

Stratford Police Department News Release

For Immediate Release: Driver and Pedestrian Safety Tips

**AAA offers pedestrian safety tips as Daylight Savings Time ends this weekend
November 1, 2013**

Stratford – Beginning at 2:00 a.m. on Sunday, November 2, Daylight Saving Time will end, which will result in fewer daylight hours.

As we prepare to turn back the clocks, AAA Mid-Atlantic is reminding motorists to be aware of the challenges associated with night driving especially at dusk, as well as the increased dangers to pedestrians.

“As Sunday arrives, the first day of Standard Time, and when motorists return to their daily commuting schedule on Monday, they will experience shorter days, longer nights, and darkness settling in earlier than they have been used to for the last seven months,” said Ragina C. Averella, Manager of Public and Government Affairs. “We’re reminding motorists of the potential driving hazards that low light or dark conditions bring especially as dusk falls. Twilight is one of the most challenging times to drive because your eyes are adjusting to the increasing darkness.”

According to the National Safety Council, traffic death rates are three times greater at night than during the day. Ninety percent of a driver’s reaction depends on vision, which is severely limited at night. After sundown, a motorist’s depth perception, color recognition, and peripheral vision are compromised.

In addition, most pedestrian fatalities occur after sundown. In 2011, 68 percent of pedestrian fatalities nationwide occurred at night (6:00 p.m. – 5:59 a.m.), according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). In Maryland, 64 percent of pedestrian fatalities occurred at night in 2011, according to the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration’s Highway Safety Office.

“Pedestrians need to remember that motorists may not always see them at night or in the morning and late afternoon as motorists fight sun glare. Pedestrians need to do their part by practicing safety guidelines that will help ensure motorists can see them,” added Averella.

AAA Mid-Atlantic offers the following tips to motorists and pedestrians while driving or walking during low light or dark conditions:

AAA Night-Time Driving Tips For Motorists

- Keep headlights, tail lights, signal lights, and windows (inside and out) clean.
- Have your headlights properly aimed. If not properly aimed, headlights will blind other drivers and reduce your ability to see the road.
- If there is any doubt, turn your headlights on. Lights will not help you see better in early twilight, but they'll make it easier for other drivers to see you.
- Reduce your speed and increase your following distances. It is more difficult to judge other vehicles' speeds and distances at night.

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- When following another vehicle, keep your headlights on low beams so you don't blind the driver ahead of you.
- If an oncoming vehicle doesn't lower beams from high to low, avoid glare by watching the right edge of the road and using it as a steering guide.
- Do not drive while drinking alcohol, while fatigued, or after taking certain medicines that can cause drowsiness.

AAA Pedestrian Safety Tips

- Do not cross in the middle of the street or between parked cars.
- Cross only at intersections. Do not jaywalk.
- Avoid walking in traffic where there are no sidewalks or crosswalks. If you have to walk on a road that does not have sidewalks, walk facing traffic.
- Stop at the curb and look left, right, and left again before you step into the street. Evaluate the distance and speed of oncoming traffic before you step out into the street.
- Wear bright colors or reflective clothing if you are walking near traffic at night. Carry a flashlight when walking in the dark.
- Allow extra time and distance for a vehicle to stop in inclement weather.
- Do not let umbrellas or jacket hoods block your view of approaching traffic.

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