

The **2004** Pedestrian and **Bicycle Safety** and...



**STREET
/// SMART**

Think of the Impact You Can Make

...Public Awareness Campaign

A public safety program of the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia



About This Report

This report describes the 2004 Street Smart Campaign, a public safety program of the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia.

Street Smart is a successful pedestrian and bicycle safety and public awareness program first implemented in 2002.

Its goal is to educate the public on the severity of pedestrian and bicycle safety issues and to promote pedestrian and bicycle safety laws in the Washington, DC metro area. The program is directed by several participating organizations concerned about the issues, and funded by District, state, county and local agencies.

Street Smart launched its annual public awareness campaign in April 2004.

It endeavored to change pedestrian and driver behavior in the Washington, DC metro area. This report describes the 2004 program and its results.


Funding Organizations:

- /// Arlington County, Department of Public Works
- /// City of Alexandria, Office of Transit
- /// Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Motor Vehicles
- /// District of Columbia, District Department of Transportation
- /// Fairfax County, Department of Transportation
- /// Montgomery County, Maryland
- /// Maryland Department of Transportation's State Highway Administration, Highway Safety Office
- /// Prince George's County, Department of Public Works and Transportation

Participating Organizations

Street Smart members include:

- /// Arlington County, Department of Public Works
- /// City of Alexandria, Office of Transit
- /// City of Gaithersburg
- /// Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Motor Vehicles
- /// District of Columbia, District Department of Transportation
- /// Fairfax County, Department of Transportation
- /// Maryland Department of Transportation's State Highway Administration, Highway Safety Office
- /// Montgomery County, Maryland
- /// Prince George's County, Department of Public Works and Transportation
- /// United States Department of The Interior
- /// Washington Area Bicyclist Association



Eighty-nine percent of pedestrian fatalities in our region occur in normal weather conditions. Sixty-five percent of them occur at night.

The Pedestrian Safety Problem

Nationally, pedestrian fatalities have risen the past two years after nearly a decade of steady decline. Pedestrian safety is an especially big challenge in the Washington, DC metro area, because we have the nation's 3rd worst traffic congestion and are the 8th most popular tourist destination. Too many cars, too little roadway, and too many pedestrians and drivers unfamiliar with the area all add up to a major pedestrian safety challenge.

Across the entire greater metro area, deadly behavior among drivers, pedestrians and cyclists is leading to injuries and deaths of pedestrians today:

- /// Drivers are ignorant of, or ignoring, crosswalk laws.
- /// Nationally, one pedestrian is hit every 7 minutes.
- /// Pedestrian impulsiveness is getting them hurt and killed too often.
- /// Tens of thousands of pedestrians – many of them children and older adults – are hit, hurt and killed every year.
- /// In the Washington, DC metro area, approximately 80 pedestrians die each year and almost 2,000 are injured.

Pedestrian safety is a very serious problem, and a solution for behavioral change is needed. New education, awareness, and enforcement of laws are critical. The public needs to become more Street Smart.

The “Three Es”

Experts call education, engineering, and enforcement the “three Es” of pedestrian safety. All are essential for combating the problem:

- /// Education targets both pedestrians, cyclists and drivers, and includes information about devices designed to enhance pedestrian safety, such as important points for the use of crosswalks, pedestrian warning signs, pedestrian signals and reflective materials for nighttime safety.
- /// Complementing education and awareness is a stepped-up, region-wide enforcement initiative:
 - Montgomery County, Prince George's County and the City of Takoma Park allocated more than 60 law enforcement officials to write citations.
 - Fairfax County targeted speeding on streets with high numbers of pedestrian incidents.
 - The District of Columbia increased pedestrian/bike related traffic enforcement at intersections with high pedestrian/bike crash statistics.
- /// Engineering includes improved sightlines, signals and markings and the use of technology, such as the laser detector, the “In-Roadway Warning Lights” (IRWL), and the auditory signals for sight-impaired pedestrians. Other innovations, such as pedestrian countdown signals, are becoming increasingly prevalent across the region.

In April 2003, the National Center for Statistics and Analysis published

“Pedestrian Roadway Fatalities”

It ranked cities with populations of over 100,000, and placed Washington, DC in the top 20% for **pedestrian fatalities**. Based on average motor vehicle traffic fatalities from 1998-2000, pedestrian fatalities accounted for 1/3 of DC's crash related fatalities!



