



## OVERVIEW

The fall and winter months bring shorter days and fewer daylight hours, resulting in darker, more dangerous commutes for drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists. To help protect Washington-area road users, the *Street Smart* traffic safety program reinforces local traffic laws and provides tips to ensure safe travel through our region.

## A NATIONAL PROBLEM

- Following a 40-year high in 2022, pedestrian fatalities across the U.S. decreased 5.4% last year.<sup>1</sup>
- Nationwide, drivers struck and killed 7,318 pedestrians in 2023 compared to 7,737 in 2022.<sup>1</sup>
- Total traffic fatalities across the nation also declined in 2023, down 3.6% compared to 2022.<sup>2</sup>
- Despite the promising 5.4% decrease last year, pedestrian fatalities are still up a shocking 14% compared to 2019, the last pre-pandemic year.

## REGIONAL FACTS

- While nationwide traffic fatalities declined in 2023, fatalities sadly increased on our region’s roadways by 2.08% year-over-year, from 385 lives lost in 2022 to 393 lives lost in 2023.<sup>3</sup>
- However, fatalities among our most vulnerable road users decreased last year, with 110 pedestrian and 7 bicyclist fatalities in 2023 compared to 130 pedestrian and 11 bicyclist fatalities in 2022, a tragically record-setting year.<sup>3</sup>
- Police departments will conduct increased enforcement this fall, ticketing drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists who break traffic safety laws. Fines range from \$40 to \$500.

2023	Alexandria City	Arlington Co.	Fairfax City	Fairfax Co.	Falls Church City	Loudoun Co.	Manassas City	Manassas Park City	Prince William Co.	Charles Co.	Frederick Co.	Montgomery Co.	Prince George's Co.	DC	TOTAL
<b>FATALITIES</b>															
Pedestrian	0	1	0	10	0	3	3	0	7	7	4	15	41	19	110
Bicyclist	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	3	7
All traffic	1	7	0	42	0	16	6	0	29	21	33	46	140	52	393
<b>CRASHES</b>															
Pedestrian	47	109	12	237	12	58	10	0	91	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	892	n/a
Bicyclist	8	52	5	78	5	26	4	2	21	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	479	n/a
All traffic	1,092	2,075	537	12,538	125	4,772	478	95	6,265	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	20,134	n/a

<sup>1</sup> Governors Highway Safety Association, [Pedestrian Traffic Fatalities by State](#)

<sup>2</sup> National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, [Early Estimate of Motor Vehicle Traffic Fatalities for the First Half of 2024](#)

<sup>3</sup> Preliminary data compiled from DDOT, MDOT, and VHSO in October 2024, subject to change.

## CAMPAIGN COMPONENTS

- “Slow Down Life Ahead,” Street Teams, featuring Street Smart’s Walking Billboard ambassadors visiting some of the region’s intersections where pedestrian-involved crashes most often occur. The street team’s eye-catching signs remind drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians to slow down and watch out for each other because we all have “Life Ahead” of us.
- English and Spanish exterior bus ads, interior bus cards, bus wraps, Bikeshare posters, and transit shelters.
- Testimonial documentary videos and webpage featuring local residents affected by pedestrian crashes.

## STREET SAFETY TIPS

### ***If you’re driving...***

- Look out for pedestrians everywhere, at all times.
- Slow down and obey the speed limit.
- Stop for pedestrians at crosswalks.
- Be careful when passing buses or stopped vehicles.
- When turning, yield to people walking and biking.
- Look for bicyclists before opening your door.
- Allow at least 3 feet when passing bikes.
- Avoid using your cell phone and never text while driving.
- Be especially careful if you drive an SUV or pickup truck—high profile vehicles are more likely to kill or seriously injure people walking and biking.

### ***If you’re walking...***

- Cross the street at the corner and use marked crosswalks when they’re available.
- Use the pushbuttons.
- Wait for the walk signal to cross the street.
- Watch for turning vehicles.
- Before crossing look left, right, and left again.
- Be visible. Wear something light or reflective after dark.
- Watch out for blind spots around trucks and buses.
- Avoid using your cell phone while you’re crossing the street.
- On an off-street trail, obey all posted signage and approach intersections with caution.

### ***If you’re biking...***

- Obey signs and signals.
- Never ride against traffic.
- Ride in a straight line at least 3 feet from parked cars.
- Use hand signals to tell drivers what you intend to do.
- Wear a helmet.
- Use lights at night and when visibility is poor.
- On an off-street trail, obey all posted signs and approach intersections with caution.

