
One Region Moving Forward

News Release
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Contact: Jeff Salzgeber
512.743.2659

Street Smart Campaign Urges Pedestrians, Cyclists and Drivers To Be Alert *Less Daylight in Early Evening Causes Spike in Crashes Involving Pedestrians*

With the recent change from Daylight Savings Time to standard time, regional safety officials are urging drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists to pay closer attention to each other now that darkness falls on evening commuters an hour earlier.

The safety push is part of the semi-annual Street Smart public education campaign sponsored by the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia. Safety officials want to decrease pedestrian injuries and fatalities that occur during November and December—the darkest months of the year. During these months last year, there were more than 430 crashes involving pedestrians in the Washington metro region.

Representatives from the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors, and police departments from across the region gathered today near the W&OD Trail in Ashburn, Virginia to kick off the Street Smart campaign, now in its eleventh year.

“People on foot and on bikes are often harder for drivers to see as we all adjust to the time of year when it’s dark by five o’clock in the afternoon and more walkers and cyclists are wearing dark coats and jackets,” said Todd Turner, National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board. “That’s why it is so important for us to remind everyone to obey signs, signals and traffic laws, be more attentive, and be especially careful at intersections. Drivers should take extra caution, slow down, and obey speed limits.”

Mr. Turner also announced that law enforcement in the District of Columbia, southern Maryland and northern Virginia will be cracking down this month on drivers, cyclists and pedestrians who violate traffic safety laws. Drivers and cyclists who fail to stop for pedestrians in crosswalks and pedestrians who jaywalk, for example, face fines ranging from \$40 to \$500. Drivers also are subject to getting points on their driver records.

On average, more than 2,600 pedestrians and bicyclists are injured in this region every year, and 89 are killed. Pedestrians and bicyclists account for 30 percent of the region’s traffic fatalities.

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About the Street Smart Campaign & the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB)

*Sponsored by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC) and the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB), the **Street Smart** public awareness and enforcement campaign is in its eleventh year. Its goal is to reduce pedestrian and cyclist injuries and deaths in the Washington metropolitan area. For more information about **Street Smart**, please visit www.bestreetsmart.net and twitter.com/COGStreetSmart. The TPB is the regional transportation planning organization for the Washington region. It includes local governments, state transportation agencies, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) and members of the Maryland and Virginia General Assemblies.*

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Street Smart Safety Tips
(BeStreetSmart.net)

If you're driving...

- Look twice for people in crosswalks and yield to pedestrians and bicyclists
- Be careful when passing stopped vehicles
- Yield to pedestrians and cyclists at intersections when you're turning
- Allow three feet when passing bicyclists
- Look for cyclists and cars before you open your door
- Slow down and obey the speed limit
- Avoid using your cell phone while driving

If you're walking...

- Cross the street at the corner and use marked crosswalks when they're available
- Wait for the "Walk" signal to cross the street
- Before crossing look left, right, and left again
- Be seen! If you're walking after dark or in bad weather, make it easier for drivers to see you by wearing light clothing or something reflective
- Don't text while you're crossing the street
- If you're on an off-street trail, obey all posted signage and approach intersections with caution

If you're biking...

- Obey all traffic signs and traffic lights
- Ride in the direction of traffic, at least a car door width away from parked cars
- Use hand signals so drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians know what you're going to do
- Always wear a helmet
- Use lights if you're riding at times of darkness
- If you're on an off-street trail, obey all posted signage and approach intersections with caution

Laws and regulations differ between jurisdictions. Visit www.BeStreetSmart.net for information on specific trail guidelines and regulations.