

WHAT'S *New*

IN THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

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



Friday, September 9, 2016

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. 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

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

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

» Get more walking and running tips from the MPD 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>

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.
- 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.

MPD CONTINUES EFFORTS TO KEEP COMMUNITY MEMBERS EDUCATED ON FILING POLICE COMMENDATIONS AND COMPLAINTS

The Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) is committed to providing quality, professional service to all members of the community. The MPD does its best to recognize individuals who provide exemplary service. Community members or visitors to DC who have had a positive experience with an MPD officer or civilian employee are invited to share their positive experiences by submitting a commendation.

Sometimes, however, individuals may feel that a member of the MPD has failed to meet that standard by engaging in misconduct or using excessive force. In these situations, individuals are encouraged to report this information to the MPD or the District of Columbia’s Office of Police Complaints (OPC). The Office of Police Complaints is a District Government agency that is independent of the MPD, and its mission is to receive, investigate, and resolve police misconduct complaints filed by the public against MPD and DC Housing Authority Police Department officers.

The MPD will investigate all complaints, including anonymous complaints, in a fair, thorough, and impartial manner. OPC has the authority to investigate complaints alleging harassment; use of unnecessary or excessive force; use of language or conduct that is insulting, demeaning, or humiliating; discrimination; retaliation for filing a complaint with OPC; or failure to wear required identification or refusal to provide name and badge number when requested to do so by a member of the public.

» OPC complaint forms and information sheets can be obtained by:

- Visiting OPC at 1400 I St., NW, # 700, Washington, DC 20005
- Calling OPC at (202) 727-3838
- Calling the OPC 24-hour, toll-free hotline at 866-588-0569
- Visiting OPC’s website, <http://policecomplaints.dc.gov>

» OPC complaint forms can be submitted:

- In person or by mail to the address above
- By fax to (202) 727-9182
- By dropping forms off at any MPDC district station

» To file a complaint with the MPD, you may:

- Visit any MPD District station or facility
- Call (202) 727-4385 or the 24-hour hotline at 800-298-4006
- Visit MPD’s website at mpdc.dc.gov
- Email the Internal Affairs Bureau (IAB) at citizen.complaints@dc.gov
- Call the IAB TTY number at (202) 898-1454
- Submit your complaint in person at any MPD facility or by mail to: Internal Affairs Division, Metropolitan Police Department, #6 DC Village Lane, SW, Building 1-A, Washington, DC 20032
- Fax your complaint to (202) 727-5116

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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