

Pedestrians advised to “Walk Safe” — November 1

Walking is considered an important part of a healthy lifestyle -- but it can also be a dangerous activity. In 2004, there were over 2,100 pedestrian-related crash incidents reported to ICBC. That same year, police attended 65 pedestrian fatalities. That’s why ICBC is advising pedestrians to “Walk Safe.”

With the fall season approaching, pedestrians should take extra care when using the streets, advised Greg Wirch, an ICBC provincial loss prevention program manager. “Police reports indicate 45 per cent of fatalities occur between 3 p.m. and 9 p.m.,” Wirch said. “With the arrival of shorter days and inclement weather conditions, it’s important that pedestrians use greater caution when crossing roads, and ensure they can be seen at all times.”

The danger zone for pedestrians is intersections. Based on police reports, over half of all pedestrian-related crashes occur at intersections and about one quarter take place at crossings with signal lights. ICBC statistics show that the majority of incidents occur in the heavily urbanized areas of Greater Vancouver and Fraser Valley, but rural roads also pose a problem. Often the severity of pedestrian injuries on rural roads is greater due to road conditions and unsafe speed.

Police attribute the leading causes of driver error in a pedestrian incident to failing to yield the right of way when turning and to driving without due care.

On average, ICBC pays out over \$100 million in pedestrian claims annually.

Tips for pedestrians:

- Wear bright-colored clothing or carry reflective articles, especially when walking at night.
- Make eye contact with drivers, so you know they see you and they know you see them.
- Always be cautious and pay attention to traffic, as drivers may sometimes disobey traffic signals or not stop.
- Use designated crossing points and obey pedestrian traffic signs.
- Look left, right and left again before stepping off the curb.

Tips for drivers:

- Always be alert for pedestrians, especially at intersections.
- Always yield to pedestrians.
- Beware of pedestrians who appear indecisive or inattentive.
- Be alert to vehicles stopped in the lane next to yours. They may be yielding for a pedestrian.
- Beware of pedestrians still attempting to cross the street on a flashing orange pedestrian signal.
- Watch out for pedestrians when backing up your vehicle.

**For more information contact:
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