

WHAT'S *New*

IN THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

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



Friday, June 21, 2013

TOWARD ZERO DEATHS: DISTRACTED 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.



Distracted Driving

Distracted driving kills. Thousands of people are killed every year nationwide, and nearly half a million people are injured, due to distracted driving. Distracted driving happens anytime you take your hands off of the wheel, take your eyes off of the road or take your mind off of driving. Statistics show that the country's youngest and most inexperienced drivers are the most at risk.

Federal statistics show that 3,092 people died and an estimated 416,000 were injured in 2010 in crashes in which distracted driving played a role. Research from the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) showed that drivers using hand-held devices are four times more likely to get into a serious crash, and that hands-free cellphones aren't much safer because just talking on the phone reduces the brain power focused on driving by 37 percent.

- 16% of all distracted driving crashes involve a driver under age 20.
- At any given moment during daylight hours more than 800,000 vehicles are being driven by someone using a hand-held cell phone.
- In 2011, 3,331 people were killed in crashes involving a distracted driver, compared to 3,267 in 2010.
- 18% of injury crashes in 2010 were reported as distraction-affected crashes.

In 2004, the District of Columbia enacted laws to restrict mobile phone use while driving. Here's what you need to know:

- It is illegal for motorists to use a mobile phone or other electronic device while driving in the District of Columbia, unless the telephone or device is equipped with a hands-free accessory.
- It is illegal for motorists to text while driving in District of Columbia.
- Individuals with a learner's permit and school bus drivers are prohibited from using any mobile phone or other electronic device, even if it has a hands-free accessory, unless they are placing an emergency call.
- The penalty for violating the law is \$100. There are no points imposed on violators.

» 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/>

» Learn more about the Distracted Driving Safety Act, which makes it illegal to use your cell phone while driving, at: <http://mpdc.dc.gov/distracteddriving>

» The US Department of Transportation is leading the effort to stop texting and cell phone use behind the wheel. Learn more about their efforts at: <http://www.distraction.gov/>

» 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>

MPD RECOGNIZED CRISIS INTERVENTION OFFICER OF THE YEAR

Submitted by Karla Melendez, MPD Intern

The Metropolitan Police Department along with members of the Department of Mental Health recognized Sergeant Michael J. Pulliam as the Crisis Intervention Officer of the Year at a ceremony on Wednesday, June 12, 2013. Sergeant Pulliam is assigned to the Sixth District and is a nine-year veteran with MPD. He has done an outstanding job on working effectively to meet the consumer needs. He has performed successfully with all his roles and tasks as a Crisis Intervention Officer. He has demonstrated huge commitment and dedication over the years.

"The work done by Crisis Intervention Officers is crucially important to helping provide assistance to those who deal with mental illness," said Mayor Vincent C. Gray. "I salute Sergeant Pulliam for his work, which helps make the District a healthier, safer community for all of our residents."

The Metropolitan Police Department, in partnership with the Department of Mental Health, set up the Crisis Intervention Officer Initiative to train officers to recognize the signs of mental illness, determine the most appropriate response, and to use techniques that build on their skills and training.

"A Crisis Intervention Officer is trained in handling incidents involving mental health consumers and is equipped to de-escalate a situation and resolve an encounter in the safest possible manner and in the best interest of those involved," said Police Chief Cathy L. Lanier. The training provides officers the opportunity to understand and learn about the "first responders" intervention skill sets in order to handle the mental issues of the individual. Many lieutenants and captains have had the opportunity to participate in this program and to learn how to interact with someone with a mental illness. Members are also trained to recognize the signs and symptoms of mental illness as well as the medical treatments. The MPD has graduated approximately 500 CIOs since the program's inception in 2009.



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>.

Report Crimes Against Children through the CyberTipline. The CyberTipline is a Congressionally-mandated means for reporting crimes against children. 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>.

Support the Washington DC Police Foundation. The Washington DC Police Foundation is a tax-exempt, non-profit organization that brings together the business, civic, and other professional communities to promote public safety by providing financial and in-kind resources to the MPD, expanding public safety awareness, and advancing public safety policy and initiatives. Learn more about the extraordinary support the Washington DC Police Foundation provides to the MPD. Learn more about the Foundation at <http://www.dcpolicefoundation.org>.

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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