About Street Smart

Since its inception in 2002, Street Smart has worked toward public education, awareness and behavioral change through news media efforts, a public awareness campaign, and, in some jurisdictions, increased law enforcement activity.

The goals of the campaign are to:

- ///** Increase public awareness of pedestrian and bicycle safety issues and help reduce the number of pedestrian and bicycle injuries and deaths. The “public” includes all drivers in DC, Maryland and Virginia as the primary audience. Pedestrians, cyclists, employers, driver education providers, judicial agencies, law enforcement and tourists are secondary audiences.

- ///** Support an intensive region-wide education and enforcement effort.
- ///** Improve all drivers’ perceived behavior to help reduce the incidence of pedestrian and bicycle injuries and deaths through increased public awareness and education in conjunction with increased law enforcement.

The 2004 campaign, launched in April, furthered these goals in several ways and carried on the work begun over the past two years.

Street Smart 2004

The 2004 campaign utilized multiple resources and media in an approach designed to educate the public and create awareness of pedestrian and bicyclist safety. The media campaign objective was to create this awareness among drivers as well as pedestrians and bicyclists.

Target Audience:

The outreach campaign was targeted at a primary audience of all drivers in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia. Pedestrians, cyclists, employers, driver education providers, judicial agencies, law enforcement and tourists were secondary audiences.

Because males, ages 18 to 34, are the primary offenders in pedestrian safety issues, they were targeted in particular. Additionally, special emphasis was given to high density Hispanic areas as well as areas with a high number of incidents.

Campaign Strategy:

Spring in this area means warmer weather, daylight savings time, and an increase in tourism. All of these contribute to an increase in pedestrians that, in turn, means more collisions, injuries, and deaths.

Therefore, Street Smart concentrated efforts during this time period, specifically April 5 to May 2, 2004. Combined with stepped-up law enforcement efforts, a media campaign was conducted consisting of TV and radio spots, print ads, outdoor media including transit shelters and bus backs, posters, handouts and more. Public relations activities were conducted, as well.



Efforts to reach a multilingual audience were increased over 2002 and 2003. Besides translations into Spanish, the 2004 campaign included materials in Korean, Chinese and Vietnamese. Campaign materials urged drivers to “Imagine the Impact” on the lives and families of pedestrians, cyclists and drivers resulting from a crash.

Campaign Elements:

The 2004 campaign consisted of a one-month, \$390,000 saturation of local media outlets and transit services:

- /// Media advertising (TV, radio, print and outdoor transit advertising) increased public awareness of pedestrian and bicycle safety issues.
- /// In conjunction with increased law enforcement, media advertising and other public relations activities continued to target behaviors such as distracted driving, speeding, slowing or stopping at crosswalks, etc.
- /// Collateral materials, such as posters and handouts, helped increase public awareness of pedestrian and bicycle safety issues and educate the public concerning the “rules of the road.”
- /// Evaluation through pre- and post-campaign surveys determined public awareness and attitudes toward pedestrian and bicycle safety. Research measured the change in awareness and attitudes as well as driving behavior that resulted from the campaign.

1) Radio Advertising

Radio advertising was produced in both English and Spanish versions. The spots were used to reach the drive-time audience of males 18-34. Spots were run in and around the Washington, DC metro area on stations that targeted drivers and pedestrians. Spots were run primarily Monday – Friday, 3 pm – 7 pm, with some running in mornings and middays to increase reach for the message.

- /// Seven stations ran spots over a 4-week schedule.
- /// Spots ran on 5-6 radio stations per week, with 20-25 spots per station per week
- /// 680 spots ran in total, for a reach of 64% of the target audience, with a frequency of 12.2. *
- /// Total impressions were 4,492,000. **

In addition to the paid advertising schedule of pre-produced spots, stations were also given shorter public service announcements to be announcer-read when possible. The Street Smart campaign also received additional radio spots in the requested time slots, plus sponsorships of news/weather/traffic reports, several on-air and taped interviews, and website exposure. The total value of these “Added Value” radio messages came to \$22,587 (see Item #8 for more details on Added Value Media).

* Reach is the percentage of different people reach in a given schedule. Frequency is the average number of times a person is exposed to a radio spot during the schedule.

