

Toward Zero Deaths In Minnesota AND Richfield

The Richfield Police Department has joined law enforcement agencies across the United States in their involvement with the "Toward Zero Deaths" program. The program's goal is to minimize fatal traffic crashes. Crashes on our nation's roadways have become a part of our everyday lives. People drive too fast, talk on cellular phones, eat and even read while driving. Over 40,000 people are killed in motor vehicle accidents in the United States every year. If 40,000 Americans were killed in airline crashes in one year, people would be in a state of panic and never fly again! Why should we accept such a staggering number of deaths in automobile crashes?

The key components in the Toward Zero Deaths program are:

Education – educate the public about the importance of safety restraint devices and the main contributing factors to crashes: 1) Driver inattention/Distraction 2) Failure to Yield 3) Following too Closely 4) Illegal or Unsafe Speed

Engineering – Roadway safety audits, infrastructure improvements, larger and more reflective signs, installation of median barriers, rumble strips and other warning devices.

Emergency Services - Fast, efficient emergency medical services are critical to reducing fatalities and serious injuries whenever a crash does occur. Prompt emergency service response is particularly important in rural Minnesota, where crash victims are far from medical facilities and crashes can go unnoticed until another vehicle passes by.

Enforcement - Increased enforcement of traffic laws and programs in Minnesota; such as Safe & Sober and NightCAP, which fund overtime for officers trying to reduce highly preventable, alcohol-related traffic deaths.

Driver behavior is a factor in 93 percent of our nation's road fatalities. As a result of that statistic, Minnesota is working hard to impact the behavioral and engineering aspects of road safety. In addition to the "four Es" enforcement, education, engineering and emergency management services to improve safety and reduce fatalities/serious injuries, changes to Minnesota law also are modifying driving behaviors, including:

- **Primary seatbelt legislation**, which requires drivers and passengers in all seating positions to be buckled up, effective June 9, 2009.
- **No texting while driving**, effective Aug. 1, 2008.
- **Blood alcohol content limit of .08**, effective Sept. 1, 2005.

Make safe driving a priority! Please discuss Toward Zero Deaths with all the drivers in your home. ■



Are Burglaries On The Rise?

Some sociologists are convinced that the high rate of unemployment is leading to an increase in theft and burglary. Research suggests that these types of crimes have been on the rise since early 2009.

Protect your home from burglary:

1. LOCK Doors and Windows
2. Fence in Your Yard
3. Install Motion Sensor Flood Lights
4. Neighbors, Neighbors, Neighbors - Never underestimate the power of a watchful eye.



Ask neighbors to keep a look out for any suspicious behavior around your home, as many criminals "case the joint" before they actually perform a burglary. **Call 911** if you see suspicious behavior! ■



EYE SPY

A Newsletter for Richfield Neighborhood Crime Watch Blocks

Spring 2010

This Newsletter is issued by the Richfield Public Safety Crime Prevention Unit
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Dave Franke, Crime Prevention Officer 612-861-9875



Top 6 Things Richfield Cops Want Us to Remember

Emergency Vehicles

Always pull over to the right and stop when an emergency vehicle with lights and/or siren is approaching from behind or in oncoming traffic. This is required by law and it makes it easier and safer for emergency personnel to maneuver through traffic when going on emergency runs. Please remember **NOT** to follow within 500 feet of an emergency vehicle that is traveling in response to an emergency.

Traffic Stops

First, remember to immediately pull over to the right and stop when an emergency vehicle is approaching. Do not get out of your car if you are stopped by the police. Keep your hands visible as a police officer approaches your vehicle. When approaching a police officer who is stopping (or has stopped) another vehicle, move your vehicle over at least one lane, if possible. (Please know that if an officer would like to conduct a traffic stop on a side street, he or she will direct you to do so.)

(Top Tips...continued on page 2)

Sign Up for Richfield Police Crime Alerts

and other City notifications



It's easy. Go to www.cityofrichfield.org > upper right corner under "**Connect.**" Enter your email address and click on "**GO.**" Then select the areas of interest from which you would like to receive an occasional email:

- General City News and Events
- Farmers Market
- Municipal Liquor Stores
- Recreational Services & Nature Center
- **Richfield Police Crime Alerts**
- Urban Wildland



Safety Day is June 15. It's a fun day, full of life-safety information for **children entering fourth grade**. The \$25 registration fee includes lunch, snacks, a

Safety Day T-shirt, and a pizza dinner for the participant and one parent, plus great gifts! Registration information and more details can be found at www.richconnect.com (barcode 5492) or call 612-861-9845. ■

(Top Tips...continued from page 1)

Driver's License/Identification/Insurance

Always carry picture identification with you. Do not drive if you do not have a valid Driver's License. (Remember you must have a valid insurance card in the vehicle.)



