

PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MORRISTOWN LAUNCHES **STREET SMART** PEDESTRIAN SAFETY CAMPAIGN

Street Smart NJ targets speed, distraction and safety awareness for motorists and pedestrians

(Morristown, NJ)- After completing two successful campaigns in 2016 and 2017, the Town of Morristown kicked off another Street Smart Campaign that will run through the month of May 2019. Street Smart is a statewide public awareness campaign that combines educational outreach and high-visibility law enforcement to change behaviors as they relate to pedestrian safety. The town of Morristown, the Morristown Police Department, TransOptions, county representatives and other advocates launched the campaign on Monday May 6, 2019. This is the third Street Smart campaign for Morristown.

"Thank you to our police department, and TransOptions for helping Morristown take active steps to keep our roadways safe," said Timothy Dougherty, Mayor of Morristown. "We know this program will once again have a positive impact on pedestrian safety and we look forward to seeing positive behavior changes from pedestrians and motorists while traveling through Morristown."

"Striking a balance between pedestrians walking through town, and effectively moving vehicle traffic alongside them, creates one of the biggest challenges for us at the Morristown Bureau of Police," said Sgt. Brian LaBarre, Morristown Police Department. "With the Street Smart campaign, we can devote separate enforcement details to pedestrian issues while educating the community as to the proper way to navigate as a pedestrian or a driver- a win for everyone."

Street Smart's mission is to focus on safe travel roles and responsibilities to both pedestrians and motorists alike. Since its creation in 2013, more than 80 communities have participated in Street Smart NJ. Campaign signs are displayed on tip cards, posters, banners and street signs throughout the community and in local businesses during the campaign as a visual reminder for drivers and pedestrians.

TransOptions, a non-profit transportation organization, is leading the Street Smart effort in Morristown, after successfully completing similar campaigns across northwestern New Jersey.

"We hope that with each and every Street Smart campaign we get one step closer to zero fatalities on our roadways," said TransOptions President Dan Callas. "TransOptions applauds Morristown for its continuous focus on pedestrian safety and we are committed to helping them in these efforts."

"Pedestrians and motorists are jointly responsible for maintaining safe roads," said Laura Cerutti, TransOptions' Street Smart project manager. "TransOptions' role is to analyze pedestrian and driver behavior, conduct outreach and deliver the education portion of the campaign."

Between 2015 and 2017 there were 74 crashes involving pedestrians in Morristown. In 2017, a pedestrian was struck an average of every 15 days in Morristown. 39 percent of pedestrian-involved crashes were attributed to drivers failing to yield to pedestrians. Also, 34 percent of pedestrians struck were in a marked crosswalk at the time of the crash. That's according to data from the New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety and Rutgers Center for Advanced Infrastructure and Transportation (CAIT).

LAWS FOR MOTORISTS AROUND PEDESTRIANS

- Drivers must stop and stay stopped to allow people to cross at marked crosswalks and intersections, including when turning. (39:4-36.a. (1))
- Whenever any vehicle is stopped for someone crossing the road, the driver of any other vehicle approaching from the rear shall not pass the stopped vehicle. (39:4-36.a. (3))
- A person crossing or starting to cross an intersection on a walk or green signal, but who is still within the crosswalk when the signal changes, has the right of way until they finish crossing. (39:4-32.c.)
- A driver shall exercise due care for the safety of any pedestrian upon a roadway. (39:4-32.g.; 39:4-36.a. (5))
- In the event of a collision between a vehicle and a person crossing at an intersection, there shall be a permissive inference that the driver did not exercise due care for the safety of the pedestrian. (39:4-32.h.; 39:4-36.d.)

Violations of the above laws carry a \$200 fine, two motor vehicle points and up to 15 days of community service. If the violation results in serious bodily injury to a person crossing, drivers can face fines of more than \$500, up to 25 days in jail and license suspension of up to six months.

LAWS FOR PEDESTRIANS

- No pedestrian shall leave a curb or other place of safety and walk or run into the path of a vehicle which is so close that it is impossible for the driver to yield or stop. (39:4-32.a; 39:4-36.a. (2))
- Where traffic is not controlled and directed either by a police officer or a traffic control signal, people should cross in a marked crosswalk, or, in the absence of a marked crosswalk, and where not otherwise prohibited, at right angles to the roadway. (39:4-34)
- No person shall cross a roadway against the stop or red signal at a crosswalk whether marked or unmarked, unless otherwise specifically directed by a police officer or traffic control device. (39:4-32.a.)
- Every person upon a roadway at any point other than within a marked crosswalk or within an unmarked crosswalk at an intersection, shall yield the right-of-way to all vehicles. (39:4-36.a. (4))

Violation of the above laws carries a \$54 fine.

Pedestrian safety is an ongoing challenge in New Jersey. The Federal Highway Administration has designated New Jersey a “focus” state and Newark a “focus” city due to their high rates of pedestrian injuries and fatalities. In 2018, there were 566 fatalities caused by crashes. This includes 177 pedestrians, 278 drivers, 95 passengers and 16 cyclists, (SOURCE: NJSP). From 2014 through 2018, 869 pedestrians were killed on the state’s roads. That translates into one death every 2 days.

On a national level, an estimated 85,000 pedestrians were injured in crashes in the U.S in 2016. On average, a pedestrian was injured every two hours and killed every eight minutes in traffic crashes. Additionally, 70 percent of the pedestrian fatalities in 2016 occurred at non-intersections.

For more information on Street Smart, visit TransOptions.org/street-smart, or call TransOptions at (973) 267-7600. A non-profit organization, TransOptions is the transportation management association for northwest New Jersey that delivers programs to improve mobility, the environment and overall quality of life of all residents and commuters.

To learn more, visit TransOptions.org/street-smart, or <http://bestreetsmartnj.org/>

Other Sources: <http://www.njsp.org/info/fatalacc/index.shtml>
<https://cait.rutgers.edu/>

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