

**West Traffic Division
Captain's Message
August 2016**

Greetings everyone! I am very enthusiastic about supporting our personnel in their efforts to educate the public and provide for the safe and efficient flow of traffic within the communities we serve. Our goal is to help keep you and your loved ones safe. With that in mind, the following message is a Summer Safety Tip.

Weather Safety Caution

It is illegal in many States for a driver to leave a child unattended in a vehicle while he or she goes into a store to shop, even if only for a few minutes. If a driver or parent forgets and leaves a child alone inside a vehicle, tragedy can quickly occur. Within the first 10 minutes, the inside temperature of a vehicle can rise 20 degrees-even with the windows rolled down a couple inches. Cooler outdoor temperatures in the 60 degree range can rapidly rise well above 110° Fahrenheit inside a car. Children have died in hot cars after climbing into an unlocked vehicle without an adult's knowledge. They can become confused by the door mechanisms or become trapped in the trunk and unable to get out before heatstroke occurs. Children's bodies absorb more heat on a hot day than an adult's and children are less able to lower their body heat by sweating. This causes a child's body temperature to rise rapidly. Children's bodies overheat easily, and when left in a hot vehicle, a young child's body temperature may increase three to five times as fast as an adult's. High body temperatures can cause permanent injury or death, and infants and children under four years of age are among those at greatest risk for heat-related illness.

Extreme Heat Dangers

Symptoms of heatstroke: Warning signs vary but can include: red, hot, and dry or moist skin, a strong rapid pulse or a slow weak pulse, lack of sweating, a throbbing headache, nausea, confusion, dizziness, grumpiness or odd behavior.

“Kaitlyn’s Law” was enacted in 2002 following the heat-related death of six-month-old Kaitlyn Marie Russell, who was left unattended in a parked vehicle on a hot summer day. The law prohibits anyone from leaving a child six years of age or younger unattended in a motor vehicle without proper supervision.

If you see a child alone in a vehicle, call the police. If the child is in distress due to heat, get them out as soon as possible and cool them down quickly. Call 911 or your local emergency number immediately.

Safety Tips:

- Never leave a child unattended in a vehicle.
- Never leave infants or children in a parked vehicle, even if the windows are partially open.
- Always check the front and rear of the vehicle to ensure no child is inside before locking the doors and walking away.
- If your spouse or another caretaker usually drops your children off at childcare or school, but you are dropping your child off instead, have them call you to make sure your child arrived safely according to plans.
- Ask your childcare provider to call you if your child does not show up for childcare or school.

- Always lock vehicle doors and trunks and keep keys out of children's reach. If a child is missing, check the vehicle first, including all places a child could hide in the front and rear seats and in the trunk.
- Do not let children play in an unattended vehicle.
- Teach children that vehicles are not play areas.

You can remind yourself and/or others that a child is in the vehicle in various ways:

- You can place a note where you will see it before you leave the vehicle to remind you that a child is inside;
- You can leave your purse, briefcase, or something else you need in the back seat so that you will have to check the back seat before you leave the vehicle; or
- You can place an object in the child's car seat, such as a stuffed toy, then when the child is buckled in, place the object where the driver will notice it when he or she is leaving the vehicle.

Vehicles heat up very quickly. If the outside temperature is in the low 80s° Fahrenheit, even with a window rolled down two inches, the temperature inside a vehicle can reach deadly levels in only 10 minutes.

The combined enforcement efforts of all West Traffic Division (WTD) officers serve to educate the public, decrease the incidence of crime, and maintain focus on impacting the number of tragic collisions with strategic enforcement. Our officers will be assigned to special details in support of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) special events being held during the month of August. When each of these events is in progress, WTD personnel will conduct additional education of the public and enforcement of the laws in regards to the theme of each event. Summertime events include, August is *Back to School Safety Month*, for which the Primary Message is: "*Walk, Bike, and Ride to School Safely!*" "*Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over*" National Enforcement Crackdown is August 17 through September 5. For more information please access the NHTSA calendar via the Internet at: <http://www.nhtsa.gov>.

In addition to the enforcement efforts of all of the officers assigned to WTD, a special unit of officers is assigned to the Driving Under Influence (DUI) Task Force. The DUI Task Force's primary function is the direct enforcement of laws prohibiting driving under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.

The Community Traffic Services Unit (CTSU) is another specialized unit operating within WTD that conducts specialized traffic enforcement and education, and works towards resolving community traffic concerns. If you have any traffic safety concerns in a particular area, you may contact CTSU at (213) 473-0215, or West Traffic Division at (213) 473-0222, to voice your concerns. Further information regarding CTSU, including child safety seat installations and inspections, please access the WTD Webpage at http://www.lapdonline.org/west_traffic. You can also schedule an appointment (Wednesdays only) by calling (213) 473-0543.

The areas within Operations-West Bureau and WTD are Hollywood, Wilshire, West Los Angeles, Pacific, and Olympic Areas. Any of the geographical areas' WebPages can also be accessed via <http://www.LAPDonline.org>. Please check the Crime Prevention Circular for the areas that are of particular interest to you.

Traffic Tips

- * **Look both ways twice before crossing the street.**
- * **Always wear your seatbelt.**
- * **Don't drink and drive.**
- * **Don't use handheld devices such as cell phones, MP3 players & GPS units while driving.**
- * **Please slow down. Speed kills.**

Captain Valencia Thomas
Commanding Officer
West Traffic Division