



City of Yakima

News Release

Subject: Back to School Safety

Contact: Communications & Public Affairs Director Randy Beehler – 901-1142

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Keep Safety in Mind as Students Return to School

Students in the Yakima School District return to school this Wednesday, August 25th. West Valley School District students return to classes on Tuesday, August 31st.

The City of Yakima encourages drivers and pedestrians to keep safety in mind.

“We recognize this is a busy and exciting time, especially with many children returning to in-person classes for the first time in over a year,” said Communications & Public Affairs Director Randy Beehler. “However, we encourage everyone to have safety on the forefront of their minds going into the new school year.”

When approaching a marked school zone between 7 a.m. and 4 p.m., unless otherwise noted, on days when school is in operation and when children are present, drivers must:

- Yield to children or adults crossing in the crosswalk area and obey the commands of a marked official.
- Stop and wait for a stopped school bus that is loading and unloading.
- Reduce vehicle speed to 20 mph.

The National Highway Transportation Safety Administration also recommends:

- When transporting children, they should always ride in the back seat. Children in the front seat are 40 percent more likely to be injured in crashes.
- When driving in neighborhoods with school zones, watch out for young people who may be thinking about getting to school, but may not be thinking of getting there safely.
- When crossing the street, look left-right-left for cars. Do not cross if a car is coming.
- Pedestrians should access the roadway at designated intersections and crosswalks. Leave the curb or place of safety only when you have the right-of-way.

To help with safety efforts, City of Yakima traffic crews last week completed programming of yellow flashing lights for school zones in the Yakima and West Valley school districts. Drivers are required to reduce vehicle speed to 20 mph when yellow lights are flashing.

For more back-to-school safety tips and to reinforce pedestrian, bicycle, school bus and/or public transportation safety habits, visit the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration website at www.nhtsa.gov.