



October is National Pedestrian Safety Awareness Month

PUTTING THE FOCUS ON PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) reports there were 6,283 pedestrian deaths in 2018 -- more than a 3% increase over the previous year and the most since 1990. It's why NHTSA has proclaimed October as the first National Pedestrian Safety Awareness Month.

The National Road Safety Foundation, which has been working to make our roads safer for everyone for nearly 60 years, is joining the effort to call attention to this growing public safety risk.

"We are all pedestrians at some point, even those who drive everywhere and only walk from the car to the store," said Michelle Anderson, director of operations at The National Road Safety Foundation (NRSF). "Pedestrian safety is an issue for all of us."

NHTSA and the NRSF offer ten tips to walk safely, as well as several tips for drivers to help protect pedestrians.

10 Walking Safety Tips

1. Be predictable. Follow the rules of the road and obey signs and signals.
2. Walk on sidewalks whenever they are available.
3. If there is no sidewalk, walk facing traffic and as far from traffic as possible.
4. Keep alert at all times; don't be distracted by electronic devices that take your eyes and ears off your surroundings.
5. Whenever possible, cross streets at crosswalks or intersections, where drivers expect pedestrians. Look for cars in all directions, including those making turns.
6. If a crosswalk or intersection is not available, locate a well-lit area where you have the best view of traffic. Wait for a gap in traffic that allows enough time to cross safely and continue watching for traffic as you cross.
7. Never assume a driver sees you. Make eye contact with drivers as they approach to make sure you are seen.
8. Be visible at all times. Wear bright clothing during the day, and wear reflective materials or use a flashlight at night.
9. Watch for cars entering or exiting driveways, or backing up in parking lots.
10. Avoid alcohol and drugs when walking; they impair your abilities and your judgment.

10 Driving Safety Tips

1. Look out for pedestrians everywhere and at all times. Safety is a shared responsibility.
2. Use extra caution when driving in hard-to-see conditions, such as nighttime or bad weather.
3. Slow down and be prepared to stop when turning or otherwise entering a crosswalk.
4. Yield to pedestrians in crosswalks and stop well back from the cross-walk to give other vehicles an opportunity to see the crossing pedestrians so they can stop too.
5. Never pass vehicles stopped at a crosswalk. There may be people crossing that you can't see.
6. Never drive under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.
7. Follow the speed limit, especially around people on the street.
8. Follow slower speed limits in school zones and in neighborhoods where children are present and obey stop signals of a stopped school bus.
9. Be extra cautious when backing up—pedestrians can move into your path.
10. Allow extra time for older pedestrians in a crosswalk. Have patience.

“Safety on the road is a shared responsibility,” said Michelle Anderson of the NRSF. “Be alert, be patient and be courteous.”

The National Road Safety Foundation, Inc. is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization that for nearly 60 years has been dedicated to reducing crashes, deaths and injuries on our nation's highways by promoting safe driving habits through greater public awareness.

NRSF produces educational programs for broadcast and for use in safety, educational and enforcement programs by police, teachers, traffic safety agencies, healthcare professionals, youth advocacy groups and other grass-roots related agencies, as well as federal, state and local government agencies. NRSF programs, which are free, address distracted driving, speed and aggression, impaired driving, drowsy driving, driver proficiency and pedestrian safety. The Foundation works with youth advocacy groups and sponsors contests to engage teens in promoting safe driving to their peers and in their communities. For information or to download free programs, visit www.nrsf.org or www.teenlane.org.