

CITY CONNECTION

Caution: School Zone

August 15th marked the beginning of a new school year for children throughout Stillwater, and that means lots of excited students, frenzied parents, and bus stop confusion. The City of Stillwater encourages all citizens to be extra aware of their surroundings and to drive with caution.

Drivers have the responsibility to ensure the safety of all pedestrians and bicyclists, and that is especially true in school zones. The first step is to obey the traffic laws and to be attentive while driving. Know your surroundings; whether you are in a business district with pedestrian traffic, a residential area with children playing or riding their bikes, or in a school zone where children are crossing the street and traveling the sidewalks. Pay attention to the flashing lights and obey the speed limits. Never pass a car within a school zone; the driver may be slowing down for a child in or near the roadway. Always be acutely aware when approaching a school bus or bus stop. Even if you are not in a school zone, you must yield to buses when their lights are on. Remember, children are loading and unloading, and drivers have the same responsibilities as in a school zone.

Drivers are strongly encouraged to refrain from using their cell phones while driving, especially in school zones. Cell phone usage while driving is a distraction. Being observant of surroundings at all times is the key for drivers to reduce the chance of an accident.

Slowing down and obeying the laws within school zones can be inconvenient, and receiving a ticket for violating a traffic law within a school zone or around a bus is very expensive; however, neither is as costly as an accident involving a child caused by excessive speed or careless actions. Allow yourself extra time when traveling, especially during the first few weeks of school. Take your time, do what is right and proper, and always drive with arriving safely at your destination as your ultimate goal.

City Connection is brought to you by the City of Stillwater as a public service to provide regular information about City services and to respond to general questions asked by the public about their local government. Today's information is provided by the City of Stillwater Police Department. Questions may be directed to the Police Department at 372-4171.