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# **La Porte police to drivers on eve of school year: Be cautious**



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With schools ready to open its doors for the 2014-2015 school year, the La Porte Police Department is sending out reminders to drivers to be extra cautious.

"Motorists get used to summer traffic conditions and forget about the natural increase in pedestrians and bicycle riders," said Sgt. John Krueger of the La Porte Police Department.

Schools in La Porte ISD are scheduled to begin Monday August 25 and with that, an increases in pedestrian traffic from bicycle riders, school busses and cars on the roadway are expected.

LPPD is reminding all drivers during the morning and mid-afternoon hours to expect delays in their daily commute with school zones back in effect.

"Busses can seem a nuisance when trying to get to work, but remember they carry our children toward a better education," Krueger said. "Whether lights are flashing or not, when a bus is stopped, drivers should slow down because children are known to run out from behind structures or even other cars."

Other factors, including construction-related and weather conditions, also become more frequent during this time of year and LPPD is urging drivers to be vigilant.

La Porte plans to have an increased level of presence on the roadways near La Porte ISD campuses as well as assist, if needed, LPISD officers in any issues which may occur on any of the campuses.

Members of the La Porte Police Traffic Division will also be on hand during both the beginning and end of each school day and will focus their enforcement in areas near each campus.

The standard seatbelt, speeding and red-light violations will be heavily targeted and officers will be looking out for vehicles blocking intersections and drivers attempting to avoid intersection traffic by traveling through business parking lots or speeding through residential side-streets.

The department is also reminding drivers of the ordinance prohibiting the use of 'electronic communication devices', which include cell phones, within schools zones. Violations result in fines which can exceed \$300 with violations for speeding through school zones start at \$200.

"Cell phones are convenient, however it has been well established that driver's visual field, physical capabilities, and cognitive processing are significantly reduced when on the phone," Krueger said.

"Texting while driving is worse than cell phone usage; often the driver's visual field is committed to everything but the roadway.

Getting to work quicker, or making that quick call or text, will seem quite unimportant if you as a driver injure or even cause the death of a child."

Krueger also urges all residents to report any traffic issues involving children near bus stops.

"If children near a bus stop or school campus are a frequent problem in common traffic areas, contact the transportation division of your local ISD and notify them about the safety hazard," he said.

For more information on the department's traffic enforcement efforts, please call 281-842-3171.