

Pedestrian Injury

Almost everyone is a pedestrian at some time. In Washington State from 2008 to 2012 there were 349 pedestrian vs. motor vehicle deaths (almost 70 each year). Another 2,123 were hospitalized (425 each year). Almost half (46%) happen at or were related to an intersection. Pedestrians have the legal right to cross at any intersection whether or not there is a crosswalk.

In 2008 -2012 vehicle driver actions were a factor in 43% of pedestrian deaths. These contributing factors include: driver distraction - 21%; failure to yield right of way - 13.5%; driver impaired by alcohol and or other drugs - 12%; speeding - 6.9%.

Pedestrian actions contributed to 62% of their deaths: impaired by alcohol and or other drugs - 50.8%; not visible to the driver - 31%; crossing improperly -28.5%; improper action in the road, such as standing, lying down, and playing – 21%

Pedestrian deaths that happened off public roadways, such as in driveways and retail parking lots, totaled 92 with 249 hospitalizations. These are mostly to young children.

Key Messages to Help Reduce Risks

- ◆ Pedestrian deaths account for 14% of all traffic fatalities, up from 11% in 2006 – 2008.
- ◆ High risk groups span the age ranges from 10 years to the later 60's.
- ◆ Risk factors for pedestrian injuries can be reduced:
 - More than 50% of pedestrians are intoxicated when they are killed. While it may be safer for other roadway users for an impaired person to walk rather than drive, the walker is at high risk for being hit by a vehicle.
 - When crossing any road, **even in a cross walk**, make eye contact with vehicle drivers and make sure they see you. Check and double check as you cross to be sure all drivers stop and stay stopped.
 - Children are at high risk for pedestrian death because they are in traffic threats beyond their developmental, behavioral, emotional, physical, and sensory abilities. This is made worse when parents misjudge their child's pedestrian skills and let the child walk in traffic areas without a responsible older person.
 - Children often play in low traffic, neighborhood streets and in driveways. Eventually they can come to think of the road space as their safe area and are unaware of threats from vehicles in other places.
 - Children are impulsive. It is hard for them to judge speed and distances. A child's hearing and seeing skills, depth perception, and proper traffic scanning develop slowly and do not fully mature until at least age 10. Child pedestrians need adult supervision.
 - At the end of the school year and during summer months are higher risk times for children and youth pedestrian injuries.

Information and Resources

- American Automobile Association (AAA) Foundation www.aaafoundation.org
- Feet First www.feetfirst.org
- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration www.nhtsa.gov
- Safe Kids Washington www.safekidswashington.org
- Safe Kids Worldwide www.safekids.org (link to Safe Kids Washington State from here)
- Safe Routes to School www.saferoutesinfo.org
- WA Traffic Safety Commission www.wtsc.wa.gov

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