



MICHIGAN STATE POLICE LEGAL UPDATE

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CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

The fourth edition of *Michigan Criminal Law and Procedure: A Manual for Michigan Police Officers* is now available for purchase in print and eBook formats.

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VEHICLE CODE

The Michigan Vehicle Code (MVC) amended to allow excessively wide snowplow blades without a special permit during certain months

Snowplow blades

[Public Act 342 of 2018](#) amended [MCL 257.717](#) to allow a person to operate or move a truck mounted with a snowplow blade that is wider than 96 inches, but no more than 132 inches, between October 1 and May 1 of each year without obtaining a special permit for an excessively wide vehicle or load under [MCL 257.725](#). [MCL 257.717\(10\)](#).

When a truck mounted with a snowplow blade, as described above, is not engaged in snow removal, [MCL 257.717\(10\)](#) requires the person operating the truck to angle the plow blade or to minimize the overwidth condition of the plow blade by any other method. The rules under [MCL 257.717\(10\)](#) do not apply to a person operating construction equipment for snow removal.

Officers are reminded that the general rule under [MCL 257.717\(1\)](#) is that the total outside width of a vehicle or load on a vehicle must not exceed 96 inches unless an exception under [MCL 257.717](#) applies. A violation of [MCL 257.717\(1\)](#) is a civil infraction. [MCL 257.717\(11\)](#).

The MVC amended to modify requirements for the use or possession of flashing, rotating, or oscillating lights

Vehicles engaged in authorized highway repair or maintenance

[Public Act 342 of 2018](#) amended [MCL 257.698\(5\)\(f\)](#) to allow a vehicle engaged in authorized highway repair or maintenance to be equipped flashing, rotating, or oscillating amber or green lights. Previously, a vehicle in

use for that purpose was only allowed to have amber flashing, rotating, or oscillating lights.

Commercial snow removal vehicles traveling between locations of snow or ice removal

[Public Act 342 of 2018](#) amended [MCL 257.698\(5\)\(f\)](#) to allow a "commercial snow removal vehicle" equipped with flashing, rotating, or oscillating amber lights to travel between locations where it is used for snow or ice removal while the amber lights are activated. A "commercial snow removal vehicle" is defined under [MCL 257.682c](#) as "a vehicle equipped with a plow or other device that is used to remove snow or ice for payment or other remuneration."

The general rule for other vehicles permitted under [MCL 257.698\(5\)\(f\)](#) to have flashing, rotating, or oscillating amber lights is that the lights may only be activated when the warning produced by the lights is required for public safety.

Neighborhood watch vehicles working with law enforcement

[Public Act 278 of 2018](#) amended [MCL 257.698\(5\)](#) to allow a vehicle used for a neighborhood watch program to be equipped with flashing, rotating, or oscillating amber lights if it is clearly identified as a neighborhood watch vehicle, and the neighborhood watch program is working in conjunction with local law enforcement. Amber lights on a neighborhood watch vehicle may only be activated when the vehicle is being used to perform neighborhood watch program duties. [MCL 257.698\(5\)\(f\)](#).

Officers are reminded that [MCL 257.698\(5\)](#) generally prohibits the use or possession of flashing, oscillating, or rotating lights of any color unless an exception under [MCL 257.698\(5\)](#) applies or the use or possession of those lights is otherwise permitted by law.

A violation of [MCL 257.698\(5\)](#) is punishable as a 90-day misdemeanor under [MCL 257.901](#) because the violation is not expressly prescribed as a felony or civil fraction.