

Incident Report

July 8th, 2022

This incident occurred on Friday, July 8th of 2022 in Williamstown Massachusetts around 3:50 in the afternoon. My mother and I were driving west on Rt. 2 through Williamstown MA, as we approached the intersection of Park St and Rt. 2, a pedestrian approached the crosswalk positioned on the west side of the intersection which triggered the strobe lights on the crosswalk sign. There were no other visible strobe lights in the area and there is a small rise in the road just before the intersection, so the crosswalk came into view suddenly. My mother, a photosensitive epileptic, had an immediate and violent seizure in the passenger seat sitting next to me. Her head and her right arm smashed against the passenger side window a couple of times and her left hand hit my arm a few times while her limbs flailed. Thankfully, I was able to maintain control of my car and rapidly decided to turn right (north) onto park street, to reduce any prolonged exposure to the strobe light facing Rt. 2. There is no curb on Rt. 2 to pull over and I did not want to risk my mother coming into contact with another strobe light, so I felt it best to take this course of action. The crosswalk is positioned to the west of the intersection so I was able to make the turn immediately without needing to wait for the pedestrian to cross. After turning down park street, I turned right again into the first available driveway to get myself and my mother off the road. That entire maneuver, from contact with the strobe light to when I ultimately pulled into the driveway off of Park St. took about 20-25 seconds, and my mother's seizure was ongoing this entire time. I turned the car off in the driveway and put my arms around my mother to help prevent any further physical injury to her limbs which are still flailing around the cabin of the car. Her seizure progressed for another 60 seconds before she began choking, so I tilted her head forward a bit. Her body stopped seizing after another 30 seconds and then she remained unresponsive for another 2 minutes. I could tell she was breathing so I remained in the driveway until she recovered. I had no ability to administer actual first aid and I could not take her to a hospital without risking further exposure to strobe lights or other seizure triggers. She finally recovered enough to talk to me, and asked me for some water/milk to drink. I helped her get a drink of water and I decided to remain on the driveway for another 10 minutes while she regained some strength. We exited Williamstown by heading north on Park St. until it eventually meets up with Rt.7 north. We had no further incidents on our drive home to Cambridge NY however, my mother was in visible pain the entire ride home. This was one of the most violent seizures I had ever witnessed my mother having, and my ability to respond would have been even more limited if it weren't for the position of Park St. being east of the strobe light.