

WHAT'S *New*

IN THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

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



Friday, May 10, 2013

TOWARD ZERO DEATHS: SPEEDING AND AGGRESSIVE DRIVING

The District of Columbia is committed to protecting the lives of those traveling on city roads. Toward Zero Deaths represents the city's goal of reducing traffic fatalities to zero. Traffic deaths are preventable and over the next few weeks, "What's New" will be sharing information on what you can do to protect yourself in a variety of areas, including seat belt safety, impaired driving, speeding & aggressive driving, distracted driving, and pedestrian & bicycle safety.



Speeding and Aggressive Driving

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) defines aggressive driving as occurring when "an individual commits a combination of moving traffic offenses so as to endanger other persons or property." The range of unsafe driving behavior includes speeding, tailgating, weaving in and out of traffic, running red lights, or any combination of these activities.

Aggressive driving is one of the most dangerous problems on our roads today – a factor in an estimated one-third of all crashes, injuries, and fatalities nationally.

Speeding

- Reduces your ability to steer safely around curves or objects in the roadway.
- Extends the distance necessary to stop a vehicle.
- Increases the distance you travel while you react to a dangerous situation.
- Increases the probability of serious injury or death when involved in a crash.
- In 2010, 10,395 people were killed nationally in speed-related crashes.
- Speed limits are designed to protect everyone – drivers, passengers and pedestrians.

The District of Columbia was one of the first jurisdictions in the area to join the Smooth Operator Program, a regional anti-aggressive driving initiative that today involves more than 50 law enforcement agencies in Maryland and the District of Columbia. Every year, Metropolitan Police participates in law enforcement waves targeting aggressive drivers. Offenses include:

- **SPEEDING** going faster than the posted speed limit or too fast for weather conditions.
- **RUNNING RED LIGHTS** and running stop signs.
- **TAILGATING** or following other vehicles too closely.
- **MAKING FREQUENT LANE CHANGES** unsafe lane changes or weaving in and out of traffic to get ahead.
- **FAILING TO YIELD THE RIGHT OF WAY** not allowing other drivers to merge or cutting other drivers off.
- **PASSING IMPROPERLY** passing on the right, passing on the shoulder of the road, or failing to use turn signals when changing lanes.

» Toward Zero Deaths represents the city's goal of reducing traffic fatalities to zero. Learn more about how you can improve your safety by going to:

<http://towardzerodeathsdcc.com/>

» The MPD's Automated Traffic Enforcement includes both red light and speed cameras. Learn more about these initiatives, including locations of cameras at:

<http://mpdc.dc.gov/photoenforcement>

» Through Smooth Operator, each year, dozens of law enforcement agencies from the region cooperate in intensive, one- to two-week aggressive driving enforcement "waves" – one each month from June through September. Learn more at:

<http://mpdc.dc.gov/smoothoperator>

» The DC Department of Transportation has a webpage dedicated to providing information about aggressive driving. Get details at:

<http://ddot-hso.com/AggressiveDriving.aspx>

» By implementing traffic enforcement initiatives, offering tips on sharing the road, and participating in regional programs, the MPD is improving safety on the streets for walkers, bicyclists and drivers. Here are some tips:

<http://mpdc.dc.gov/traffic>

SMARTPHONE USERS ENCOURAGED TO TAKE STEPS TO PREVENT THEFT AND BRICK STOLEN DEVICES

In Washington, DC, New York and other large American cities, roughly 40% of all robberies now involve smart phones—endangering the physical safety of victims, as well as the security of the personal information on the stolen devices. In addition to the loss and injury experienced during the initial crime, there is an added risk of identity theft if the stolen smartphone isn't password protected to prevent a thief from getting access to private information on the device. Smartphone owners are encouraged to do what they can to reduce their risk of becoming a victim of a robbery. The MPD offers the following tips:

- **Protect Your Information.** Make sure your phone is password protected before you walk out the door. That way, if your device is lost or stolen, no one can run up your phone bill or access your online accounts.
- **Don't Walk and Text.** Texting while walking is dangerous, especially in crosswalks and other areas with heavy pedestrian and vehicular traffic. Not only that, when you're texting, you're not paying attention to your surroundings, which make you an easy target for criminals.
- **Pocket the Phone.** Consider putting your smartphone away for a bit. If you are wearing headphones, don't turn up the volume so high that you cannot hear outside noises. Don't forget that ubiquitous white cord may indicate to would-be thieves that you're carrying a certain brand of smart phone.
- **Be Alert.** Always be aware of your surroundings. Wherever you are—on the street, in an office building or shopping mall, driving, waiting for a bus or subway—stay alert and tuned in to your surroundings.

If someone tries to rob you, don't resist. Give up your property—don't give up your life. Report the crime to the police. Try to describe the attacker accurately. Your actions can help prevent others from becoming victims.

If your smart phone is lost or stolen, you may now contact the carrier and ask to have that device remotely disabled. If a smart phone is rendered inactive in such a manner, it's often considered to be as useful as a "brick." These "bricked" phones are of little use to thieves because they can't be reactivated after being sold on the black market. The MPD is encouraging victims of smart phone thefts to call their carriers and to "brick it" in an effort to deter smart phone theft.

By bricking your phone, you will permanently disable your device and help us eliminate the black market for stolen smart phones. We can reduce robberies by eliminating the reason criminals steal smart phones in the first place!

- » The MPD offers a variety of safety tips, including a complete brochure on robbery prevention. Read the tips online or download brochures at: <http://mpdc.dc.gov/safety>
- » Get more information on "bricking" your phone at: <http://brickit.dc.gov>
- » The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) offers information on how to safeguard yourself against wireless device theft at: <http://www.fcc.gov/guides/stolen-and-lost-wireless-devices>
- » If your smart phone is lost or stolen, contact your carrier. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has a contact list of service providers at: <http://www.fcc.gov/stolen-phones-contact-numbers>

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>.

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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