



Sergeant's Corner

A public service column by
Police Sergeant Joe Powell

Safety is always a priority for the police department and for the community. We can all work together to avoid accidents and ensure the safety of residents and of officers. Today we're going to go over some rules that everyone needs to be aware of.

Rules of the road

Always stop at stop signs. It's the law. Not only can you get a ticket if you ignore this rule; you can possibly hurt or kill someone. Don't drive through red lights, even if there is no other traffic. Everyone in the car must use seat belts and small children need to use safety seats, appropriate to their age. Pedestrians have the right-of-way over vehicles. Yield to them in crosswalks. Stop your vehicle for school buses when they are picking up or dropping off children. Whenever possible, change lanes to avoid emergency vehicles like patrol cars,

ambulances and tow trucks on the highway shoulder. If moving to another lane is not possible, slow down to pass more safely.

What to Do When Approached by the Police

When pulled over for a traffic offense or moving violation, do not leave your vehicle. Instead, roll down your window and wait for the police officer to approach you. Keep your hands on top of the steering wheel so the officer can see your hands are empty. Be prepared to offer your driver's license and proof of car insurance.

Expect officers to keep their distance and not permit physical contact, such as for shaking hands or hugging. They are trained to protect their weapons and themselves from attack. If they refuse a friendly gesture, it does not mean they are angry with you or that they don't care.

Do not offer money to police officers. If you receive a fine for a traffic violation, for example, the fines must be paid by check, money order or electronically to the address presented on your ticket. Offering cash to the officer will be interpreted as a bribe. You can be prosecuted for offering a bribe. Also, do not offer money to corrections officers. Bail is paid at the

court, not in the detention facilities.

Driver's Licenses

When moving from one state to another, you must update your driver's license in the new state with your new address. There are penalties for using a driver's license with an old address.

If someone is *selling* you a driver's license, the license is fraudulent. In the United States, driver's licenses may only be obtained at the Division of Motor Vehicles. To qualify for the license, you must take an eye test and driving test. There is no charge for your license.

Contact us

Remember that the police and sheriff's departments are here to help you. Contact your local law enforcement agency to report crimes or ask for assistance. If you have an emergency, call 9-1-1.

If you have questions or ideas for our next column, please call Sergeant Powell at XXX-XXXX or write to him at XXX.