

WHAT'S *New*

IN THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

A weekly update for residents, visitors, and workers in the District of Columbia



Friday, February 8, 2013

BUCKLE UP, BABY!

KNOW THE FACTS ABOUT CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY

Today, more parents and caregivers than ever before secure their kids in child safety seats. According to the Data from the Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), show an estimated 8,959 lives were saved by child restraint systems from 1975 to 2008.

But amid this good news is an alarming fact: too many parents still don't use the full range of child safety seats, especially booster seats. Safety experts strongly recommend that children should not be moved into regular seat belts until they are at least four feet, nine inches (4' 9") tall, weigh about 80 pounds, and are approximately eight years old. And DC law now requires booster seats for children up to age 8. Yet, booster seat use for children ages four to eight is still less than 10 percent nationally.

The MPD encourages all parents and caregivers to know about and follow the law, to acquire and use age-appropriate child safety restraints, to have their child safety seats inspected, and to follow the four essential steps to protecting children in motor vehicles. The four steps to protect your children as they grow older are listed in the steps below. Remember to have safety seats inspected on a regular basis. Seat belts can seriously injure or kill small children who are not properly placed in child safety seats.

Protect your children by following each step as they grow older. And remember to have their safety seats inspected on a regular basis. Seat belts can seriously injure or kill small children who are not properly placed in child safety seats.



» Learn more about child passenger safety and the laws in the District of Columbia at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/carseat>

Four Steps to Car Seat Safety

Step 1: Infants

From birth to 1 year (or up to approx. 20 lbs), use a rear-facing car seat.

Step 2: Toddlers

From 1-4 years (20-40 lbs), use a forward-facing child seat, or a convertible car seat.

Step 3: Younger Children (40 - 80 lbs. and up to 54")

For younger children (40-80 lbs and up to 54"), use a belt-positioning booster seat (high-back or booster without a back).

Step 4: Older Children (8 years or older, more than 80 lbs. and taller than 54")

For older children (over 80 lbs and over 54"), use a seat belt. Be sure the child is large enough for a correct fit.

WITH THE COLDER WEATHER HERE, DON'T MAKE YOUR VEHICLE AN EASY TARGET

With colder temperatures taking hold in DC, there's something that police officers are on the lookout for: motorists who leave their vehicles running while unattended. Year to date, almost 4,000 vehicles were reported stolen in DC, according to preliminary statistics. And while it is impossible to tell how many auto thefts are the result of running vehicles left unattended, national statistics show that more than 20 percent of stolen autos had the key left in the ignition. As colder temperatures settle in, some drivers will be tempted to run their vehicle to warm it up, while they remain indoors. Other motorists may leave their vehicles running while they dash into a convenience store or other location. Their reasoning: they will be away from their cars for only a "brief" minute or two. In either instance, the practice is unwise, unsafe and illegal in the District of Columbia. Some auto thieves need as little as a minute to break into and steal a vehicle that is locked and without a key. The time needed to steal a car that is unlocked, unattended and running is literally a matter of seconds. And under DC law, motorists who leave a motor vehicle running and unattended can receive a \$50 ticket and the vehicle may be impounded. This cold-weather season, the MPD asks all motorists to take appropriate measures to avoid being the victim of auto theft and to never leave their vehicles running unattended.

» For more auto theft prevention and other safety tips, go to:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/safety>

DC POLICE ALERTS PROVIDE RAPID TEXT NOTIFICATION

The Alert DC system provides rapid text notification and update information during a major crisis or emergency. This system delivers important emergency alerts, notifications and updates on a range of devices including your email account, cell phone, pager, BlackBerry and wireless PDA.

When an incident or emergency occurs, authorized DC Homeland Security & Emergency Management personnel can rapidly notify you using this community alert system. Alert DC is your personal connection to real-time updates, instructions on where to go, what to do, or what not to do, who to contact and other important information.

Alert DC is available to citizens of the District of Columbia as well as individuals traveling to or working in the District. In addition to Alert DC, users may register for the DC Police Alert Program through the same website. The DC Police Alert Program notifies businesses and residents about crimes in their police district or service area. This program sends alerts when there is information regarding a crime and instructs what to do if recipients have information to share. Sign up for an account to receive alerts and emergency notifications today.

» Get more information on Alert DC and DC Police
Alert text alerts at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/policealert>

NEWS & NOTES

Also Noteworthy

Tell Us How We're Doing. MPD is now part of Grade DC. We invite you to share your thoughts on our service — positive or negative — through MPD's email groups, our social media, or by visiting the Grade DC website. Get more information at <http://grade.dc.gov>.

Join the MPD Reserve Corps. The MPD Reserve Corps, a volunteer policing program is seeking new members. Applications are now being accepted at <http://dcpolicejobs.dc.gov>.

Report Crimes Against Children through the CyberTipline. The Report crimes 24-hours a day, 7 days a week by calling 1-800-843-5678 or reporting crimes online at <http://www.cybertipline.com>.

Preventing terrorism is everybody's business. If you SEE something, SAY something. Call the MPD at (202) 727-9099 to report suspicious activity that has already occurred. Call 911 to report in-progress threats or emergencies. Learn how you can help fight terrorism at <http://mpdc.dc.gov/operationTIPP>.

Information, ideas, or comments about this service?

Send an e-mail to **KAYLIN CASTELLI**, Manager of Internet Communications, at kaylin.castelli@dc.gov

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