

Great Barrington Police Department

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Chief of Police



PRESS RELEASE

Roundabout Rules

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With the new construction of our first roundabout in Great Barrington, I felt this would be a good time to refresh our knowledge of the rules about rotary's and roundabouts. Please take a minute to read the following information provided by the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles.

Rotaries are much more common in Massachusetts than in other parts of the country. A rotary is an intersection of roads coming together from several directions. It allows you to continue through without stopping at a STOP sign or a traffic signal. There are yield signs at the entrance to a rotary. There is a physical barrier (the Central Island) in the center that forces traffic to travel around it. Big rotaries are designed to handle traffic traveling at up to 40 miles per hour.

Rotary Traffic Rules Traffic travels counter-clockwise in a rotary. Always yield the right-of-way to vehicles already in the rotary (unless told differently by signs or police officers) and to pedestrians. Use your turn signals in the same way as any other intersection. Travel through the rotary and, when you are ready to exit, use your right turn signal.

Choosing a Lane If the rotary has a single lane, you must enter from the right lane of the road you are coming from. You must exit onto the right lane of the road you intend to travel on. If the rotary has

multiple lanes, look for signs to help you choose the proper lane. If there are no signs, you should do the following:

- For a quarter-turn, or to continue straight ahead, enter the rotary from the right lane. Stay in that lane, and exit onto the right lane.
- For a three-quarter-turn, or a U-turn, enter the rotary from the left lane. Travel through the middle or inner lane. Exit onto the right lane. If coming from a road with a single lane, you should stay in the right lane for the entire turn.

In a multiple-lane rotary, there may be traffic on both sides of your vehicle. Do not attempt to move out of your lane until it is safe to do so. If you miss your exit, don't get upset. Check the traffic around you. If it is safe to do so, go around again and position your vehicle to properly and safely exit the rotary. Do not stop in the rotary.

Roundabouts are similar to rotaries. They are generally much smaller than rotaries and have a smaller central barrier. Most roundabouts have yield lines on the pavement and crosswalks for pedestrians. Roundabouts are used on busy streets and their small size requires vehicles to reduce speed to 25 miles per hour or less. Roundabouts reduce the need to change lanes. Look for signs as you get near a roundabout to determine which lane you should be in. When entering a roundabout and choosing a lane, you should follow the same rules as for a rotary. Slow speeds in roundabouts make them safe for bicyclists.

Instructions from the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles driving manual:

- Traffic travels counter-clockwise in a rotary and roundabouts.
- Use your turn signals in the same way as any other intersection. Travel through the rotary and, when you are ready to exit, use your right turn signal.
- If the rotary has a single lane, you must enter from the right lane of the road you are coming from. You must exit onto the right lane of the road you intend to travel on.
- If the rotary has multiple lanes, look for signs to help you choose the proper lane.
- If there are no signs, you should do the following: For a quarter-turn, or to continue straight ahead, enter the rotary from the right lane. Stay in that lane, and exit onto the right lane. For a three-quarter-turn, or a U-turn, enter the rotary from the left lane. Travel through the middle or inner lane. Exit onto the right lane.
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The key safety element to remember is that the vehicle within the rotary/roundabout has the right of way and the vehicle entering must yield to vehicles within the rotary/roundabout. For more information contact the Great Barrington Police Department or go to:

<https://malegislature.gov/laws/generallaws/parti/titlexiv/chapter89/section8>