

WHAT'S *New*

IN THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

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



Friday, May 6, 2011

AS THE 2011 BOATING SEASON GETS UNDER WAY, THE MPD HARBOR PATROL STRESSES SAFETY

The warm weather has brought the unofficial start of summer to DC and that means the summer boating season is about to kick off. Again this year, the MPD's Harbor Patrol Unit is reminding boaters to respect the water and to practice important safety measures. In particular, boaters are being warned that boating while under the influence is strictly prohibited on DC's waterways. Boat owners and guests are also reminded of the critical importance of personal flotation devices – or "PFDs," for short. US Coast Guard regulations require that all boats have a wearable type PFD for each person on board or being towed. Each PFD must be in good condition, readily available, and the proper size for the intended wearer. Boaters need to ensure that there are properly fitting PFDs for all children who may be aboard their vessels. In addition, boats 16 feet in length or longer must carry a Type IV throwable device. Most adults need an extra 7-12 pounds of buoyancy to keep their heads above water. A PFD can provide that "extra lift" to keep you afloat until help comes. Your weight isn't the only factor in how much extra lift you need. A person's body fat, lung size, clothing, and water conditions are also important.

The DC Harbor Patrol is a critical, but largely unknown, part of the Metropolitan Police Department. The Harbor Patrol polices all of the rivers, inlets, and waterways that majestically surround our nation's capital. The 20-member unit encounters the same types of incidents that occur on DC streets including disorderly conduct, loud music, domestic violence, high-speed chases, and robbery suspects.

In addition to patrol duties, the Harbor Patrol also prepares boaters in the District of Columbia by offering a Boating Safety Course. This course is designed to educate boaters of the legal requirements, navigational rules, safety equipment, risks of boating accidents, and other issues pertaining to safe boating. Anyone operating a vessel on District of Columbia waterways is required to have a Boating Safety Certificate. The Boating Safety Certificate is issued to individuals who successfully complete the Boating Safety course.

- » For more information about PFDs and their use and care, as well as other safety and equipment requirements, visit:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/harborpatrol>
- » The Harbor Patrol offers boating safety courses that are required of anyone who operates a boat in DC. Get the 2011 schedule at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/boatingsafety>

MPD POLICE RESERVE CORPS SEEKS NEW MEMBERS

The Metropolitan Police Reserve Corps is a volunteer program that offers qualified civic-minded individuals the opportunity to assist the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) in carrying out its policing responsibilities. Members of the Metropolitan Police Reserve Corps can make a volunteer public safety contribution to their community in many ways.

Reserve Officer assignments are varied and range from administrative support to the broad duties of career police officers. Reserve Officers are expected to volunteer a minimum of 16 hours per month, or 192 hours per year. Last year alone, Reserve Officers provided over 17,500 hours of supplemental services to the department. The application deadline for the next Metropolitan Police Reserve Corps class is May 16, 2011.

- » For more information or to apply to join the MPD's Reserve Corps, go to:
<https://oap.mpdconline.com/public/instructions.aspx>

MAY IS MOTORCYCLE SAFETY AWARENESS MONTH

During “Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month,” all motorists are reminded to safely share the road with motorcycles and to be extra alert when driving to help keep motorcyclists safe.

With warmer weather here, more motorcycles are back on the roads. Drivers of all vehicles need to be extra alert. Motorcycles are some of the smallest vehicles on the road, so folks in other vehicles need to really look out for them—and to take extra care to safely share the road. Because of their smaller size, motorcyclists are often hidden in a vehicle’s blind spot. It’s crucial that motorists and bicyclists always make a visual check for motorcycles by checking mirrors and blind spots before entering or leaving a lane of traffic and at intersections.

Motorcyclists are much more vulnerable than passenger vehicle drivers in the event of a crash. Research shows that approximately 80 percent of motorcycle crashes injure or kill a motorcycle rider, while 20 percent of passenger car crashes injure or kill a driver or passenger in their vehicle.

Drivers can follow these tips to help keep motorcyclists safe on our roadways:

- Remember the motorcycle is a vehicle with all of the rights and privileges of any other motor vehicle on the roadway. Always allow a motorcyclist the full lane width—never try to share a lane;
- Always make a visual check for motorcycles by checking mirrors and blind spots before entering or leaving a lane of traffic and at intersections;
- Always signal your intentions before changing lanes or merging with traffic;
- Don’t be fooled by a flashing turn signal on a motorcycle – motorcycle signals are often not self-canceling and riders sometimes forget to turn them off. Wait to be sure the motorcycle is going to turn before you proceed;
- Remember that road conditions which are minor annoyances to other vehicles pose major hazards to motorcyclists;
- Allow more following distance, three or four seconds, when following a motorcycle, so the motorcyclist has enough time to maneuver or stop in an emergency. And don’t tailgate. In dry conditions, motorcycles can stop more quickly than cars.

Motorcyclists have responsibilities, too, by following the rules of the road, being alert to other drivers, and always wearing DOT-compliant helmets and protective gear.

The message to all drivers is: make this the first year in recent years when motorcycle fatalities do not increase. Help to share in the responsibility and do your part by safely sharing the road with motorcycles.

» Get more information on motorcycle safety at:

- **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration**
<http://www.nhtsa.gov/Safety/Motorcycles>
- **Motorcycle Safety Foundation**
<http://www.msf-usa.org/>

DATA BOX	
Homicides	as of 5/6/11
2011:	
2010:	
% Change: %	
Closure Rate: % (closures)	
Adult Arrests	week end. 4/30/11
Data Not Available	
Juvenile Activity	week end. 4/30/11
Data Not Available	
Firearm Recoveries	as of 5/2/11
May: 2	
2011 Total: 632	
Traffic Fatalities	as of 5/6/11
2011: 12	
2010: 12	
% Change: No Change	

NEWS & NOTES

Also Noteworthy

Police Week is May 15-21. Tens of thousands of law enforcement officers from around the world will converge on DC to participate in a variety of events to honor those who have made the ultimate sacrifice and were killed in the line of duty. Events

kick off on Friday, May 13, with a Candlelight Vigil for fallen officers. National Police Week information and a schedule of events are available at <http://www.nleomf.org/programs/policeweek/>.

Upcoming Citywide Neighborhood Watch Training. MPD will be hosting a series of Citywide Neighborhood Watch Training Sessions in partnership with each district’s Citizens Advisory Council. For more

information, visit <http://www.mpd.dc.gov/NeighborhoodWatch>.

Youth Invited to Apply to the MPD’s Jr. Police Academy 2011. For students (ages 14 – 17) approved to work this summer’s Mayor’s Summer Youth Employment Program (www.does.dc.gov), opportunities are available to join the Jr. Police Academy Summer Program. For more information, visit <http://www.mpd.dc.gov/JPA>.

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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