



# Chatham Borough Police Department

## Traffic Safety Unit



As a pedestrian, you are at a major disadvantage when crossing streets, intersections and standing on corners. You are not always visible to drivers even when you think you are; especially for large truck and bus drivers and you don't stand a chance if a vehicle hits you. Pedestrians need to be careful of all vehicles and never take chances when they are sharing the road with large vehicles, like trucks and buses. Here are some safety tips that can keep you safe when walking from one destination to another.

But first, we have provided the NJ State Statute as it pertains to pedestrians and their responsibilities under Title 39 of the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Code.

### **39:4-34. Pedestrians to cross within crosswalk or at right angles; facing traffic; sidewalks**

Where traffic is not controlled and directed either by a police officer or a traffic control signal, pedestrians shall cross the roadway within a crosswalk or, in the absence of a crosswalk, and where not otherwise prohibited, at right angles to the roadway. It shall be unlawful for a pedestrian to cross any highway having roadways separated by a median barrier, except where provision is made for pedestrian crossing. On all highways where there are no sidewalks or paths provided for pedestrian use, pedestrians shall, when practicable, walk only on the extreme left side of the roadway or its shoulder facing approaching traffic.

**Where sidewalks are provided it shall be unlawful for any pedestrian to walk along and upon an adjacent roadway.**

### **WATCH YOUR WALK WAYS**

Walk on sidewalks and in crosswalks whenever possible. It is important to pay attention to walk signals and keep a safe distance when standing on street corners. Trucks and buses make wide right turns and occasionally run up onto the corner of the sidewalk. It is important for you to be alert and to move back. Mostly likely, the truck driver will not see you or may be distracted and you could be seriously injured or killed if hit.

### **KNOW YOUR NO-ZONES**

Be careful of the blind spots, or No-Zones, around cars, trucks, and buses when walking near or around them. Always assume the driver does not know that you are there. Because of a truck's large blind spots, a driver may not see, so it is up to you to avoid a crash. Never walk behind a truck when it is backing up; truck drivers cannot see directly behind the truck and could seriously injure you.



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### **STOPPING DISTANCES**

Use caution when crossing intersections and streets. You may think vehicles will stop for you, but they may not see you or even be able to stop. Remember, trucks, cars, motorcycles and bicyclists, all have different stopping capabilities. In fact, trucks can take much more space to stop than passenger vehicles. Never take a chance with a truck, even if the driver sees you he may not be able to stop.

### **MAKE YOURSELF VISIBLE**

Wear bright or reflective clothing, especially when walking at night. Dressing to be seen will make it safer for you and drivers. Professional drivers do a lot of driving at night, and there's a good chance a driver will not see you if you don't make yourself visible. Carrying a flashlight is your safest bet for being seen at night.

### **AVOID DISTRACTIONS**

Using electronic devices like cell phones and MP3 players while walking can increase your likelihood of being involved in a motor vehicle accident. Pay attention to your surroundings and avoid distractions. No plan or strategy guarantees your safety; all you can do is remain cautious and take no unnecessary chances. The more careful you are, the safer you will be. The very act of holding a cell phone can limit the visual field of view while crossing the roadway.

### **WATCH OUT FOR WIDE LOADS**

Trucks with wide loads have very limited visibility as well as difficulty maneuvering. Wide loads are much heavier and take up lots of room on the road. You need to be aware when walking near a truck with a wide load, because the driver may not see you. Trucks with wide loads make even wider right turns, require more space, and take even longer to stop than other trucks on the road. Remember to keep your distance when walking around these large trucks.