** Total impressions are the total number of times a message was heard or seen in a given schedule.

2) TV Spots

Two TV spots, produced in English and Spanish, ran for several weeks on cable TV stations. Several hundred total spots ran during daytime and prime time on MTV, BET, USA, Comedy Central, Family Channel, NIK, and Comcast SportsNet, plus the Hispanic Telemundo Network. In the 3-week delivery time, they had a total reach of 473,477.

3) Newspaper Advertising

Newspaper ads were created and ran in the *Washington Post Express*, which is designed for pedestrians and commuters, plus the Spanish language paper *El Tiempo Latino*. Ads ran Mondays and Thursdays in the *Washington Post Express*, and one ad per week ran in *El Tiempo*. Twelve ads ran in total, for 1,136,000 impressions.



4) Outdoor Media

Pedestrians were targeted with a variety of outdoor media messages:

- 41 transit shelter signs, 13 in Spanish, 28 in English, were placed in shelters in high-risk areas. They delivered more than 12,700,000 impressions over the month. Many of these were left in the shelters past the month of April for free to the campaign, delivering an additional \$5,280 in Added Value Media (See Item #8 below for additional details).
- 375 interior bus cards were displayed in Metro buses. (These were placed at no cost to the campaign beyond manufacturing – a \$5,775 value.)
- Taillight displays, or bus backs, were created and placed on area buses. They were targeted to reach pedestrians running to catch buses as well as drivers in traffic. On Metro buses, there were 80 messages placed on tails of vehicles, plus 20 bonus placements, at no extra cost to the campaign. On the Fairfax Connector, there were 50 placements. Though there are no exact figures for these displays, 150 displays are projected to produce an 82.5% reach and a 5.7 frequency.

5) Posters

Fifteen hundred posters were produced in three different versions. These dealt with pedestrian behaviors and safety issues. One side was printed in English, with the second side printed in Spanish. These were distributed for display in government buildings, schools, libraries, parking garages, grocery stores and at various events.

6) Handouts

One hundred thousand handout brochures were created which discussed pedestrian safety problems and solutions. To meet bilingual needs, they were printed in English/Spanish, English/Chinese, English/Vietnamese, and English/Korean. They were distributed to participating organizations and in government buildings, schools, libraries, parking garages, and grocery stores, as well as at various events.



7) Evaluation

In order to validate the campaign and judge effectiveness of the efforts, a longitudinal tracking study was conducted both before and after the campaign. Evaluation goals were to discover if public awareness of pedestrian and bicycle safety issues was increased. Specifically, the 2004 campaign was evaluated in terms of:

- Increasing public awareness of pedestrian safety, in general, and regarding pedestrian laws in crosswalks in particular.
- Increasing public awareness of police enforcement regarding yielding to pedestrians in crosswalks.
- Improving both driver and pedestrian behavior.
- Complete campaign evaluation details are available further in this booklet.

8) Extra, Added Value Media

Because pedestrian safety is such a visible public safety issue, in several situations the campaign was able to garner free media and placement for materials.

Added value media helped extend the coverage of the audience and message. All seven radio stations provided PSAs and time on interview shows. Clear Channel Outdoor (bus shelters) provided bonus distribution as availability permitted. Viacom Outdoor provided 20 additional bus backs at no charge as a public service contribution along with placing all interior cards at no additional costs.

Street Smart public service announcements (PSAs) and pedestrian safety stories ran numerous times on and in TV, radio, Internet and print outlets such as:

- News Channel 8
- WJLA TV (ABC)
- WRC TV (NBC)
- Noticias
- Montgomery County Cable
- Arlington County Cable
- Prince George's County Cable
- WTOP-1500 AM
- WAMU-88.5 FM
- Telemundo
- Univision
- NBC4.com
- WTOPnews.com
- *The Washington Post*
- *The Washington Times*
- *Korean Daily*
- *Connection* newspapers (Arlington)

Radio and TV stations also distributed Street Smart brochures at various events and venues, shopping malls, colleges, and festivals. Between the many PSAs, sponsorships and distribution of literature, the Added Value Media total for April alone came to \$130,342.

