

**West Traffic Division
Captain's Message**

MARCH 2018

Older Pedestrian and Driver Safety

As people age, their abilities change. West Traffic Division's (WTD) mission with respect to older drivers and pedestrians is to reduce traffic-related injuries and fatalities and keep them safely mobile through public education and the enforcement of traffic laws. One of the goals of WTD officers is to help aging individuals recognize their changing abilities and adapt their transportation practices accordingly. Aging pedestrians often experience changes in their mobility and ability to cross roadways safely. The following are a few basic rules to remember.

- Stop and look both ways TWICE before crossing a street.
- Make eye contact with drivers before you step off the curb.
- At intersections, watch out for vehicles that are turning from another direction toward you.
- Watch out for vehicles entering and exiting driveways.
- Do not cross outside pedestrian crosswalks.

The following California Vehicle Code (CVC) sections should be noted with regard to pedestrian safety:

21456(a) CVC – Walk, Wait, or Don't Walk

A pedestrian facing a "WALK" signal may proceed across the roadway in the direction of the signal, but shall yield the right-of-way to vehicles lawfully within the intersection at the time that signal is first shown.

(b) No pedestrian shall start to cross the roadway in the direction of the signal while the "DON'T WALK" or "WAIT" or "Upraised Hand" symbol is showing.

21950(a) CVC – Right-of-Way at Crosswalks

The driver of a vehicle shall yield the right-of-way to a pedestrian crossing the roadway within any marked crosswalk OR within any UNMARKED crosswalk at an intersection.

21954(a) CVC – Pedestrians Outside Crosswalk

Every pedestrian upon a roadway, except those traveling within a marked or unmarked crosswalk at an intersection, shall yield the right-of-way to all vehicles in the roadway that are near enough to constitute an immediate hazard.

21955 CVC – Crossing Between Controlled Intersections

Pedestrians shall not cross the roadway at any place between adjacent intersections controlled by traffic control signal devices or police officers, except within a crosswalk.

When drivers of any age make unsafe choices the results can be disastrous. An aging person's physician, health-care provider, friends, family, and licensing officials can be vitally important in

assisting older persons with selecting safer transportation options. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) offers website links to various information sites. A few of the sites available for review are:

- Promoting Older Driver Safety;
- Driver Fitness Medical Guidelines;
- Adapting Motor Vehicles for Older Drivers;
- Active Aging Programs; and,
- Driving Transitions Education, which includes practice exercises.

On **Saint Patrick's Day, March 17**, NHTSA's "*Buzzed Driving is Drunk Driving*" will be available on Twitter Chat under "Buzzed Driving." For too many Americans, St. Patrick's Day has ended in tragedy due to drunk drivers getting behind the wheel. On St. Patrick's Day from 2009 to 2013, there were a total of 276 lives lost in drunk-driving crashes. The apprehension of drivers operating vehicles while under influence of drugs or alcohol before they are involved in a collision is always a priority. The NHTSA website has a great deal of additional information and releases various reports containing information regarding different types of traffic collisions, which can be obtained by calling (202) 366-9550 or via the Internet at: <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov>

The Community Traffic Services Unit (CTSU) is one of WTD's specialized units, which works to resolve particular community concerns, including the installation of child safety seats. Child safety seats are available and can be properly installed by our certified CTSU officers by contacting (213) 473-0215. If you have traffic safety concerns in a particular area, you may contact CTSU or West Traffic Division at (213) 473-0222 to voice your concerns. Also, please see CTSU's Web Page listed under the West Traffic Division Web Page.

The areas within Operations-West Bureau and West Traffic Division are Hollywood Area, Wilshire Area, West Los Angeles Area, Pacific Area, and Olympic Area. Excessive speed, red light, unsafe left turns, and driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs are the primary causes of serious and fatal traffic collisions in these areas. Our WTD Traffic Enforcement and Collision Investigation officers are regularly patrolling these streets, as are the Area patrol officers to decrease traffic collision related injuries and deaths. Any of the geographical areas' Web Pages can be accessed via LAPDOnline. Please check the Crime Prevention Circular for the areas that are of particular interest to you.

Captain Gary Walters
Commanding Officer
West Traffic Division

Traffic Tips

- * **ALWAYS wear your seatbelt and be sure your passengers, especially children, are properly secured.**
- * **Don't drink and drive.**
- * **Don't text and drive.**
- * **Look both ways TWICE before crossing the street.**
- * **Please slow down. Speed kills.**
- * **Pull over safely to the side of the road if you need to use your cell phone, mp3, or GPS.**