

WHAT'S *New*

IN THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

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



Friday, August 10, 2012

SHARE THE ROAD: TIPS FOR DRIVERS, CYCLISTS, AND PEDESTRIANS

On average, 265 bicycle and 600 pedestrian crashes are reported to the Metropolitan Police Department each year in the District of Columbia. Approximately 2,700 pedestrians and bicyclists are injured every year in the Washington region, and 89 are killed. Pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities accounted for 23% of the total traffic fatalities in the District of Columbia, suburban Maryland and northern Virginia from 2004-2008. What's disappointing is that many of these fatalities could have been avoided. By exercising some common sense and extending some common courtesies, future tragedies can be avoided. The following tips should help drivers, bikers and walkers share the road and get where they're going safely.

Tips for Drivers

Drivers are reminded to turn on vehicle headlights at dusk and be vigilant in looking out for cyclists and pedestrians. Additionally, drivers should:

- » Stop for pedestrians at crosswalks.
- » Slow down and obey the posted speed limit.
- » Yield to pedestrians and cyclists when turning.
- » Look before opening your door.
- » Be careful when passing stopped vehicles.
- » Allow three feet when passing bicyclists.

Tips for Cyclists

When travelling on city streets, cyclists should follow the same rules of the road as motorized vehicles. This means stopping at stop signs; obeying traffic signals and lane markings; and using hand signals to let others know your intention to stop or turn. Furthermore, cyclists are advised to be aware of their surroundings:

- » Don't wear headphones; you need to be able to hear if a car is approaching.
- » Slow down and check for oncoming traffic before entering any street or intersection.
- » Do your best to anticipate hazards and adjust your position in traffic accordingly.
- » Be predictable: ride with the flow of traffic, on the right, and in a straight line – not in and out of parked cars on the side of the street.

Be visible and wear the proper protective gear. DC law mandates that riders under 16 are required to wear a helmet while cycling in the District of Columbia, but it's a good idea for bikers of any age. Make eye contact with motorists to let them know you are there (but don't always expect them to see you). And stay visible by riding where drivers are looking (i.e., do not pass on the right). Bicyclist should be particularly mindful of their visibility to other vehicles in the evening, especially when biking during rush hour or later. Legally, cyclists must have a front white light and a red rear reflector and/or a rear red light.

Tips for Walkers and Runners

Whether you're going for an afternoon stroll, commuting to work on foot, or getting some exercise, walking and running are great activities. However, it's important to pay attention. When walking or exercising, especially in the early morning or at dusk or dark, pedestrians should keep the following tips in mind:

- » Stay on the sidewalk, not in the street; only cross the street in crosswalks with traffic control devices.
- » Look both ways before crossing the street.
- » Never run between cars into the street.
- » Wear clothing that allows drivers and people to see you. That means no dark clothes after dark or early in the morning.

» Get tips for drivers, cyclists and pedestrians, and learn how to avoid fines for associated violations at:

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

» Tips for drivers, bikers and pedestrians are available on the Street Smart website:

<http://www.beststreetsmart.net>

» Get more Smart Bicycling Tips from Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA):

<http://www.waba.org/areabiking/safecycling/>

» Get cycling tips and hand signals from the Street Smart Campaign:

<http://www.beststreetsmart.net/bike.php>

» Get more walking and running tips at:

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

» Aggressive driving is a combination of unsafe and unlawful actions that demonstrate a conscious and willful disregard for safety. If you witness aggressive driving, report it. Learn more about aggressive driving at:

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

» Don't own a bicycle? Consider participating in DDOT's SmartBike program, register in advance for Capital Bikeshare. Get more information on the DC Department of Transportation's website at:

<http://www.ddot.dc.gov>

SHARE THE ROAD: TIPS FOR DRIVERS, CYCLISTS, AND PEDESTRIANS (CONTINUED FROM FRONT)

- » Exercising outdoors at dusk or at night can be dangerous without some type of reflective device on your clothing. Many athletic shoes have reflective qualities built in, but also consider a vest complete with reflective tape.
- » Keep alert! Dawn and dusk offer convenient shadows for muggers and other crooks.

Pedestrians and cyclists are also reminded to ALWAYS carry identification with them when they go out. If carrying a license seems too inconvenient, please consider purchasing an identification bracelet or tag for your shoe. New products designed especially for runners, bikers and other athletes have recently come on the market. A simple internet search for "identification bracelet" will provide numerous results.

EMAIL LIST GROUPS HELP STRENGTHEN ONLINE COMMUNITY

The MPD police-community Yahoo discussion groups were created for members of the community so they could share public safety information in an effort to help reduce crime and the fear of crime. Information shared on the email list groups include community announcements, meeting dates, crime statistics, safety concerns and ideas, crime reports, and safety tips. The listserv also acts as a virtual community, which helps strengthen partnerships between the local police and the communities they serve. It provides yet another means of visibility and accessibility for the community.

The listserv discussion groups are designed to attract area residents, employees, students, business owners, elected officials, and government agency representatives interested in coming together to solve problems and share public safety-related information that will improve the quality of life in each police district. It provides an opportunity for all stakeholders and DC service providers to engage in ongoing online interaction with police, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, holidays and weekends.

Information posted to the groups is intended to benefit members of a specific police district. If you don't know your police district, you can find out by visiting access the DC Guide to easily locate a PSA and other resources within a geographic area.

Successes of the police listserv include:

- » Faster dissemination of information, especially community meetings and events.
- » Assistance with identifying and taking action against nuisance properties.
- » Successful collaborations among community groups, elected officials and police.
- » Greater assistance with lookouts — from missing persons and pets to found property
- » Recognizing good work and identifying areas of service that need improvement.
- » Gauging the community's concerns.
- » Developing relationships, especially when a police district gets a new commander or new patrol officers
- » Identifying community leaders and activists, who are eager to join the group to let their voices be heard.
- » Sharing information between districts.
- » Listserv-to-Listserv communications (MPD postings are regularly shared with other large community online groups, with the potential of reaching 20,000 online users in one day.)

- » For more information or to get the Yahoo group name of your district email list group, go to:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/emailgroups>

DATA BOX

Homicides	as of 8/10/12
2012: 56	
2011: 67	
% Change: -16.4%	
Closure Rate: 76.8% (43 closures)	
Adult Arrests	(week end. 8/4/12)
Total Arrests: 824	
Weapons: 13	
Robbery: 14	
Unauthorized Use of Vehicle: 5	
Prostitution/Sex Offenses: 18	
Narcotics: 150	
Juvenile Activity	(week end. 8/4/12)
Total Arrests: 49	
Weapons: 1	
Robbery: 7	
Unauthorized Use of Vehicle: 2	
Narcotics: 0	
Firearm Recoveries	as of 8/6/12
August: 44	
2012 Total: 1,175	
Traffic Fatalities	as of 8/10/12
2012: 10	
2011: 24	
% Change: -58.3%	

NEWS & NOTES

Also Noteworthy

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 Use the CyberTipline to report 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>.

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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