9) Public Relations

The 2004 campaign was kicked off with a Pedestrian Safety News Conference on April 5. Representatives from almost every county and state and local jurisdiction were there, as well as other distinguished guests. The list included:

- /// Chris Zimmerman, Metropolitan Washington Transportation Planning Board, Arlington County Board
- /// Whitt Clement, Secretary of Transportation, Commonwealth of Virginia
- /// Dan Tangherlini, Director, District of Columbia, District Department of Transportation
- /// Charlie Watkins, District Engineer, Maryland State Highway Administration

Media/Materials	Cost	Added Value
Radio (680 spots)	\$114,614	\$22,587
TV (241 spots)	\$56,500	–
Print (12 insertions)	\$9,556	–
Outdoor Media:	\$96,064	\$11,055
Busbacks (150)		
Interior Cards (375)		
Transit Shelters (41)		
Collateral Materials:	\$28,000	–
Posters (1,500)		
Handouts (100,000)		
Blowups (6)		
Public Relations	\$10,000	\$96,700

- /// Gerry Connolly, Chairman, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
- /// Doug Duncan, County Executive, Montgomery County
- /// Ludwig Gaines, Councilman, City of Alexandria
- /// Cicero Salles, Bike-Pedestrian Coordinator, Prince George's County
- /// Bill Tower, Law Enforcement Coordinator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
- /// Jeff Gold, a regional radio personality whose father killed in a pedestrian crash

From this unified turnout of officials and TV, radio and print press, came an outpouring of coverage for the Street Smart campaign and pedestrian safety issues. The news conference and subsequent efforts garnered substantial earned media coverage, including non-English media outlets that serve over-represented audiences. The total value of the media coverage of the campaign kick off came to \$96,700 in "Added Value" messages.

Attending or covering media outlets included:

Television

- ABC-7
- News Channel 8
- News Channel 8 News Talk (15 minute live interview)
- NBC-4
- Univision
- Telemundo
- Noticias
- Montgomery County Cable
- Arlington County Cable
- Prince George's County Cable

Radio

- WAMU-88.5 FM
- WTOP-1500 AM

Print

- Washington Times*
- Korean Daily*
- Connection* newspapers (Arlington)

The total estimated
media value
 for television, radio and print coverage
 for the Street Smart
public relations campaign
 in 2004 was **\$130,342.**

Electronic Media Monitoring of the Street Smart Campaign

The following is a listing and sampling of stories that ran during and just after the Street Smart campaign of 2004. Note: All monitoring services miss stories. Therefore, in addition to the following, stories ran numerous times on News Channel 8, WTOP-1500 AM, WAMU-88.5 FM, Telemundo and Univision.

News Talk			
News Channel 8	04/05/2004	4:45 - 5:00 pm	
WJLA-TV			
ABC 7 News At 5	04/05/2004	5:00 - 6:00 pm	
WRC-TV (NBC)	04/05/2004	6:00 - 7:00 am	
WRC-TV (NBC)			
News 4 At 5:00	04/05/2004	5:00 - 6:00 pm	
WRC-TV (NBC)			
News 4 At 6:00	04/05/2004	6:00 - 7:00 pm	
WRC-TV (NBC)			
News 4 At 11:00	04/05/2004	11:00 - 11:35 pm	
WRC-TV (NBC)			
News 4 Today	04/06/2004	5:00 - 6:00 am	
WRC-TV (NBC)			
News 4 Today	04/06/2004	6:00 - 7:00 am	

Monitoring services also delivered a sampling of the print and Internet stories that ran during the campaign. The following are representative samples:

The Washington Times April 6, 2004

Area Wide Program Targets Pedestrian Safety

By Sean Salai

Area police officials are conducting a region wide pedestrian sting this month as part of a public safety campaign funded by state and local governments.

The \$375,000 Street Smart campaign – which began yesterday and will continue for the next four weeks – offers overtime pay to uniformed police officers throughout the region for strolling along crosswalks and stopping any vehicles that refuse to yield the right of way.

“We’re hoping the campaign will make drivers think twice about roaring through intersections during tourist season,” said D.C. police Sgt. Stephen R. Barton, with the District’s Traffic Safety Unit. “We also want to educate pedestrians and get bikers to wear protective gear.”

Drivers who are pulled over during pedestrian stings, which typically occur during the day, will receive citations according to local county or city laws.

Authorities are targeting those crosswalks in Maryland, Virginia and the District that have a high rate of pedestrian injuries, including the Langley Park area.



