

Stop on Red Week: Why Obeying Red Lights Saves Lives

Every year, thousands of people are seriously injured or killed because someone ran a red light. Stop on Red Week, observed each August, is a national campaign to raise awareness about the dangers of red-light running and the life-saving importance of obeying traffic signals.

At its core, this campaign is about preventing trauma and protecting every person who uses our roadways - drivers, passengers, cyclists, and pedestrians alike.

According to the National Coalition for Safer Roads, red-light running is one of the most common, and most dangerous, forms of aggressive driving. The consequences of running a red light are immediate and often devastating. A split-second decision to speed through an intersection can change lives forever.

Why Do People Run Red Lights?

Many drivers admit to running red lights “when no one is around” or “because they were in a rush.” Common reasons include:

- Distracted driving (such as using a phone or adjusting controls)
- Speeding to “beat the light”
- Misjudging the timing of a yellow light
- Impatience or road rage

But no reason justifies putting lives at risk. Intersections require full attention, patience, and respect for traffic signals.

The Importance of Stopping at Red Lights

Stopping at a red light is not just about following the laws, but also about making our communities safer.

- **Prevents serious injuries:** T-bone and side-impact collisions at intersections are often severe and lead to long-term trauma.
- **Protects pedestrians and cyclists:** These road users are especially vulnerable when crossing intersections.
- **Encourages a culture of safety:** When drivers consistently obey red lights, it sets a standard for others, especially young or inexperienced drivers watching from the passenger seat.

- **Reduces emergency response burdens:** Fewer crashes mean less strain on EMS, hospitals, and law enforcement agencies.

What You Can Do During Stop on Red Week

1. Always stop at red lights every time. Even if the road looks clear, someone else may be crossing. Respect the signal.

2. Approach yellow lights with caution, not speed. Yellow means slow down and prepare to stop, not speed up to get through.

3. Eliminate distractions. Keep your eyes on the road, hands on the wheel, and mind focused on driving—especially at intersections.

4. Talk to your family and friends. Use this week as a reminder to reinforce good driving habits with your children, teens, and loved ones.

5. Support red-light camera enforcement. Data shows that intersections with red-light cameras see significant reductions in violations and injuries.

Intersections are designed to keep traffic flowing safely. When we choose to respect red lights, we are choosing to protect lives—our own and those around us.

This Stop on Red Week, commit to making safe choices behind the wheel. A few extra seconds of patience at a red light could be the difference between life and lifelong trauma.