

A Safer Naper --- Traffic, Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety

Now that the temperature outside has finally started on an upward trend, the Naperville Police Department wants to make Naperville “A Safer Naper” for everyone ... no matter how you choose to get around town.

In 2017, 37,133 people were killed in the United States in motor vehicle traffic crashes. Illinois ranked 8th with 1,097 people losing their lives. And that is just the tip of the iceberg. On average over the last 10 years, 2.4 million people are injured each year in motor vehicle traffic crashes.



With this in mind, we’re spending the month of May reminding everyone what it means to share the road. Whether you’re on a bike, in a car or on foot, we all have rights and responsibilities. By being alert, following the rules and keeping others in mind, we can all enjoy the fresh air and the summer months safely.

No matter how you’re traveling through town, there are a few universal safety rules that everyone is required to follow:

- Follow the rules of the road! They apply to everyone!
- Stay Alert! Don’t drive, walk or ride while distracted. Pay attention to what you’re doing!

Tips for Drivers

Drivers are reminded to turn on vehicle headlights at dusk and to be vigilant in looking out for cyclists and pedestrians. Additionally, drivers should:

- Stop for pedestrians at crosswalks.
- Slow down and obey the posted speed limit.
- Yield to pedestrians and cyclists when turning.
- Look before opening your door.
- Be careful when passing stopped vehicles.
- Allow three feet when passing bicyclists.

Tips for Cyclists

When traveling on city streets, cyclists are required to follow the same rules of the road as if they were operating a motorized vehicle. This means stopping at stop signs, obeying traffic signals and lane markings and using hand signals to let others know your intention to stop or turn. Furthermore, cyclists are advised to be aware of their surroundings:

- Don’t wear headphones; you need to be able to hear if a car is approaching.
- Slow down and check for oncoming traffic before entering any street or intersection.
- Do your best to anticipate hazards and adjust your position in traffic accordingly.
- Use designated bike paths whenever possible.
- Be predictable: ride with the flow of traffic, on the right, and in a straight line – not in and out of parked cars on the side of the street.
- Be visible and wear the proper protective gear.
- Make eye contact with motorists to let them know you are there (but don’t always expect them to see you).
- Stay visible by riding where drivers are looking (i.e., do not pass on the right).

- Avoid riding at night. If you must ride in the dark, the law requires that your bike have a front light visible from a distance of at least 500 feet and a rear red reflector visible for up to 600 feet.
- Wear white/light colors and/or reflective clothing when riding at night.

Tips for Walkers and Runners

Whether you're going for an afternoon stroll, commuting to work on foot or getting some exercise, walking and running are great activities. However, it's important to pay attention. Pedestrians should keep the following tips in mind:

- Use signaled crosswalks when possible and use extreme caution when crossing at intersections without signals.
- Look both ways before crossing the street.
- Never run between cars into the street.
- Wear clothing that allows drivers to see you. That means no dark clothes after dark or early in the morning.
- Exercising outdoors at dusk or at night can be dangerous without some type of reflective device on your clothing. Many athletic shoes have reflective qualities built in, but also consider a vest complete with reflective tape.
- Keep alert! Practice good situational awareness, listening to your instincts. Always know who and what is around you.
- Don't run alone. The buddy system just isn't for kids. There is strength in numbers. If you must run alone, stick to busy areas and always tell someone where you are going.
- Always carry identification with you when you go out. If carrying a license seems too inconvenient, please consider purchasing an identification bracelet or tag for your shoe. New products designed especially for runners, bikers and other athletes are available for purchase. A simple internet search for "identification bracelet" will provide numerous results.

Remember: No driver, bicyclist or pedestrian has sole rights to the road. It is a shared space where we all have rights and responsibilities. If we all take those rights and responsibilities seriously, this summer is surely going to be bright in Naperville!

Links:

Rules of the Road - https://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/publications/pdf_publications/dsd_a112.pdf

Bicycle Rules of the Road - https://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/publications/pdf_publications/dsd_a143.pdf

IL Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Webpage -

https://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/drivers/traffic_safety/bikepedsafety.html