



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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LESS DAYLIGHT INCREASES RISKS FOR PEOPLE WALKING: HOLIDAY SEASON BRINGS INCREASE IN PEDESTRIAN DEATHS AND INJURIES

BALTIMORE, MD (November 19, 2019) – With the approach of Thanksgiving and the winter holiday season, sponsors of Baltimore’s *Look Alive* pedestrian safety campaign want pedestrians and drivers to make safety a top priority during this risky time of year.

Regional transportation officials warn that November and December are the most dangerous time of year for pedestrians because of fewer daylight hours. According to the MDOT MVA Maryland Highway Safety Office, nearly 70 percent of pedestrian fatalities in Maryland occur in the dark, with one in three pedestrians killed at times with little to no light.

During the last two months of 2018, there were almost 400 crashes involving people on foot in Baltimore and the surrounding counties, resulting in 52 serious injuries and 13 deaths. Pedestrian crashes that result in fatalities occur most often between 6 p.m. and midnight.

“We know visibility plays an important role in pedestrian safety,” said Michael B. Kelly, BMC’s Executive Director. “That’s why we’re reminding everyone to be alert and on the look-out for one another, especially as it gets dark earlier every day.”

Beginning November 21, residents in the Baltimore metropolitan area can expect stepped up enforcement of traffic laws that protect people who are walking. Violators face fines ranging from \$40 to \$500.

The *Look Alive* campaign offers safety tips for drivers and pedestrians (see below). The campaign’s key safety tips include reminders for drivers to obey the speed limit and stop for people crossing the street. Pedestrians are advised to use the crosswalk and wear something light or reflective at night. Learn more about the program at LookAliveMD.org.

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The Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC) works collaboratively with the chief elected officials in the region to create initiatives to improve our quality of life and economic vitality. BMC, as the Baltimore region’s council of governments, hosts the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board (BRTB), the federal metropolitan planning organization (MPO), and supports local government by coordinating efforts in a range of policy areas including emergency preparedness, housing, cooperative purchasing, environmental planning and workforce development.

BMC’s Board of Directors includes the executives of Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Harford and Howard counties, the mayor of the City of Baltimore, a member of the Carroll County and Queen Anne’s County boards of commissioners, a member of the Maryland State Senate, a member of the Maryland House of Delegates, and a gubernatorial appointee from the private sector.

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STREET SAFETY TIPS

If you're driving...

- Slow down and obey the speed limit.
- Stop for pedestrians at crosswalks.
- Be careful when passing buses or stopped vehicles.
- When turning, yield to people walking and biking.
- Look for bicyclists before opening your door.
- Allow at least 3 feet when passing bikes.
- Avoid using your cell phone and never text while driving.

If you're walking...

- Cross the street at crosswalks and intersections.
- Use the pushbuttons.
- Wait for the walk signal to cross the street.
- Watch for turning vehicles.
- Before crossing look left, right, and left again.
- Be visible. Wear something light or reflective after dark.
- Watch out for blind spots around trucks and buses.
- Avoid using your cell phone when crossing the street.