Snow Parking Ordinance

The City's snowplow crews need your cooperation to be able to plow streets quickly and efficiently so that driving is safer for everyone. Under City ordinance, a vehicle parked on a street after a snowfall of two inches or more may be issued a violation ticket and towed immediately at the owner's expense. Hopefully this can be avoided. The time used to tag and tow illegally parked vehicles and re-plow a street where a towed vehicle sat, is wasted time and money. Please speak with neighbors, landlords or friends to make arrangements for parking your vehicles off the street during and following snowfalls of two inches or more.

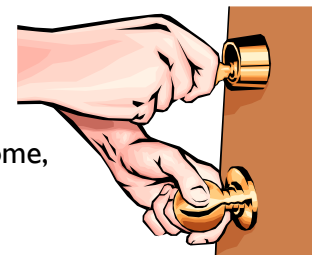
Using training learned in the classroom during exercises, CERT members assist others in their neighborhood or workplace following an event when professional responders need assistance or are not immediately available to help. CERT members are also encouraged to support emergency response agencies by taking a more active role in emergency preparedness projects in their community. **CERT philosophy** is based on the axiom, "Help yourself, help your family, help your neighbors, and help your community."

Purses left in Shopping Carts

Please **DO NOT** leave your purse or wallet in a shopping cart unattended. Metro area stores are seeing numerous thefts from purses. Consider using a belly bag to carry your wallet and coupons. If you carry a purse, keep it with you at all times. Carry it close to your body with the clasp or flap towards you. Carry only the amount of cash and credit cards that you need. Try to be aware of your surroundings and be cautious of strangers distracting you with questions. Consider shopping with a friend or family member.

A Lock Is Not A Lock Until It's LOCKED

It's simple. Locks do not work if you don't use them. **PLEASE** take the time to properly secure your home, apartment, garage and/or vehicle. ■



CERT

Richfield Public Safety has begun Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training for Richfield residents. The CERT Program educates community volunteers about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their city or neighborhood and trains them in basic disaster response skills.



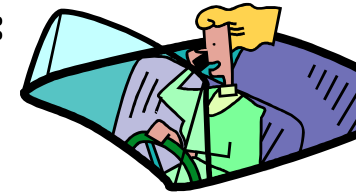
Mayor Goettel with CERT volunteers and Charlie O'Brien of Richfield PS

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Two CERT classes graduated in November/December 2009! Ongoing classes for 2010 for new CERT candidates are being scheduled. Photos of the training and graduating classes can be viewed at the Richfield CERT website; <http://Richfield.CERT-central.com>. Please visit the site for more information!

If you are interested in being trained as a CERT volunteer please download the CERT Application Form from www.cityofrichfield.org (click the CERT icon), complete it and return it to Lieutenant Jay Henthorne, Emergency Management Coordinator, at Richfield Public Safety, 6700 Portland Avenue, Richfield MN 55423. We look forward to training and working with you! A waiting list for applicants has been established for classes planned to be held in March and April of 2010! Reserve your spot by applying now! ■

Cell Phones: Friend or Foe on the Road?



Cell phones in cars, when properly used, can mean security when you're on the road. If you need directions, want to report a dangerous condition, or need Emergency Road Service (ERS), **a cell phone can be your best friend**. However, improper use of cell phones is a hazard. Phone calls made from the driver's seat contribute to collisions. It's easy to be distracted for a few seconds by dialing or by a heated conversation. And when you're going 60 miles per hour, in only three seconds you've travelled nearly the length of a football field.

According to NHTSA (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration), at any given moment of the day, 500,000 drivers of passenger vehicles are talking on handheld cell phones. This adds up to a lot of miles driven by people who are not giving their full attention to driving. And, handheld phones aren't the only culprits: The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety has found that use of hands-free phones also contributes to inattention. AAA recommends you not use your cell phone while driving. However, if you must call when behind the wheel:

- Recognize that driving requires your full attention.
- Before you get into the car, become familiar with the phone's features.
- Use the phone only if it's absolutely necessary.
- Use the phone only when and where it's safe to do so.
- Ask a passenger to place the call for you and to do the talking.
- Keep the call short.
- Tell the person at the other end that you're driving.
- Get off the phone as soon as possible—especially in traffic or bad weather.
- Don't combine a phone conversation with other distractions.
- Secure your phone so it doesn't become a projectile in a crash.

Stay Alive – Don't Text and Drive

Not only is texting while driving extremely dangerous but **it is illegal in Minnesota for anyone, regardless of age.** You can be pulled over and ticketed! ■



2010 U.S. Census



The Richfield Police Department advises people to be cooperative, **but cautious**. Information gathered from the census will be used to determine the number of seats each state occupies in the U.S. House of Representatives, as well as how much federal funding is received for infrastructure and services like: Hospitals, job training centers, schools, senior centers, bridges, tunnels and other public works projects, and emergency services.

If you do not want a Census Worker knocking on your door, simply complete the census questionnaire and mail it back promptly.

The 2010 Census will be one of the shortest and simplest in U.S. history. Ten basic questions including: Name, gender, age, date of birth, Hispanic origin, race, household relationship, and whether you own or rent your home.

For more information on the 2010 U.S. Census, visit www.2010.census.gov/2010census. ■