

2009 Wisconsin Act 97

Effective Date: January 1, 2010

- Current law prohibits U-turns at all controlled intersections. Beginning 1/1/2010, **Wisconsin Act 97 will permit U-turns at controlled intersections** UNLESS signs are installed to indicate the maneuver is prohibited by the unit of government responsibility for maintaining the intersection (state, county, municipality).
- U-turns will have to be made from the leftmost turn lane in the same fashion as a conventional left turn. Vehicles on the intersecting street attempting to turn right-on-red must yield to the U-turning vehicle.
- No backing will be permitted as part of the U-turn, so drivers will have to be familiar with their vehicle's turning radius. U-turns will also be prohibited on curves and hillcrests where visibility is less than 500 feet.
- The new U-turn law will help traffic engineers in controlling traffic on divided highways. It will also reduce issues/costs associated with condemnation where highway projects result in median closings, since reasonable access to businesses and residences across the highway median should now be possible via U-turns.
- Also under Wisconsin Act 97, beginning 1/1/2010, **passing a left-turning vehicle on the right using a PAVED shoulder will be permitted**. This reverses the 2001 *Kaufman v. Postle* decision.
- This does NOT mean that a driver can pass a slower-moving vehicle on the right using the shoulder – the vehicle being passed MUST be making a left turn.
- Also, the vehicle making the pass on the right MUST keep all four wheels on the pavement or paved shoulder.

Effective Date: July 1, 2010

- The mandatory insurance law will take effect.