

WHAT'S *New*

IN THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

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



Friday, July 5, 2013

TOWARD ZERO DEATHS: PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE 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.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety

The District of Columbia and surrounding jurisdictions are united against bicycle and pedestrian tragedies. In 2010, 4,280 pedestrians were killed nationwide and an estimated 70,000 were injured in traffic crashes. On average, a pedestrian was killed every two hours and injured every eight minutes in traffic crashes. Additionally in 2010, 618 bicyclists were killed nationwide and an additional 52,000 were injured in motor vehicle traffic crashes. Bicyclist deaths accounted for 2% of all motor vehicle traffic fatalities, and made up 2% of all the people injured in traffic crashes during the year.

In the Washington Metropolitan region, an average of 2,600 pedestrians and bicyclists are injured and an average of 89 are killed each year. In DC alone, pedestrians make up more than 40% of the total number of people killed in traffic accidents. The District has approximately 650 pedestrian crashes per year and approximately 15 pedestrian deaths. Safety initiatives in the District of Columbia for cyclists, pedestrians and drivers include:

- Countdown pedestrian signals have been installed in more than 95 percent of DC's 1,550 signalized intersections over the last five years, more than any other U.S. city.
- The fine for drivers who fail to stop and give right of way to pedestrians in crosswalks is \$250 and 3 points. If a driver strikes a pedestrian in the process of failing to stop, the penalty is \$500 and 6 points.
- Any cyclist under 16 years of age cannot operate or be a passenger on a bicycle or any attachment to a bicycle without a helmet on a public roadway, public bicycle path or other right-of-way in the District of Columbia.
- The District Department of Transportation and Washington Area Bicyclists Association train thousands of children and others on pedestrian and bike safety every year.
- MPD targets drivers and pedestrians along high crash corridors and high pedestrian traffic locations as part of Street Smart enforcement waves every year. Street Smart is a bi-annual public awareness campaign in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia. The campaign uses advertising, public awareness efforts, and law enforcement to respond to the challenges of pedestrian and bicyclist safety.
- It is illegal for a driver to make a right turn in front of a bus that is stopped at an intersection to receive or discharge passengers. Violators are subject to a fine of at least \$100.

» 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/>

» 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>

» Find out what the DC Department of Transportation is doing to enhance bicycle and pedestrian safety at:

<http://ddot.dc.gov/DC/DDOT/On+Your+Street/Bicycles+and+Pedestrians/View+All/Bicycle+and+Pedestrian+Safety>

» Street Smart is an annual public awareness and behavioral change campaign designed to respond to the challenges of pedestrian and bicyclist safety. Learn more about Street Smart at:

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



SUMMER REMINDER: DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE

Submitted by Karla Melendez, MPD Intern

Summer is here and people often celebrate in this period of time. If your celebration will involve alcohol, the MPD would like to remind you to drink responsibly. Alcohol has been a factor in thousands of car accidents in the U.S. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in 2010, 10,228 people were killed in alcohol-impaired driving crashes, accounting for nearly one-third (31%) of all traffic related deaths in the United States. Alcohol is very dangerous, affecting your central nervous system and reducing your visual, behavioral, and cognitive capabilities. If you drink and drive, you may be severely fined, penalized, and punished for driving under the influence.

Underage drinkers are not exempt from the law. As a matter of fact, underage drinkers who choose to drive under the influence. Underage drinkers are severely punished under the law because they do not have the right to drink until the age of 21. It is illegal in every state for persons under the age of 21 to purchase and publicly possess alcoholic beverages. The risk of fatal crashes among teenagers under 21 is greater at low alcohol levels than it is for older drivers. According to CNN's Ann J. Curley, more than 2,000 teens aged 16-19 are killed each year in traffic fatalities and many of those deaths are alcohol related.

The legal limit for Blood Alcohol Content in the District of Columbia is .08 percent. It is a crime (Driving While Intoxicated, or DWI) to have a BAC at or above that level while operating a motor vehicle. Individuals are fined for two types of alcohol offenses known as DUI (Driving under the influence) and DWI (Driving with intoxication). A DUI applies to a person having a blood alcohol concentration of .07 percent or lower. However, a DWI applies to a person having a statutorily prohibited blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 or higher. Penalties for drinking and driving in DC range from \$300-\$10,000.

Why face the many penalties when there are so many alternatives to getting behind the wheel? Never drive when you've been drinking. Ask for a ride from a friend. Call a taxi cab or use the Sober Ride Program that provides free cab rides home when you've been drinking. Consider staying at a hotel or a friend's house. When throwing a party with guests who will be driving be sure to offer non-alcoholic beverages.

Please don't drink and drive. Drive and celebrate responsibly and safely. Don't risk your life on one bad choice. Always think about what you are going to do and always be mindful on following the law. Know the consequences of drinking and driving, and do the right thing.

» Learn more about drunk driving laws in DC by going to:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/dui>

» More details on SoberRide are available at:
<http://www.wrap.org/soberride/>

NEWS & NOTES

Also Noteworthy

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>.

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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