

# WHAT'S *New*

IN THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

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



Friday, April 26, 2013

## TOWARD ZERO DEATHS: SEAT BELT SAFETY

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.

### Seat Belt Safety

Over half of people who die in traffic crashes in the nation are not wearing seat belts. Police officers in the District of Columbia think even one death resulting from not wearing a seat belt is one too many. That's why the District of Columbia has one of the strongest and most comprehensive seat belt laws in the country. Seat belts are your best defense against unsafe drivers – the single most important step you can take to save your life or the life of a loved one in a crash.

The District Department of Transportation and the Metropolitan Police Department are working Toward Zero Deaths on DC's roadways through strict policy, public health, education, enforcement and other efforts.

The District of Columbia enacted its seatbelt law in 1997. Since then, injuries have been prevented and lives saved.

- The District of Columbia's law allows police to stop a vehicle solely because its driver and/or passengers are not properly buckled up.
- It's a \$50 fine and 2 points for not having your seat belt buckled at all times - for drivers and all passengers, front and back seats.
- Drivers are responsible for seat belt compliance for all passengers.
- All children under 8 must be properly seated in an infant, toddler or booster seat. Eight- to 16-year-olds must be secured with a safety belt.
- Drivers who fail to properly secure their child face a \$75 fine and 2 points for a first offense, and up to \$150 fine for subsequent offenses.
- DC participates in the national Click or Ticket seat belt usage awareness campaign. Click It or Ticket is national seat belt campaign including high visibility enforcement with paid and earned media.

A seat belt can be the most significant action you can take to protect your life and those you care about. Buckling up dramatically increases your chance of surviving a crash, and it's your best weapon against a drunk, tired, distracted, or aggressive driver.

Wear your seat belt in DC. Day and night. Every trip. Every time.



» 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/>

» Click It or Ticket! If you drive – or your passengers ride – without a seatbelt, the penalty is a \$50 fine and 2 points on your license. Be smart and be safe: buckle up! Learn more at:

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

» Know the law about child car seats and booster seats. Read all about it at:

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

## APRIL IS NATIONAL 911 EDUCATION MONTH

Emergencies don't happen very often. But when they do, you want to get help fast. No one wants to spend time looking up the phone number. That's why 911 was created — to make it easy. In the United States and Canada, dialing 911 on your telephone is the fastest way you can get help for yourself or someone else. In 2008, April was identified National 9-1-1 Education Month.

In Washington, DC, the Office of Unified Communications oversees the designated call center for all District emergency 911 calls and for all District non-emergency and citywide 311 calls. Dial 911 to request police, fire, and emergency medical services for life-threatening situations. 911 is designed for contacting the MPD and the DC Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department (FEMS) in all situations requiring an onsite response by MPD or FEMS. 911 is a toll-free call accessible through residential, wireless, and pay telephones throughout the District

Most people know that 911 is for people emergencies only, but you may need to remind young people how and when to use 911 responsibly. Never call 911 as a joke or just to see what might happen. When the emergency dispatcher has to take the time to talk to people who don't have a real emergency, other people who call and do need help right away might have to wait.

If you do have to call 911 in an emergency, be sure to stay on the phone. Do not hang up until the 911 operator tells you it's OK to do so. That way, you can be sure that the operator has all the information to get help to you fast!

» For information on calling 911 in the District of Columbia, go to:  
<http://ouc.dc.gov/page/about-911>

» Dial 311, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, to request scheduled services such as trash removal, pothole repair, bulk pick-ups and recycling collection. For more information on 311 and to download a smartphone app, go to  
<http://ouc.dc.gov/page/about-311>

» Learn more about the Office of Unified Communications (OUC), which manages 9-1-1 communications for the District of Columbia at  
<http://ouc.dc.gov>

## MAKE THE STREETS SAFER – AND SMOOTHER: REPORT POTHOLES TO DDOT DURING POTHOLEPALOOZA

Potholepalooza is the District's month-long spring campaign to aggressively repair damaged roadways across the city. The first-ever Potholepalooza was held in 2009, and since then, DDOT crews have filled almost 21,011 potholes during the annual campaign. Through May 22, DDOT will work to repair identified potholes within 48 hours of the request (normal response time is within 72 hours). Residents and commuters are encouraged to inform DDOT of any potholes. Here's how:

- Call the Mayor's Call Center at **311**
- Use the On-line Service Request Center at <http://311.dc.gov>
- Tweet to <http://twitter.com/DDOTDC>
- Email [Potholepalooza@dc.gov](mailto:Potholepalooza@dc.gov)
- Use the District's new DC311 smartphone application:  
<http://ouc.dc.gov/page/dc-311-smartphone-app>
- Post a comment on the Potholepalooza Facebook page at  
<http://www.facebook.com/Potholepalooza>

» Learn more about Potholepalooza at:  
<http://ddot.dc.gov>



### NEWS & NOTES

#### Also Noteworthy

**Weekend Street Closures.** The Walk to End Lupus Now is set for Saturday, 4/27, and the Nike Women's Half Marathon is set for Sunday, 4/28. Both events will start near

the National Mall and streets will be closed along the routes during the events. Due to the heavy pedestrian crowds associated with these events, motorists are encouraged to exercise caution when traveling in these areas. In addition, those wishing to attend these events are encouraged to use public

transportation. Get more information at <http://mpdc.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>.

#### Information, ideas, or comments about this service?

Send an e-mail to **KAYLIN CASTELLI**, Manager of Internet Communications, at [kaylin.castelli@dc.gov](mailto:kaylin.castelli@dc.gov)

#### Would you like *What's New in the MPD* emailed to you each week?

Register with DC.Gov at <http://dc.gov/DC/Subscribe/Email+Alerts>

LEARN MORE AT  
**mpdc.dc.gov**