



Minnesota Department of Transportation
395 John Ireland Boulevard
Saint Paul, MN 55155

News Release

Oct. 3, 2016

Fall is deadliest time for pedestrians

MnDOT urges motorist, pedestrian safety

ST. PAUL, Minn. – As the days get shorter and the nights longer this time of year, motorists and pedestrians should watch out for one another, according to the Minnesota Department of Transportation. The fall months are the deadliest months for pedestrians.

So far this year, 37 pedestrians were killed. In 2015, 41 pedestrians were killed and 904 were injured, compared to 17 deaths and 837 injuries in 2014.

“With more hours of darkness in the fall, pedestrians are more difficult to see,” said Jay Hietpas, MnDOT state traffic engineer. “Motorists and pedestrians are equally at fault when we look at our crash data. That means that both groups need to know and obey the laws.”

The crosswalk law includes these highlights:

- Motorists should stop for crossing pedestrians at marked crosswalks and at all intersections without crosswalks or stop lights.
- Pedestrians should obey traffic signs and signals at all intersections that have them.
- Vehicles stopped for pedestrians can proceed once the pedestrian has completely crossed the lane in front of the stopped vehicle.
- Pedestrians shouldn’t enter a crosswalk if a vehicle is approaching and it is impossible for the driver to stop. There is no defined distance that a pedestrian should abide by before entering the crosswalk; common sense should be used.
- When a vehicle is stopped at an intersection to allow pedestrians to cross, drivers of other vehicles approaching from the rear should not pass the stopped vehicle.

For the full crosswalk law, go to: www.mndot.gov/sharetheroad/ped/crosswalklaw.html.

Because the sun rises later and sets earlier, there are more pedestrians before and after daylight hours, increasing the risk of crashes. Children are going to or getting out of school or walking to their bus stop, and adults are walking to or from home or work.

About one-third of pedestrian crashes happen during the weekday rush hour driving time, defined as 6 to 9 a.m. and 3 to 6 p.m. One out of every four pedestrian fatal crashes occurred between the hours of 9 p.m. and 3 a.m.

Male pedestrians are more likely than females to be killed or injured. Males accounted for 68 percent of all pedestrian fatalities and 53 percent of all injuries in 2015. The most cited contributing factors to all pedestrian crashes is driver failure to yield right of way and driver distraction or inattention.

###

An Equal Opportunity Employer

