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STREET SMART SAFETY CAMPAIGN LAUNCHES NEW INITIATIVE TO EDUCATE ON TRUCK BLIND SPOTS

Innovative Truck Safety Initiative Offers People a “Truck’s-Eye View”

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Whether commuting to work or simply enjoying the warm weather this time of year, people walking and biking in the District of Columbia often find themselves crossing paths with delivery trucks, which is why the *Street Smart* campaign’s new truck safety initiative is reminding everyone to remain vigilant when traveling around the city.

As part of National Bicycle Safety Awareness Month in May, and ahead of Bike to Work Week, the *Street Smart* campaign is launching a new truck safety initiative that includes a series of community outreach events to remind truck drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians to watch out for each other on the roads. The events will offer participants the opportunity to explore the cab of a truck and observe marked off “blind spot” zones from the driver’s point of view, demonstrating what truck drivers can and cannot see.

“The District sees a large number of pedestrians and bicyclists traveling alongside big trucks on its roads every day,” said Laura Richards, Transportation Planner, District Department of Transportation (DDOT). “As more people hit the road for National Bike to Work Week, DDOT is working with the *Street Smart* campaign to remind drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists that safety is critical around trucks and buses as well.”

In addition to the truck safety events taking place throughout the District, the campaign provides tips on how truck drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians can safely share the streets.

If you’re walking . . .

- **Watch for turning trucks and be aware of blind spots.** Drivers might not see you in front of or alongside their vehicle.
- **Avoid stepping out in front of a truck.** It takes longer for a large vehicle to stop.

If you’re biking . . .

- **Don’t stop on the right side of a truck.** You might be in the blind spot, and the truck could be turning right or moving to the curbside.
- **Keep your distance when trucks are turning.** Sometimes trucks swing out to make wide turns.
- **Don’t linger next to a truck on any side, in any lane.** If a truck attempts to pass, slow down and let it get ahead of you.

Truck drivers . . .

- **Yield to pedestrians and bicyclists.** Be alert, especially when turning or changing lanes.

- **Check your mirrors.** Check your mirrors often, especially after passing a bicyclist or before making a turn or lane change.
- **Use your turn signals early.** By using your signal early you'll give bicyclists the option to back away from the side of your vehicle.
- **Take care when passing.** Be sure to give bicyclists plenty of space when passing and change lanes if possible. If there is not enough room to pass, wait until there is room.
- **Be alert at all times.** Bicyclists worry about defects you'd never feel in your vehicle. Allow plenty of room between you and cyclists in case they swerve to miss a pothole, storm drain, or debris.

The *Street Smart* campaign's truck safety initiative is a partnership with DDOT. The District has gained attention recently for its popularity among people choosing to walk or bike to work. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the city ranks No. 2 in walking to work, and No. 4 in biking to work, among major U.S. cities. The truck safety program will help kick off National Bike to Work Week, May 15-19, which includes the annual DC Bike Ride on Mother's Day.

Street Smart is a public awareness campaign for commuters in the Washington, D.C., suburban Maryland and Northern Virginia that aims to prevent deaths and injuries of people walking and biking in those areas.

To learn more about *Street Smart*, visit BeStreetSmart.net, and follow us on twitter.com/COGStreetSmart.

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The Council of Governments is an independent, nonprofit association where area leaders address regional issues affecting the District of Columbia, suburban Maryland, and Northern Virginia.