



MEDIA ADVISORY

For immediate release

FURTHER INFORMATION:

Barbara Giles

barbara@bikewalkcentralflorida.org

MEDIA TIP

Crosswalk crackdown planned as Daylight Savings ends and 2017 is shaping up to be one of the deadliest yet for people walking

Orlando Police Department and Orange County Sheriff's Office to enforce Florida's driver yield law to encourage drivers to stop for people in marked crosswalks.

ORLANDO, Fla., Nov. 6, 2017 – With 47 reported pedestrian fatalities in Orange County, 2017 is shaping up to be one of the deadliest years on record for people simply trying to walk across a street. Factors such as population growth and more vehicles on Central Florida roads are contributing to this deadly trend. Additionally, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration warns that with earlier sunsets “adjusting to the new, low-light environment can take time, and that driving while drowsy puts everyone – especially pedestrians – at greater risk.”

That’s why the Orlando Police Department (OPD) and Orange County Sheriff’s Office (OCSO) will be out reminding drivers to yield to people in marked crosswalks during *Operation Best Foot Forward* on **Wednesday, November 8, starting at 7:00 a.m.**

Operation Best Foot Forward is a high-visibility, dual-enforcement action to remind drivers about [Florida’s driver yield law](#). Undercover officers wear plain clothes and cross the street at a marked crosswalk, giving motorists enough time to yield. Motorists who fail to yield will be issued a warning or a ticket - costing them \$164 and three (3) points on their license. To date, more than 7,300 citations and warnings have been issued by OPD and OCSO at 53 monitored crosswalks.

Enforcement is part of the “Triple E” method that Best Foot Forward employs to increase driver yield rates. Education and outreach in areas with a high rate of pedestrian injuries and fatalities coupled with engineering improvements like street lighting, pavement markings and signals are also implemented to make roads safer for everyone.

Fast Facts – 2016 & 2017 Pedestrian Crashes

- 49 people walking were struck and killed in Orange County in 2016
- 47 people struck and killed to date in 2017
- 638 people were injured or killed in pedestrian crashes in Orange County in 2016 – that’s enough to fill two Boeing 747 planes

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Fast Facts – Best Foot Forward Program

- 3,012 citations and 4,373 warnings have been issued by OPD and OCSO through *Operation Best Foot Forward*
- 17 to 59 percent: the percentage increase in drivers now yielding to people in crosswalks on roads posted 35 mph and lower (*Best Foot Forward crosswalks measured*)
- 2 to 28 percent: the percentage increase in drivers now yielding to people using marked crosswalks on roads posted 40 mph and higher (*Best Foot Forward crosswalks measured*)

NOTE TO EDITORS AND PRODUCERS: Media is invited to *Operation Best Foot Forward* and will have the opportunity to speak to drivers, police officers and pedestrians. Times and locations below:

Crosswalk Enforcement Schedule for Wednesday, November 8

Crosswalk Location	Detail Time (approximate)	Nearby Schools	
Lake Underhill Rd. & Palmer St.	7:00 to 8:00 a.m.	<i>Boone HS, Howard MS, Lake Como ES</i>	OPD
S. Conway Rd. & Hargill Dr.	8:15 to 9:15 a.m.	<i>Boone HS, Howard MS, Dover Shores ES</i>	OPD
E. Rollins St. & Camden Rd.	9:30 – 10:30 a.m.	<i>Edgewater HS, Lee MS, Fern Creek ES</i>	OPD
Lake Baldwin Ln. & Almond Ave.	10:45 – 11:45 a.m.	<i>Winter Park HS, Glenridge MS, Audubon ES</i>	OPD
101 E. Central Ave. (in front of Orange County Library)	To be determined	<i>Hillcrest ES, Howard MS, Edgewater HS</i>	OPD
International Drive & Austrian Ct.	9:30 – 10:30 a.m.	<i>Tangelo Park ES, Southwest MS, Dr. Phillips HS</i>	OCSO
Pine Hills Rd. & El Trio Way	9:30 – 10:30 a.m.	<i>Rolling Hills ES, Ridgewood Park ES, Meadowbrook MS, Evans HS</i>	OCSO
W. Oak Ridge Rd. & Magic Way (in front of Westridge MS)	9:30 – 10:30 a.m.	<i>Westridge MS, Sadler ES</i>	OCSO

Crash Report Update

In 2016, 49 people walking were struck and killed in Orange County alone and 638 people were injured or killed in pedestrian crashes according to the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles. Reported to date in 2017, 47 people walking have been killed and 559 involved in pedestrian crashes in Orange County. These numbers have contributed to the Metro Orlando area’s distinction as one of the most dangerous places for pedestrians in the nation.

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Total Traffic Fatalities Up

The National Safety Council report that it estimates 40,200 people died in traffic fatalities in 2016, a six percent increase from the previous year. If that estimate is confirmed, it will be the first time since 2007 that more than 40,000 people have died in motor vehicle accidents. The National Safety Council attributes the rise to distracted driving and an improved economy with more people driving more miles.

About Best Foot Forward & Pedestrian Safety in Metro Orlando

The Best Foot Forward pedestrian safety initiative was launched in June 2012 to reduce pedestrian deaths and injuries in Metro Orlando by getting drivers to yield to pedestrians in crosswalks and getting pedestrians to be more careful crossing the street. More than a campaign, this “Triple-E” behavioral change process seeks to create lasting social good through the consistent and persistent application of low-cost engineering, community education, and high-visibility enforcement.

Initiated by Bike/Walk Central Florida under the leadership of former Orange County Mayor Linda Chapin, spearheaded by Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer and Orange County Mayor Teresa Jacobs, the Best Foot Forward coalition includes Orange County Government, Orange County Public Schools, Orlando Health, LYNX, Winter Park Health Foundation, MetroPlan Orlando, the City of Orlando, Winter Park, Maitland, Winter Garden, Apopka, and towns of Eatonville and Windermere as well as police chiefs throughout Orange County led by Orlando Police Chief John Mina and Orange County Sheriff Jerry Demings. Osceola County and the City of Kissimmee launched the Best Foot Forward program on Oct. 30, 2017.

The long-term goal is to cut pedestrian injuries in half in ten years. The short-term goals are to increase driver yield rates by 60 percent on roads posted 35 mph and lower, and a 10 percent increase on driver yield rates year over year on roads posted 40 mph and higher. To learn more, visit www.iyield4peds.org.

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