

**Male narrator:** They've been used effectively throughout the world for many years, moving traffic through busy intersections. All with no lights involved. We're talking about roundabouts.

VDOT has been using roundabouts in certain situations to enhance safety and reduce delays encountered by the traveling public. Roundabouts are now being used here in Virginia to help reduce crashes, traffic delays, fuel consumption, air pollution and construction as well as maintenance costs, while often moving more traffic and enhancing the intersection's beauty.

They've also been used to control speed in residential neighborhoods, and are accepted as one of the safest types of intersection designs.

Roundabouts differ from the old, larger traffic circles in three major areas. A roundabout is generally smaller in diameter, requiring a lower traveling speed. At roundabouts, entering traffic yields the right of way to the circulating traffic. This "yield-at-entry" rule keeps traffic from locking up and allowing free-flow movement.

The splitter and center islands of a roundabout deflect entering traffic and reinforce the yielding process.

Here are some answers to some frequently asked questions about roundabouts.

**Why use a roundabout?** Roundabouts are safer. Roundabouts have been shown to reduce fatal and injury crashes as much as 75 percent. The reduction in crashes is attributed to slower speeds and reduced number of conflict points.

Roundabouts are easier to maintain. Roundabouts eliminate maintenance and electricity costs associated with traffic signals, which can be as much as \$5,000 a year per intersection.

Roundabouts help reduce traffic delays. By yielding at the entry, rather than stopping and waiting for a green light, traffic delay can be significantly reduced.

Roundabouts help increase capacity. Intersections with high volumes of left turns are often better handled by a roundabout than a multi-phased traffic signal.

Roundabouts are environmentally friendly. A reduction in delay corresponds to a decrease in fuel consumption and air pollution.

Roundabouts look better. The central island provides an opportunity to beautify the intersection with landscaping.

How do I drive in a roundabout? First, as you approach the roundabout, slow down and prepare to yield to oncoming traffic.

If you're making a right turn, be sure to be in the right lane if this is a dual-lane roundabout.

You must yield to the traffic already in the roundabout. Use your right-turn signal as you approach the exit you wish to use.

Some things to remember about roundabouts:

Always yield to pedestrians who may be crossing the road on your approach to the roundabout. Pedestrians, bicycle riders and motorcyclists are often hard to see, so please watch for them. Buses and trucks may need more than one lane to enter or leave a roundabout, so keep clear of these larger vehicles. And always yield to vehicles that are already in a roundabout.