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Environmental Health and Safety Committee

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A newsletter for and about safety at UW Oshkosh

Pedestrian Safety Edition

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome back all students, faculty and staff for the 2012-2013 school year. It is important to remember that with school back in session the level of pedestrian traffic has significantly increased on campus along with motor vehicle traffic on the roadways (especially in the area of Sage Hall). In order to move about campus it may be necessary to cross lanes of traffic to arrive at your destination. Below, I have included some Traffic Safety Information from the State of Wisconsin for your review. Please pay particular attention to the rules of the road for both vehicles and pedestrians. This information is especially important for High Avenue and Algoma Boulevard which are both two lane, one way roads that experience significant motor vehicle traffic along with pedestrian crossings. In addition to the rules of the road, there are also some tips to keep you safe during the course of the year. Please stay safe and enjoy the school year!

Chief Joe LeMire
UW Oshkosh Police Department

SPECIAL NOTE #1: Consistent with State Statute 346.23(1), *Drivers have the right of way at intersections controlled by a traffic signal when that signal is green. The pedestrian has the right of way if the signal is green or a "walk" signal is displayed for their direction of travel.*



This is especially important in the area in front of Reeve Union. There have been instances where well intentioned drivers have stopped at a green light to allow pedestrians to cross. Although well intentioned, it is a dangerous practice and contrary to the law. The other lane of traffic still has the green signal and this may cause a pedestrian/vehicle accident. Remember: at traffic light controlled intersections the light will determine the right of way for pedestrians and vehicles. Please be safe!

SPECIAL NOTE #2: State Statute 346.25, Crossing at place other than crosswalk. *Every pedestrian, bicyclist, or rider of an electric personal assistive mo-*

bility device crossing a roadway at any point other than within a marked or unmarked crosswalk shall yield the right-of-way to all vehicles upon the roadway.

This point is important for drivers of vehicles that stop and allow pedestrians to cross at spots other than a cross walk or intersection. Since it is not a crosswalk or intersection the driver in the other lane may not know why you are stopping and may continue within in their lane causing a dangerous situation for the pedestrian who is mandated to "yield" to the vehicle.

SPECIAL NOTE #3: State Statute requires that drivers yield to pedestrians

that are **in the crosswalk** or have **started crossing** at a crosswalk or intersection. This does not necessarily mean that vehicles should stop for every person waiting at the curb or approaching the curb at a crosswalk or intersection. However, if a vehicle does stop and the pedestrian(s) begin to cross then it is mandated that both lanes of traffic stop and yield to those pedestrians.

BEST PRACTICES:

Do not stop at green lights to allow pedestrians to cross. Allow the traffic signal to control all directions of travel.

Do not stop in places that are not intersections or crosswalks to allow pedestrians to cross. Although it appears courteous and convenient it creates a dangerous scenario.

Drive the speed limit or below (depending on conditions) and be cautious at crosswalks and intersections.

Pay attention to the vehicles in the other lane in the event they are stopping for pedestrians that may be out of your view.

CROSS WALK ISSUES

WISCONSIN TRAFFIC SAFETY INFORMATION

Rules and pointers for pedestrians and drivers

The most important safety tip to reduce pedestrian injuries and fatalities is to pay attention. You can significantly reduce your chances of being in a collision with a motor vehicle by obeying traffic rules and being aware of dangers posed by cars in your vicinity. Make eye contact with drivers if possible and make sure that they can see you.

Both drivers and pedestrians have certain safety responsibilities that depend on both circumstances and common sense.

Drivers must:

Yield to pedestrians when crossing a sidewalk or entering an alley or driveway (ss346.18(7)(b))

Yield to pedestrians who have started crossing at an intersection or crosswalk on a "walk" signal or a green light (if there is no walk signal) (ss346.23(1))

Yield to pedestrians who are crossing the highway within a marked or unmarked crosswalk at an intersection where there are no traffic lights or control signals (ss346.24(1))

Not overtake and pass any vehicle that stops at an intersection or crosswalk to permit a pedestrian or bicyclist to cross the roadway safely (ss346.24(3))

Pedestrians must:

Yield to drivers when crossing a road where there is no intersection or crosswalk or where the pedestrian does not have a green or "walk" signal and where vehicles have a green signal (ss346.25))

Not suddenly move into the path of a closely approaching vehicle that does not have sufficient time to yield for a pedestrian (ss346.24(2))

Walk on and along the left side of a highway when not walking on a sidewalk (ss346.28(1)).

Note: This law does not apply to bicycles. Bicycles operate under the same laws as other legal vehicles on the road and should always stay on the right side of the road. (ss346.80(2)(a))

Pedestrian pointers to keep in mind:

Pay attention

A recent report from the Federal Bureau of Transportation Safety concluded that the pedestrian was solely at fault in 43% of car-pedestrian collisions and that both were at fault in 13% of collisions. You can significantly reduce your chances of death or injury by obeying traffic rules and being aware of dangers posed by cars in your vicinity. For example: 58% of pedestrian-car crashes occur while the pedestrian was crossing the street. Pay close attention to cars in your vicinity. Make eye contact with drivers if possible.

Take extra care at night and at dusk

Walking at night increases your chances of death or injury. Drivers cannot avoid what they can't see. When walking at night, wear retro-reflective outdoor clothing or shoes or lights to make you more visible. Avoid wearing dark clothing. Most importantly, don't assume that drivers can see you. Always walk on the left hand side of the road or on the sidewalk. This way, motorists can see you and will not be approaching you from behind.

Have a safety concern?

If you see or hear of a potential safety issue, report it to any member of the Environmental Health and Safety committee.

Our job is to help ensure that we maintain a safe and healthy workplace for employees and students.