

Office of Highway Safety Upgrades “Walk Smart, Arrive Alive” Campaign to Increase Safety Over Memorial Day Weekend

Strategic enhancements to the pedestrian safety campaign leverage grassroots influence and broad communications reach throughout Delaware

DOVER, DE. (May 27, 2021) – This Memorial Day, [The Delaware Office of Highway Safety \(OHS\)](#) is bringing back its “*Walk Smart, Arrive Alive*” campaign – with a few additions designed to expand its reach and impact on some of the most at-risk pedestrian populations in the state. Implemented in partnership with the [Delaware Department of Transportation \(DelDOT\)](#) and [Delaware Authority for Regional Transit \(DART\)](#), the communications campaign aims to discourage risky pedestrian activities and encourage the adoption of safer walking habits that can prevent injuries and save lives long after the holiday weekend is over.

OHS is excited to add curbside art to the upcoming enforcement campaign, creating dynamic displays at busy transit and bus stops statewide that will cause pedestrians to “stop in their tracks” and think about ways their walking habits could put themselves as well as other pedestrians, drivers, and cyclists at risk of crashes. Like all other elements of the campaign,

these installations will also provide tips and education to help Delaware residents, workers and visitors change behaviors and walk more safely to reduce pedestrian deaths.

The curbside art will be integrated with a comprehensive list of communications tactics – including digital advertising, paid and organic social media, public relations, and grassroots outreach – motivating pedestrians to “be bright” in what they wear and how they walk, every day and everywhere. Additionally, OHS has created a communications toolkit that partnering businesses and organizations, such as bars, restaurants, realtors, rental agencies, and housing authorities, will use to reach niche markets they serve with messaging that encourages pedestrian safety and discourages distracted driving. Grotto’s Pizza has also partnered with OHS by sponsoring a \$100 gift card giveaway to motivate Delawareans to make a pedestrian safety pledge by texting **WALK BRIGHT** to **99000**.

While every time of the year is important to the pedestrian safety initiative, OHS is looking at this Memorial Day holiday with a heightened degree of urgency.

*“Pedestrian traffic is increasing, and more motorists are on the road as people are eager to make up for the lost time after the pandemic restricted so many activities,” said **Kimberly Chesser, Director, Delaware Office of Highway Safety**. “This Memorial Day will in many ways mark a return to normal and the ability for many to be able to relax and have fun again. And that can mean greater risk to pedestrians posed by everything from not paying attention to street signs to walking during the darkest hours of the evening without a flashlight and walking or driving while impaired. We have to get our message out in front of pedestrians and drivers – repeatedly and in a variety of places where they work, live, and play – to combat dangerous behaviors that can work against roadway and sidewalk safety.”*

The “Walk Smart, Arrive Alive” re-launch is spearheaded by OHS and implemented by state and local law enforcement, and will run from May 28 – September 6 in Delaware beach communities and from July 15 – July 31 statewide and work to encourage safer roadways by reducing risk factors such as distracted driving, speeding, and driving under the influence.



The “Cheswick the Crab” (featured image) and the “Walk Bright, Walk Smart” pedestrian campaign graphics will be featured in the statewide curb art installations this summer.

Delaware Statistics: Pedestrian Crashes

Data continues to show that New Castle County has a disproportionately higher number of pedestrian crashes, which in large part is attributed to the urban nature of the county. Kent and Sussex’s counties are roughly equal in the number of pedestrian crashes year-round, however, Sussex County tends to see an uptick during the summer months due to more residents and visitors heading to beach communities.

Pedestrian crashes peak around the evening rush hour, with the period of 5:00-7:00 p.m. seeing the greatest number of crashes. The period from 7:00-9:00 p.m. has the second-highest pedestrian crash rate.

While the most common factors contributing to pedestrian crashes involve individuals being under the influence, crossing outside of crosswalks, and wearing dark-colored clothing—in 2020 in Delaware, walking in unlit or dark conditions accounted for 55% of pedestrian crashes.

Additional statistics for the state include:

- In 2019, pedestrian fatalities accounted for 24% of overall traffic fatalities.
- In 2019, 50% of pedestrian fatalities involved impairment.
- Pedestrian fatalities most often occur for individuals aged 35-54.
- Since 2016, 85% of pedestrian fatalities occurred on roadways with a speed limit of 35 mph or higher.
- Since 2016, 83% of pedestrian fatalities occurred in the dusk/dark lighting conditions.

Tips for Increasing Safety

OHS offers the following guidelines while walking along Delaware's roadways:

- *Cross lawfully.* Cross only at crosswalks or intersections with signals or traffic signs.
- *Be predictable.* Follow the rules and obey signs and signals.
- *Look carefully.* Watch for cars coming from all directions.
- *Avoid distractions.* Turn off handheld devices when crossing the street.
- *Be visible.* When walking at night, carry a flashlight, avoid wearing dark clothing, wear reflective items.
- *Use sidewalks.* If there isn't one, walk facing traffic, as far from traffic as possible.
- *Be patient.* Wait for cars to stop before stepping into a crosswalk.
- *Be sober.* Do not walk under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- *Never assume.* Make sure drivers see you by making eye contact before walking.

Key Enforcement Locations

OHS will fund pedestrian safety enforcement during the special

enforcement periods (May 28-September 6 in Delaware beach communities and from July 1-July 31 statewide). An emphasis will be placed on these locations:

- Central Newark (bounded by DE-896, Cleveland Avenue, Library Avenue, and Delaware Avenue)
- Western Wilmington (south of Delaware Avenue, west of I-95 – summary analysis)
- US-13/40 corridor
- Limestone Road (DE-7)
- Kirkwood Highway (DE-2)
- Concord Pike (US202)
- Philadelphia Pike (Business-13)
- Middletown town limits

For more information on the campaign, statistics, and education on pedestrian safety, visit <https://www.arrivealivede.com/Walk-Smart/>.

About the Delaware Office of Highway Safety

The Office of Highway Safety (OHS) is committed to improving the safety of Delaware's motoring public by focusing on behavioral traffic safety issues, such as impaired driving, seat belt use, speeding, child passenger safety, pedestrian and bicycle safety, motorcycle safety, and teen driving issues. Follow the Delaware Office of Highway Safety on [ArriveAliveDE.com](https://www.arrivealivede.com), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [Snapchat](#).