



DODGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Dale J Schmidt Sheriff Chad Enright Chief Deputy

Law of the month – February 2023

For this month's law of the month, we are going to discuss turns at intersections and what constitutes a proper vs an improper turn. Improper turns have a high probability of causing crashes, so it is important to make sure that everyone is properly educated on this topic to try to prevent vehicle accidents. It is important that when you are making a right turn, you are turning into the lane closest to you. Do not cross the closest lane to get into the opposite lane next to it. A common intersection where this occurs is Gateway Drive and Frances Lane in the city of Beaver Dam. Oftentimes, people turn right off of Frances Lane to go west on Gateway Drive and cross the closest lane to get into the second lane. This can cause people turning left on Corporate Drive to go west on Gateway to slam on their brakes due to people making these improper turns. Instead, you must first turn into the lane closest to you, and then conduct a lane change when safe. Wisconsin State Statute 346.31 states that "Both the approach for a right turn and the right turn shall be made as closely as practicable to the right-hand edge or curb of the roadway. If, because of the size of the vehicle or the nature of the intersecting roadway, the turn cannot be made from the traffic lane next to the right-hand edge of the roadway, the turn shall be made with due regard for all other traffic."

For left-hand turns, the same state statute states "(a) The approach for a left turn or U-turn shall be made in the lane farthest to the left which is lawfully available to traffic moving in the direction of travel of the vehicle about to turn left. Unless otherwise marked or posted, this means the lane immediately to the right of the center line or center dividing strip of a 2-way highway and the lane next to the left-hand curb or edge of the roadway of a one-way highway."

Violating this state statute will result in a citation of \$175.30 and three demerit points against their license. A second violation within one year increases the forfeiture to \$213.10.

Wisconsin State Statute 346.31 Required position and method of turning at intersections.

(2) Right turns. Both the approach for a right turn and the right turn shall be made as closely as practicable to the right-hand edge or curb of the roadway. If, because of the size of the vehicle or the nature of the intersecting roadway, the turn cannot be made from the traffic lane next to the right-hand edge of the roadway, the turn shall be made with due regard for all other traffic.



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(3) Left turns and U-turns. Except as otherwise provided in sub. (4), left turns at intersections shall be made as follows:

346.31(3)(a)(a) The approach for a left turn or U-turn shall be made in the lane farthest to the left which is lawfully available to traffic moving in the direction of travel of the vehicle about to turn left. Unless otherwise marked or posted, this means the lane immediately to the right of the center line or center dividing strip of a 2-way highway and the lane next to the left-hand curb or edge of the roadway of a one-way highway.