



**** MEDIA RELEASE ****

BIG LAKE POLICE DEPARTMENT



790 Minnesota Ave, Big Lake MN, 55309

Incident Number: N/A

Date/Time: 3/27/2016

PEDESTRIAN LAWS AND SAFETY TIPS

Crossing the road remains a dangerous activity in Minnesota. During the past decade, the number of pedestrian deaths and injuries have remained constant, while other traffic deaths have been on the decline. Last year, there were 40 pedestrian deaths statewide, matching the 2011 count—and each year more than one-quarter of the pedestrian deaths tested at 0.08 alcohol-concentration.

“Drivers should scan the road and sidewalks ahead for pedestrians and must stop for those crossing at marked crosswalks or intersections that don’t have a traffic control device,” says Lt. Sam Olson. “Pedestrians need to watch for traffic from all directions as they cross, including while in a crosswalk — white painted lines don’t protect you from distracted motorists.”

Minnesota law states pedestrians must obey traffic control devices. When no traffic control device is present, motorists must stop for crossing pedestrians within a marked crosswalk or at an intersection with no marked crosswalk. Pedestrians also should walk on the left side of the roadway facing oncoming traffic, when possible. This practice allows for pedestrians to better react in the case of motorists swerving off the road or not paying attention.

Motorists Safety Tips

- Drive at safe speeds and drive attentively — scan the road and sides of the road ahead for pedestrians.
- Stop for crossing pedestrians at every intersection, even those without crosswalks or stop lights.
- Before making a turn, look in all directions for pedestrians.
- Leave plenty of room between you and the pedestrian when stopping.
- Watch for people in wheelchairs and motorized carts who may be below eye level.
- Never pass or drive around a vehicle that is stopped for pedestrians.

Pedestrian Safety Tips

- Cross streets at marked crosswalks or intersections; don’t cross mid block.
- Obey all traffic signals.
- Don't solely rely on traffic signals; look for vehicles before crossing.
- Make eye contact with drivers and ensure they see you and will stop.

- Watch for turning and passing vehicles.
- Stand clear of buses, hedges, parked cars or other obstacles before crossing.
- Cross in a well-lit area at night.
- Wear bright-colored clothing and reflective material.

Pedestrian safety education and enforcement is a component of the state's *Toward Zero Death (TZD)* initiative. A primary vision of the *TZD* program is to create a safe driving culture in Minnesota in which motorists support a goal of zero road fatalities by practicing and promoting safe and smart driving behavior. *TZD* focuses on the application of four strategic areas to reduce crashes — education, enforcement, engineering and emergency trauma response.

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