

COMMUNITY RELATIONS DEPARTMENT/RGPF

ON THE BEAT: PEDESTRIANS SAFETY

Safety is a shared responsibility for all road users, including drivers and pedestrians. As drivers, one must be responsible and look out for pedestrians at all times; at no time should one park, wait, or block a pedestrian crossing. It is a no parking zone in itself, and therefore does not need the erection of any "no-parking" signs.

Police officers have been noticing that there are problems with drivers who for some reason choose to park on pedestrian crosswalks thus hindering pedestrians and exposing them to danger. One of such pedestrian crossing/crosswalk is the one located on Church Street for the St. George's Anglican senior and junior school. (These are our nation's children, the future generation and we drivers treat them with such disregard; surely we can do better. We cannot be too busy to protect our children).

Drivers, please be alert!!! Watch for pedestrians at all times. These here are some tips that can help you to help pedestrians.

- Scan the road, and the sides of the road ahead, for potential pedestrians.
- Before making a turn, look in all directions for pedestrians who may be using the crossing/crosswalk.
- Don't drive while distracted or after consuming alcohol or other drugs.
- Do not use your cell phone while driving especially near marked pedestrian crossings/crosswalks.
- Look carefully behind your vehicle for approaching pedestrians, especially small children, before backing-up.
- Do not park or block pedestrian crossings/crosswalks.
- Yield to pedestrians in crosswalk whether marked or unmarked and when making turns at intersections.
- Use extra caution when driving near schools for children playing along the street or older pedestrians who may not see or hear you.
- Do not overtake or pass a vehicle that is stopped for pedestrians.
- Always be prepared to stop for pedestrians.

Drivers, remember the use of pedestrian crosswalks for parking is an offence; the laws of Grenada (Chapter 5 Volume 1 Section 77 subsection 1 states: If any person parks or leaves a motor vehicle at a place or in a manner or at a time prohibited by order of the Commissioner of Police, he commits an offence.

Pedestrians also create their share of problems, by taking risks -- failing to adhere to signs and warnings from the police, who may be conducting duty at crosswalks, and also to traffic lights for pedestrians. In so doing, they put themselves in harms way.

There are simple steps that pedestrians can take to avoid accidents and avert danger. Here are some tips:

- Be careful at a crossing. Stop, look, listen and think before crossing the road.
- Never assume a driver has seen you and will stop. Make eye contact with the driver don't just look at the vehicle. If driver is on a cell phone, he may not be paying enough attention to drive safely.
- Always cross at a pedestrian crosswalk, commonly known as pedestrian crossing or at traffic signals and never rely solely on them. Look before you cross the road.
- If there is no pedestrian crossing facility, choose a location where you have a clear view of approaching traffic and where drivers can see you.
- Always walk on the sidewalk. If there is none, walk facing traffic.
- Avoid talking on cell phone or using headphones while crossing. Your hearing and judgement can be impaired due to the distraction.
- Avoid crossing on a bend.
- Be seen!! At night wear something light in colour or wear reflective clothing (such as wristbands).
- Cross the road in a well-lit area at night and stand clear of all obstacles before crossing so drivers can see you.
- Be smart and alert; avoid dangerous behaviour.

Parents should teach their children to be safe as a pedestrian. Parents must be examples to children do not take calculated risk in the presence of children. Be an example and practice safety. As the saying goes, children learn what they see and they learn safety by watching adults.

Please, adults, set good examples by always crossing the road at a pedestrian crossing/crosswalk, or at traffic lights, where they are available. Look left; look right then left again before crossing a street. This may sound trivial but it is truly being a good example as well as safe guarding our future generation.

It is better to be safe than sorry; accidents do not discriminate. They can happen to anyone.