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News for Darien

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Downtown Traffic Slowdown 9 to 3 on Thursday for Work on Traffic Lights, Bridge Warning System

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After Wednesday's snow and rain, electrical contractors hired by the state Department of Transportation are expected to install a new co-ordinated system of traffic lights and something called an "over height detection system" that may have something to do with helping trucks avoid getting stuck under the railroad bridge downtown.

Sunny but freezing weather — 32 degrees and below — [is forecast for the town](#) (as of Wednesday morning) on Thursday.

A system of signs with lights to warn trucks that are too high for the underpass has long been in the works. (There's one in New Canaan before the Route 106 underpass, north of Darien's Hoyt Street.)

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A news release from Darien Police Department mentions the detection system in its headline, but provides no details about it — so whatever work is done, the system may need additional work before it gets going.

The news release is more about how downtown traffic might be disrupted by the project.

Here's [the announcement](#) (*slightly rewritten, slightly redacted*):

Project: CDOT traffic signal and over height detection system replacement project

The Darien Police Department is advising that traffic in the downtown area will be affected on Thursday, Feb. 8, 2018 between the hours of 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Electrical contractors working for the Connecticut Department of Transportation will be working on the equipment (a controller or controllers) that operate the traffic signals on U.S. Route 1 at Center Street, Tokeneke Road and West Avenue.

This will require the traffic signals to be non-functioning during a significant portion of this time.

Officers have been assigned to this project to assist with facilitating safe and orderly traffic flow through the downtown area during the time that the lights will be non-operational.

The contractor has assured town officials that they will work as expeditiously as possible to return the lights to normal operation.

The Police Department asks that all motorists plan trips through the downtown area accordingly and consider alternate routes if possible.

We thank you in advance for your cooperation and patience as the traffic signal replacement project moves forward.

What We've Reported Previously About Safety Plans for the Bridge

From a [Darienite.com article](#) on July 30, 2015:

The Transportation Department has plans to install a truck-height detection system that would set off flashing lights near the bridge when any truck at too great a height approaches it, Anderson said.

Overhead detection systems on poles at both sides of a road have laser beams that are disrupted if a truck passes by at a certain height. The disruption activates the warning signal, which can be flashing lights closer to the bridge.

(There's a height-detection device in operation near the Merritt Parkway overpass on Old Stamford Road in New Canaan (Route 106), where Hoyt Street passes into that town.)

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The state plans to install the devices in downtown Darien sometime in 2016, Anderson said.