Local officials demonstrated on Wilson Boulevard in Arlington yesterday a laser system that warns drivers that pedestrians are in a crosswalk.

More than 60 officers in Takoma Park, and Montgomery and Prince George’s counties have already been committed to the project.

“This time, there’s really an enforcement component,” said Mary

McAndrew of the District-based Design House, which created Street Smart’s advertising campaign. “We’ve also got slightly higher funding this year than in the past.”

Rachel Lyons, an account manager for Design House, said the Street Smart ads will saturate regional cable TV channels – including Cox Cable and Comcast – as well as radio stations, Metro bus-stop walls, and the backs of Metro buses.

She said her office has taken special pains to translate every advertisement into Spanish. “We have found that newly arrived immigrants don’t walk the way we do here,” Ms. Lyons said. “There’s an effort to focus on the Hispanics, in particular.”

At a press conference to announce the campaign yesterday, Montgomery County Executive Douglas M. Duncan said public officials want to send a unified public safety message to drivers and pedestrians in the region.

Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Gerry Connolly said the campaign will give much-needed publicity to a neglected area of public safety. “We have not paid enough attention to pedestrian safety,” he said.

According to the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG), an average of 85 pedestrians are killed and more than 2,600 are injured each year in the metro area. A demographic breakdown of the victims is not available. Seven pedestrians were killed and 237 injured in Fairfax County in 2002. Fifteen persons were killed and 388 injured in Montgomery County that year. The District had 19 fatalities last year, and one so far this year.

During yesterday’s press conference, local officials also demonstrated a laser-detection system that when installed at crosswalks warns drivers that pedestrians are crossing the street. Two posts on either side of the four-lane crosswalk exchange a laser beam. When a person enters a crosswalk, he or she breaks the beam, which triggers several optic green lights that are

embedded in the road. The lights start flashing at oncoming traffic.

Michael J. Farrell, a transportation planner for COG, said the technology is an example of future innovations. "It's superior to flashers, because flashers are on all the time, and people tune them out," he said. "The optic lights only flash at drivers when pedestrians are in the crosswalk."

Mr. Farrell said Wilson Boulevard in Arlington County and a parking lot at the Maryland Highway Safety Office are currently the only "live" examples of runway lighting technology. "I think it will catch on," he said. Mr. Farrell said the runway lighting also could be used to protect jaywalkers who don't use crosswalks. "We try to encourage people to cross at crosswalks," he said. "But people need to cross the street, and sometimes the nearest crosswalk is half a mile away."

Arlington Connection April 6, 2004

Playing It Smart

As tourist season begins, new COG campaign aims for pedestrian safety.

By Jim Silver

An extra seat will sit empty at Jeff Gold's Seder table this Passover, as it did last year. It was "almost exactly two years ago," Gold said Monday, that his father was killed in a traffic accident.

Gold's father was the victim of a rising trend in the region, a pedestrian killed while crossing the road. To fight that trend, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments brought elected officials from across the region to Ballston on Monday to announce the kickoff of Street Smart, a public awareness and enforcement campaign, emphasizing pedestrian safety.

"After nearly a decade of steady decline," pedestrian fatalities have risen for the last two years,



Photos by Jim Silver/The Connection

Not all pedestrian safety comes from government, said County Board member Chris Zimmerman County Board on Monday. Board member Paul Ferguson showed off a yard sign, available from the county, urging slower speeds in neighborhoods with children.

said Chris Zimmerman, Arlington's representative to the MWCOG transportation planning board and a County Board member.

In 2003, Zimmerman said, "more than 85 pedestrians and bicyclists were killed as a result of crashes, and 2,600 were injured," across the DC area.

That's a clear sign "we have not paid enough attention to pedestrian safety," said Fairfax Board of Supervisors chairman Gerald Connolly, and it shows why the Street Smart program is necessary.

The campaign kicks off at the start of the heaviest pedestrian season for the region, said Zimmerman, when tourists are most likely to be crossing local streets to get to museums or Metro stations. But pedestrian safety is always important in the Washington region, said Dan Tangherlini, District department of transportation director. "The city has the largest number of people who walk to work, after Boston."

FOR THOSE PEDESTRIANS, "crossing the street should not be a death-defying act," said Montgomery County, Md., Executive Doug Duncan.

