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PennDOT, Health Department Urge Safety as Students Head Back to School

Share the Road, Be Aware

PITTSBURGH - As the upcoming school year begins, PennDOT urges motorists to be on the lookout for students and school buses while also familiarizing themselves with Pennsylvania's school bus stopping law.

Under Pennsylvania state law, motorists traveling in all directions whom are approaching a school bus with its red lights flashing and stop arm extended, are required to come to a complete stop at least 10 feet away from the bus.

According to PennDOT data, last year in Allegheny County there were 100 crashes involving a school bus. The majority of these crashes were a result of aggressive and distracted driving behaviors. If convicted of violating the school bus stopping law, motorists face a \$250 fine, 60-day license suspension, and five points on their driving record. Motorists are encouraged to obey this law in order to prevent potentially devastating incidents and penalties from citations.

Motorists should also be aware of pedestrians in school zones and nearby crosswalks. There were 77 crashes involving a pedestrian under the age of 18 last year the county. Motorists are required to slow down to the posted speed limit of 15 mph in school zones. Violators face a fine and three points on their driving record.

Alicia Dosh-Eller, Coordinator of the Allegheny County Health Department's Traffic Safety Education Project, says, "Drivers should be especially alert in school zones and limit distractions when behind

the wheel, including cell phones, music, and conversation. Allow extra time as these are often targeted enforcement areas designed to keep commuting children safe.”

PennDOT District 11 and the Allegheny County Health Department Traffic Safety Education Project offer a free “Road Rules” presentation to elementary and middle schools in Allegheny, Beaver, and Lawrence counties. To schedule a presentation, contact Alicia Dosh-Eller at 412-247-7945 or by visiting www.achd.net/injury.

For more information on Pennsylvania’s school-bus stopping law, school-bus safety tips and programs, visit www.justdrivepa.org or [ACHD's Back-to-School page](#).

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