

Southern Manatee Fire & Rescue District Newsletter

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Slow Down. School is in Session!

First Day of school in Manatee County is August 12th. Time to slow down and pay attention to walkers, bikers and buses.

Here are a few safety tips to get you through the new school year:

- When walking, cross only at the crosswalk. Teach your children to obey traffic signals, signs and pavement markings. Always look both ways before crossing a street. Never run across intersections.
- When driving, always obey school zone signals and speed limits. Watch out for crossing guards. Never pass other vehicles or make a U turn in a school zone. Do not block the crosswalk with your vehicle. Allow enough room for walkers to get past your vehicle and do not turn on a red light when pedestrians are in the crosswalk. Never pass a vehicle that has stopped for pedestrians.
- Always wear a helmet when riding a bike. Bicycles must obey the same rules as vehicles on the road. Watch for bikes coming out of driveways and from behind cars in parking lots.
- When driving behind a bus, allow a greater distance behind the bus than you would a car. Slow down once the yellow lights are activated on the bus and be prepared to stop. It is illegal in all 50 states to pass a school bus that has stopped to load or unload children. All drivers moving in either direction on a two way street must stop for the school bus once the arm is extended and the red lights are on. On a divided highway with a paved median, all drivers in either direction must stop for a school bus displaying a stop signal and must remain stopped until the road is clear of children. Be alert when the bus is loading or unloading. Children are unpredictable and may bolt out round the bus.



Please note the diagram outlining Florida law for stopping for a school bus. Each illegal pass-by could result in a tragic injury or fatality of a student.

The inconvenience of an extra few seconds spent waiting for a stopped school bus is insignificant compared to the **loss of a child's life.**

