

A Safer Naper --- Traffic Safety

The Naperville Police Department understands that the well-being of our city depends on how safe we keep our community. This is precisely why we partner with businesses, other government agencies, community organizations, schools and residents – to make, and keep, Naperville ‘a Safer Naper.’ One area we utilize partnerships greatly for is traffic safety.

In 2020, the Naperville Police Department responded to 1,903 traffic crashes throughout the City. The primary causes of these crashes involved speed (such as failure to reduce speed or driving too fast for conditions), failure to yield the right of way, and improper lane usage.

Knowing the primary causes of crashes helps us direct education and enforcement to curb these behaviors and make our roadways safer. To reduce crashes caused by the three primary reasons mentioned above, along with distracted driving and impaired driving, we regularly work with local partners such as AAA, AARP and Naperville Community Radio Watch.

The COVID-19 pandemic limited much of our ability to host our traditional programs, classes and other initiatives in 2020, so the activities mentioned below reflect our typical, non-pandemic partnerships that we’re hoping to support once again in 2021 and beyond.

AAA

The Naperville Police Department partners with AAA to educate our local high school Driver’s Education students about the dangers of texting and driving. After a discussion concerning internal and external distractions and ways to minimize or eliminate them, the students experience first-hand the effects of distracted driving as they utilize the AAA Distracted Driving Simulator. The simulator is an effective tool that demonstrates what happens when a driver texts and drives. It’s a powerful lesson as the driver often veers into oncoming traffic, hits an animal or pedestrian, demonstrates erratic speed, or causes a crash. Those watching learn just as much as the driver, but also have the advantage of seeing what the driver is missing while looking at his/her phone.

AARP

The partnership with AARP offers a program entitled “Smart Driver.” This classroom driver refresher course, designed for drivers age 50 and older, has assisted millions of mature drivers to stay safe. The course covers topics such as: understanding the normal effects of aging on driving and practical ways to compensate for those changes, driving strategies for the mature driver, identifying the most common crash situations and how to avoid them, an update on the Illinois rules of the road, vehicle technology, and local traffic hazards.

[Learn more about Smart Driver Classes](#)

Community Radio Watch

Naperville Police also utilize our Community Radio Watch members as partners in traffic safety. CRW's intent is not to replace the patrol activities of police officers but to provide the police department, and the citizens of Naperville, with additional individuals trained in police observation capabilities to reduce

crime and enhance public (and traffic) safety. These volunteer citizens conduct radar patrols and traffic surveys, which then help our department's Traffic Unit prioritize our traffic enforcement areas to reduce crashes.

[Learn more about CRW](#)

Highway Safety Grants

Lastly, the Naperville Department participates in Highway Safety grants such as STEP, Sustained Traffic Enforcement Program. This grant program provides federal money through the Illinois Department of Transportation to be used in traffic enforcement, specifically in the areas of distracted driving, speed, impaired driving, and occupant restraint. The grant funds are used to hire off-duty officers to perform specific enforcement details centered around speeding, distracted driving, impaired driving and seat belt enforcement, usually around holidays or heavy travel times when there are more drivers on the roads. The goal of the grant is to reduce traffic fatalities to zero through enforcement and education.

Residents

You can be our partners, too! By limiting distractions, driving sober and obeying the rules of the road, you can make our roadways safer for other motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians. Here are a few tips every motorist should focus on:

- **Drive the speed limit** – Speed is one of the primary causes of fatalities throughout the united states. Speeding diminishes reaction time and increases the chance of serious injury in the event of a crash.
- **Leave space** – Driving too closely to the vehicle in front of you significantly reduces your ability to stop in time to avoid a crash.
- **Buckle up** – Properly wearing your seat belt keeps you safe and secure in your vehicle and protects you from being ejected from the vehicle in the event of a crash.
- **Drive sober and alert** – Many substances can impair driving, including alcohol, marijuana, some over-the-counter and prescription drugs, and illegal drugs. Impairment of any kind can cause poor judgement, loss of coordination, diminished reaction time, and slowed thinking, among other effects. Drowsy driving can also lead to serious and deadly crashes.
- **Pay attention to the road** – Distracted driving is any activity that takes your attention away from the task of safe driving. It can include talking or texting on your phone, eating and drinking, talking to people in your vehicle, fiddling with your navigation system, or other activities. Distractions increase your risk of crashing.

Source: nhtsa.gov

[Take our driver safety pledge](#)
(this will link to PDF pledge)