

# Waunakee Police Department

## Newsletter

### September 2014



## Texting While Driving

Last month we discussed the dangers of cell phone conversations and the affect it has on a driver's ability to multitask. A Newsletter reader shared an experience where her vehicle was totaled due to the driver of the other vehicle texting while driving. She asked for some information on texting while driving in the September issue.

1. Texting while driving is now the leading cause of death among teenagers – surpassing drinking and driving, according to a study by Cohen Children's Medical Center.
2. More than 3,000 teens die each year in crashes caused by texting while driving
3. More than 50 percent of teens admit to texting while driving
4. A Virginia Tech study showed drivers are 23 times more likely to be in an accident while texting
5. 5 seconds is the minimal amount of attention that a driver who texts takes away from the road. If traveling at 55 mph, this equals driving the length of a football field without looking at the road.
6. According to AT&T's Teen Driver Survey, 97% of teens agree that texting while driving is dangerous, yet 43% do it anyway
7. 9 in 10 teens expect a reply to a text or email within five minutes or less, which puts pressure on them to respond while driving

Wisconsin State Statute 346.89 makes it illegal to drive any motor vehicle while composing or sending an electronic text message or an electronic mail message. If cited in Waunakee, a driver could face a fine of \$111.40 and 4 demerit points off your driver's license.

For more information visit the below websites:

<http://safety.trw.com/texting-while-driving-now-leading-cause-of-us-teen-deaths/0710/>

<https://beta.dosomething.org/facts/11-fact-about-texting-and-driving>

<http://www.fcc.gov/guides/texting-while-driving>

# School Starts September 2nd

## Drivers must be extra cautious when school starts

It is that time of year again. The kids will be heading back to school! The morning and afternoon traffic will be increasing. Please pay attention to pedestrians and watch your speeds in and around schools zones.



State law requires drivers to yield to pedestrians:

- Who have started crossing an intersection or crosswalk on a walk signal or on a green light if there's no walk signal.
- Who are crossing the road within a marked or unmarked crosswalk at an intersection where there are no traffic lights or control signals.
- When a vehicle is crossing a sidewalk or entering an alley or driveway.

In addition, drivers may not legally overtake and pass any vehicle that has stopped for pedestrians at an intersection or crosswalk.

Drivers who fail to yield the right of way to pedestrians who are legally crossing roadways in the Village of Waunakee may be issued citations in amounts ranging from \$98.80 to \$250.00 (depending on the violation) and 3-4 demerit points.



## Vehicles must stop for adult school crossing guard

Every operator of a motor vehicle approaching a school crossing which is controlled by an adult school crossing guard shall follow the directions of the crossing guard. If directed by the school crossing guard to stop, the driver must stop the vehicle not less than 10 feet or more than 30 feet from the school crossing and remain stopped until directed by the crossing guard to proceed.

A vehicle owner can be cited when the driver of a vehicle fails to stop for the adult school crossing guard. A law enforcement officer need not witness this violation if the adult school crossing guard reports it to the law enforcement agency within 24 hours. If the violation occurred in Waunakee the forfeiture amount is \$111.40 and 3 demerit points.



## **Drivers must stop on the street or highway 20 feet or more from any school bus that has stopped and is flashing red warning lights.**

- This applies both to vehicles approaching from the rear and from the opposing lanes.
- All lanes of traffic must stop for the school bus, except in opposing lanes if the highway is divided with a center median.
- No vehicle may proceed until the bus resumes motion and has turned off the red warning lights.

A vehicle owner can be cited when the driver of a car passes a school bus illegally. A law enforcement officer need not witness this violation if the school bus driver reports it to the law enforcement agency within 24 hours. If the violation occurs in Waunakee the forfeiture is \$250.00 and 4 demerit points.



## **Students biking to school**

When drivers are passing bicycles in the roadway traveling in the same direction, they must leave a safe distance of no less than 3-feet of clearance and must maintain that clearance until they have safely passed the bicycle.

## **September is National Preparedness Month.**

Across the United States, workplaces and communities will promote emergency preparedness. You can join the effort by following four steps:

### **Get an Emergency Kit**

An emergency kit includes the basics for survival: fresh water, food, clean air and warmth. You should have enough supplies to maintain your family's comfort for at least three days or throughout an extended power outage.

### **Make an Emergency Plan**

Make plans with your family and friends in case you're not together during an emergency. Discuss how you'll contact each other, where you'll meet and what you'll do in different situations. Ask about planning at your workplace and your child's school or daycare center.

### **Be Informed**

Being prepared means staying informed. Check all types of media – Web sites, newspapers, radio, TV,

mobile and land phones – for global, national and local information. During an emergency, your local Emergency Management or Emergency Services office will give you information on such things as open shelters and evacuation orders.

### **Get Involved**

Look into taking first aid. Get emergency response training and learn how to participate in community exercises, and volunteer to support your community's first responders.

## Watch out for Deer



The end of September kicks off a flurry of deer activity. Please make sure you watch for deer when driving especially during the early morning and late evening. Hwy 113, Woodland Drive and Arboretum Drive are roads where deer are commonly seen in Waunakee.

Motor vehicle-deer crashes continue to be cause for concern in highway safety. Deer are the third most commonly struck object in Wisconsin (behind striking another vehicle and striking a fixed object). There were 18,313 vehicle vs deer crashes reported to Law Enforcement in 2013. In 2012, 14 people died in 14 fatal motor vehicle-deer crashes. In addition, 81 people suffered incapacitating injuries; less serious injuries totaled 210; Dane County had the second most motor vehicle-deer crashes reported in 2013 with 786.



## The Squad Car

Over the last fifteen years we have seen some major changes to our patrol squads. The squad car has turned into an office. The goal is to keep the officers on the road patrolling the streets. The following are items inside the squad that help us stay on patrol.

**Laptop style computer:** Wireless networks have changed how computers can be used in squad cars. We can check DOT information for drivers and vehicles, create reports, search police/ public databases, obtain driver's license photos, obtain maps and the list goes on. The computer allows officers to access unlimited information and saves time. Officers no longer need to go into the police department or call dispatchers to access information.

**Cell Phone:** You may have seen officers pulled over to the side of the road on a phone. Officers can take complaints from citizens and make follow-up contacts with citizens without having to return to the Police Department.

**Dash Cameras:** We have cameras with audio and video which capture our traffic stops and emergency responses. Officers can review the camera systems inside the squad car to help complete reports.

**Squad Radio:** Dane Co is currently in the process of updating our radio systems. The goal is to allow better communication between Police, Fire and EMS.

## Facebook

Please “like” our Waunakee Police Department Facebook page. We provide information regarding local events, safety tips and press releases for major incidents. You can also send us your questions through private messages and tips on any recent crimes that have taken place.

Questions can be sent to [newsletter@waunakeepd.org](mailto:newsletter@waunakeepd.org). Questions submitted may be featured in future newsletters. The person submitting the question will not be identified.