Holding the kickoff for the campaign in Ballston made sense, said Zimmerman, because with Ballston Common Mall, apartments buildings and office buildings in a five block radius, it

is “a place where people live, work and play ... and the almost all do that without walking.”

Watching the event from in front of the National Science Foundation, Eric Myers agreed. “I almost get run over twice a day” on the way to and from work, he said. “I take the Metro, and I’m dodging crazy drivers all over the place.”

TO OFFER RELIEF to pedestrians like Myers, the Council of Governments will promote pedestrian safety with public service announcements on local cable channels, radio stations, and advertisements in local newspapers and on bus shelters.

Holding up a sample ad, Zimmerman said that some ads will be an attempt to educate pedestrians: “Take the Time to Cross Safely.” Others will be aimed at drivers, advising them to “Watch for Pedestrians” or “Watch for Bicyclists.”

Those ads, and fliers available at Metro stations, will also target the region’s Latino, Vietnamese and Korean communities, particularly in pushing pedestrian safety.

That means “if you’re a pedestrian, wear bright clothing,” said Duncan, noting that 80 percent of pedestrian fatalities occur at night. The advertising campaign will cost \$400,000, all funds donated by local governments.

In addition, police departments across the region will be stepping up enforcement of pedestrian safety, ticketing drivers who fail to yield to pedestrians in cross walks.

In Montgomery County, police officers have just finished a training program covering changes in pedestrian safety laws, and the District and Fairfax County are increasing speeding and red light enforcement at intersections with heavy pedestrian traffic, said Bill Tower, law enforcement coordinator with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

“The next time a driver swerves past a pedestrian in a crosswalk, that pedestrian might be a police officer,” said Tower. “And that driver

might be getting a friendly reminder from another police officer.”

GOLD LAUDED the Street Smart program. But it comes too late for his family. A DJ on oldies radio station WBIG 100 FM, Gold was about to go on the air in April 2002, when he got a call from Suburban Hospital in Bethesda. “They said, you better come down here, your dad’s been hit by a car,” Gold said Monday.

Gold bought a condo for his father in Bethesda, to be close to family, and soon after moving here, Gold said, his father was a regular on local sidewalks. “His favorite thing was walking around, saying ‘Hi.’”

While crossing at a crosswalk, his father was hit by a pickup truck turning left, and died of his injuries soon after.

The road has even more distractions today than it did two years ago, Gold said, pointing to cell phones and televisions in minivans. “I beg drivers to pay attention to the task at hand: driving a lethal weapon – a car. I know there are a million distractions, but try to concentrate.”



“Our goal is to reduce pedestrian deaths down to zero,” said Montgomery Co. Executive Doug Duncan *“No family should have to suffer the tragedy of losing a loved one because they went out for a walk.”*

NBC4.com

April 6, 2004

Pedestrian Safety Takes Step Forward

Local Municipalities Contribute To New Ad Campaign

WASHINGTON – It’s not a new problem to the Washington, D.C. area. Each year more than 80 cyclists and pedestrians are struck and killed in the region.

Just in the past two months a cyclist was run over by a dump truck driver who then fled the scene, a little girl was killed by a hit and run driver, and a man walking his dogs was struck and killed while crossing the Clara Barton Parkway.

Now there’s another new TV advertising campaign that aims to reduce the number of pedestrian deaths. Several local jurisdictions are contributing lots of money to the \$400,000 campaign.

“Our goal is to reduce pedestrian deaths down to zero,” said Montgomery Co. Executive Doug Duncan “No family should have to suffer the tragedy of losing a loved one because they went out for a walk.”

The new region-wide campaign is called “Getting Street Smart” and includes stepped up enforcement, along with changes to pedestrian crossings.

Using laser technology, lighted devices are embedded in the pavement just before the cross-

walk. The flashing signals serve as a warning to alert pedestrians as well as drivers.

The new television campaign will be translated into various languages, including English, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

WTOPnews.com

Apr. 6, 2004

Drivers Targeted in Pedestrian Safety Campaign

The campaign will give publicity to a neglected area of public safety – safely crossing the region’s heavily congested roads.

Fairfax Co. Board of Supervisors Chairman Gerry Connelly will take your questions about pedestrian safety and other issues on WTOP’s Ask the Chairman Tuesday between 10 a.m. and 11 a.m. WTOP’s Kristi King with reaction from one of the region’s least pedestrian-friendly areas – Route 1 in Fairfax County.

