proceed.
 - 1. Before an officer begins to direct traffic, he/she should attempt to utilize the traffic signal pattern and direct traffic with the signal if one is present. If this cannot be done, place the traffic signal on flashing and immediately notify E.C.C.
 - 2. Officers are not authorized access to the inner

light box, only the outer box.

- 3. Officers directing traffic should position their police vehicle in such a manner that it is highly visible to roadway users yet does not impede or hinder the flow of traffic, unless the road (or a portion of it) is shut down.
- 4. Officers will wear high-visibility or reflective clothing at all times while they are in the roadway directing traffic or when on foot in the roadway performing other duties, and will:
 - Position themselves to be clearly seen
 - Stand facing approaching traffic
- B. To stop traffic, the officer should first extend his/her arm and index finger toward and look directly at the person to be stopped until that person is aware of the officer's gesture to stop.

The pointing hand is raised at the wrist so that the palm is facing the person to be stopped, and is in the position until the person stops. Simultaneously, officers will emit one long whistle blast to indicate that traffic must stop.
- C. To start traffic, the officer should stand with the shoulder and side toward the traffic to be started, extend his/her arm and index finger toward and look directly at the person to be started.

With the palm up, the pointing arm is swung from the elbow only, through a vertical semi-circle until the hand is adjacent to the chin. Simultaneously, officers will emit two short whistle blasts to indicate that traffic should go.

- D. For motorists turning right or left, the officer should swing the extended arm in the direction of the motorist's intended turn. Officers should stop or hold oncoming traffic and then direct ~~left~~ turning motorists to execute their turns.
- E. Every officer, while directing traffic, should use a whistle to get the attention of motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists, in the following manner:

1. One long blast as a STOP signal.
2. Two short blasts as a GO signal.
3. Several short blasts if they do not respond to a given signal, or to warn of the approach of an emergency vehicle.

- F. Verbal commands are acceptable but seldom used because arm gestures are more easily understood, and voice commands are not easily heard.
- G. A flashlight equipped with a red plastic tip is recommended for use in low-light and/or adverse weather conditions. The flashlight should be used in conjunction with the arm gestures described above.
- H. Officers are discouraged from physically holding road flares to direct traffic, as their ashes and embers can be harmful to the officer, motorists, and property, etc. *Whenever* practical, officers will use flashlights *with plastic tips* to direct traffic.

III. TEMPORARY TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES

Temporary traffic control *signs* (Stops, Detour, Road Closed, etc.) are available at Public Works.

- A. Before a temporary traffic control device is placed into service, any traffic signal present should be placed on flashing. All Montgomery County traffic signals are computerized and will not be operated manually by officers.
- If the signal itself is causing the problem, *the officer shall request that ECC notify the Traffic Management Center so that the problem can be corrected.*
- B. If the officer determines that the flashing signal will adequately and safely control traffic, the temporary traffic control devices should not be used if they will confuse the motorists.
- C. During normal business hours, the officer should contact Public Works directly via the CCV Dispatcher and specify exactly what is needed. After normal business hours, Public Works will be contacted by the CCV Dispatcher at the officer's request, usually in an emergency type situation.
- D. Via ECC, Officers should *notify* either County Roads or the State Highway Administration to furnish temporary traffic control devices on streets maintained by those respective agencies.
- E. When the temporary devices are no longer needed, the officer should remove them or have them removed and make arrangements to have them returned to Public Works or to the appropriate agency

that provided them. If Public Works, County Roads or State Roads will not be able to pick up the devices in a timely manner, the signs should be placed face-down to avoid confusing the motorists.

IV. TRAFFIC DIRECTION AND CONTROL AT FIRE SCENES

- A. Officers will direct and control traffic at or around fire scenes and will coordinate their traffic direction and control efforts with the on-scene Fire/Rescue Incident Commander.
- B. Vehicles that interfere with Fire Department or rescue operations may be towed as necessary.

V. TRAFFIC DIRECTION AND CONTROL DURING ADVERSE WEATHER AND ROAD CONDITIONS

- A. Whenever an officer discovers a hazardous situation that would affect street or highway users, the officer, using his/her best judgment, training, and discretion, is authorized to close a road or portion thereof to traffic until the situation has subsided.
- B. When called upon to direct and control traffic during adverse weather and road conditions, officers will:
1. Consider requesting barricades, temporary traffic control devices, etc., to slow traffic and/or establish a safe traffic pattern;
 2. Consider requesting a salt/sand truck or snow plow to respond or whatever else the officer deems necessary for the situation;
 3. Not leave a hazardous situation they have discovered or responded to, unless the hazard has been alleviated or until relieved by a supervisor or *another officer* in the absence of a supervisor;
 4. Position the police vehicle, with emergency lights activated, in such a way that it does not impede traffic, but yet is clearly visible to motorists. Adverse weather and road conditions are usually accompanied by poor visibility so officers should position their vehicles to afford themselves maximum protection.
 5. *Officers should consider setting out* the flares to warn motorists and to establish a temporary traffic pattern.
- C. When directing traffic around downed power lines, or a broken gas/water main, *officers should:*
1. *Presume that any downed line is electrified.*
 2. *Request the appropriate utility* (PEPCO, Wash-

ington Gas Light or WSSC) to respond:

3. Request Fire/Rescue;
4. Request additional assistance to detour traffic and control bystanders.

VI. CLOSING ROADS

- A. If a road will be closed down for any length of time, officers will notify ECC of the closure along with an estimated length of time that the road will be closed, and what, if any alternative routes are available.
- B. Officers will also request ECC to notify the MCPD Media Services Division so that this information can be passed on to highway users via radio and television. ECC will also be advised when the road is re-opened.

This directive voids the previous version dated 1/9/2009.