WASHINGTON – Police are targeting drivers in a region wide sting this month in an effort to increase pedestrian safety.

Because pedestrian-related accidents often occur during the day, officers will be paid overtime to stroll along crosswalks and stop vehicles that fail to yield the right-of-way to pedestrians. Drivers will receive citations for the violations.

The \$375,000 Street Smart campaign, which kicked off Monday, will continue for the next four weeks.

Public officials are trying to send a unified message across the region. The campaign will include not only extra police patrols, but also TV advertising, radio advertising and billboard advertising to encourage people to use crosswalks to cross busy roads.

According to the Metropolitan Council of Governments, the sponsor of the initiative, each year an average of 85 pedestrians are killed and 2,600 are hurt in the metro area.

Campaign Evaluation

Riter Research of Edgewater, Maryland was engaged to conduct evaluation of the campaign, measuring attitudes and awareness before the campaign began as well as after the campaign ended.

Measurement Methodology

The 'pre' survey was conducted prior to the initiation of the campaign. It provided benchmark measurements of awareness and attitudes across the Washington Metro area. This wave began prior to the start of the campaign. Three hundred interviews were conducted. Motorists were selected at random from DC, Maryland, and Virginia that comprise the DC metropolitan area.

The second, "post" survey of 300 interviews was conducted approximately one week after the campaign concluded.

Information gathered during the telephone and motorist surveys provided information to assess how the target audience's knowledge, attitude, and actions were influenced by the campaign message.

There were significant limitations in this evaluation work. It was based on a campaign that ran for a short duration, and experience shows that changes in behavior, especially deep-rooted ones such as driving behaviors and attitudes, take a long time to change. The campaign also ran during a period where much media and public attention was focused on the War in Iraq. The war effects are unknown.

Evaluation Results

At A Glance:

Research showed that much of the awareness of the problem and driving behavior issues were virtually unchanged from the beginning of the campaign to the end. Many of these are also still unchanged from the inception of Street Smart in 2002:

- /// Awareness of laws regarding yielding to pedestrians in crosswalks was unchanged from levels observed in 2002.
- /// The incidence of jaywalking is unchanged over the past 24 months.
- /// Drivers reported observing pedestrians who walk in the street or jaywalk without concern for motor vehicles just as much at the end of the campaign.
- /// Awareness of police efforts to crackdown on drivers who do not yield around pedestrians was unchanged.

- /// Motorists reported they were just as likely to frequently observe drivers who 'did not' yield to pedestrians in crosswalks during the campaign period.
- /// Motorists still believed that, when a crash occurs between a motor vehicle and a pedestrian, the fault lies with the driver. Overall levels of belief were also unchanged from 2002.
- /// The proportion of motorists who believe they would get a ticket for not yielding to a pedestrian in a crosswalk is unchanged.

However, there are strong signs that the 2004 Street Smart Campaign and the two years of efforts are working:

- /// Since 2002, surveys of self-reported behavior show improvement in driver behavior regarding drivers yielding to pedestrians in crosswalks.
- /// Among target male drivers under 35 years of age, awareness of police efforts to crack down on drivers who did not yield to pedestrians increased 22 points – from 10% to 32% – between April and May 2004.
- /// Between the 2004 campaign period, the proportion of drivers surveyed who reported they had to 'suddenly swerve' to avoid hitting a pedestrian who was jaywalking or walking without concern for vehicle traffic declined from 32% to 27%.
- /// The campaign is beginning to be recognized, as awareness for all Street Smart media executions increased slightly between March and May 2004. Among the target audience – males under 35 – awareness increased significantly, from 27% at the beginning of the 2004 campaign to 48% at the end.

Research Conclusions:

Riter Research drew two distinct conclusions from their 2004 research:

1. Although there was a significant increase in awareness of the Street Smart Campaign among male drivers under 35, this has not yet translated into reported changes in behavior or beliefs of consequences if they violate the law.
2. The public is very aware of laws pertaining to yielding to pedestrians in crosswalks; however, in spite of this knowledge, they readily report it is not likely that drivers will get a ticket for the infraction or law violation.





**Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety and
Public Awareness Campaign**

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