Walking Crimes:
Pedestrian Laws and Safety
Pedestrian Laws are relevant because

1 Health and Safety
2 It’s the Law
3 Resources Diverted
OBJECTIVES

Identify Pedestrian laws as a Municipal Court Issue;

Discuss community safety related to Pedestrian laws;

Name one resource particular to Pedestrian regulation.
Focus on Safety
Reasons for pedestrian fatalities

- Inattentive drivers
- Intoxicated pedestrians
- Distracted pedestrians
Pedestrian Fatalities
# by the numbers #

NATIONALLY:

- Pedestrians accounted for 12% of all deaths in motor vehicle traffic crashes
- 4,092 pedestrians were killed nationally
- 59,000 pedestrians were injured nationally
- Children accounted for 25% of all injured
Pedestrian Fatalities
# by the numbers #

41% of pedestrian fatalities occurred in 4 states:
Pedestrian Fatalities
# by the numbers#

TEXAS:

- 344 pedestrians died in traffic crashes
- 11% of all traffic fatalities in Texas
- 8% of all pedestrian fatalities nationally
What is the TEXAS Data?

- **DFW 2011**
  - Bic - 12
  - Ped - 35

- **Austin 2011**
  - Bic - 20
  - Ped - 41

- **San Antonio 2011**
  - Bic - 14
  - Ped - 55

- **Houston 2011**
  - Bic - 15
  - Ped - 40
Walking is Dangerous
Distracted Walking is More Dangerous
Distractions While Walking

- Texting
- Talking on cell phones
- Looking at smart phones
- Listening to an iPod or music device
What is Being Done to Make the Roadways Safer?
Is this one of those things?

Video: Phone App For Distracted Pedestrians Detects When You're About to Get Hit By a Car

By Clay Dillow  Posted 11.28.2011 at 2:08 pm  5 Comments

WalkSafe  WalkSafe uses vision learning to figure out which direction cars are facing and establish whether any of them are threats to a distracted user who might unwittingly wander into traffic while taking on the phone.
WalkSafe:
a pedestrian safety app for mobile users who walk and talk while crossing roads

Tianyu Wang, Giuseppe Cardone, Antonio Corradi, Lorenzo Torresani, Andrew T. Campbell

Dartmouth College University of Bologna
1. Traffic Engineering (Road Construction)
   - crosswalk stop lines moved back
   - diagonal parking
   - preventive markings painted on pavement
Data Application

2. Training and Education

“Willy the Whistle”
Street crossing program for kindergarten  Look L-R-L

https://www.nysdot.gov/about-nysdot/kids-corner/repository/sss_kids/walk_here.html
John’s “Virtual” Journey
http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/saferjourney/
Data Application

3. Enforcement – Traffic Safety Regulations

1969 study - enforcement focused on drivers not the relationship between driver and pedestrian.

15,000 crashes each year
100 fatalities
Another Focus Area
Who would focus on this data?

- Fed Hwy Admn
- NTSA
- TxDOT
- DPS
- Cities

1. Safety
2. Law
3. Resources
Diverted Resources?
Pedestrian Research -1998
Pedestrian Research - 1998
WHERE! Did the Frog Cross the Road
http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/publications.htm

http://www.nhtsa.gov/Pedestrians
http://www.nhtsa.gov/Bicycles

http://www.biketexas.org/
http://www.biketexas.org/en/education/educational-resources

http://www.txdot.gov/safety/tips/bicycles.htm
http://www.txdot.gov/safety/tips/pedestrians.htm
Texas Law
Walk this way…

Pedestrian defined:
- A person on foot
- Section 541.001(3), TC

Pedestrian laws:
- Most in Chapter 552, TC
Texas Transportation Code

552 (Ped) & 551 (Bike)

Pedestrian: A person on foot

541.001 (3)

Must follow traffic signals

552.005

Crosses generally at crosswalks

552.006

Left side / shoulder, facing traffic

552.001

Walk on available sidewalk

552.006 or

Facing traffic

It's the LAW
Ped X-ing Crash
It’s the law…

Obey pedestrian control signals

Pedestrians must follow pedestrian control signals if provided

- Walk on “Walk”
- Do not walk on “Don’t Walk” or “Wait”
- Proceed to sidewalk or safety island if only partially across if “Don’t Walk” or “Wait” is displayed
Walking Points…

Where to Walk?

0 On a sidewalk if one is provided and accessible

0 If no sidewalk:
  0 On the left side of the road or
  0 On the shoulder facing oncoming traffic
Walking Points…

Where to Cross?

- At a marked crosswalk, in a pedestrian tunnel, or on an overhead pedestrian crossing, if provided
- At an unmarked crosswalk at an intersection
- On the right half side of the crosswalk
Where to Cross?

- Between adjacent intersections with operating traffic control systems, ONLY in a marked crosswalk
- NOT diagonally across an intersection unless authorized by a traffic control device
It’s the Law…

Who has the right of way?
Where did the Chicken cross the Road (and what was there)?
It’s the Law…

Vehicle shall yield ROW to pedestrian:

- when pedestrian is crossing at a crosswalk facing a “Walk” signal
- if there is no traffic control signal and pedestrian is already crossing in the vehicle’s half of roadway or close to vehicle’s half of roadway
- when vehicle is entering or emerging from an alley, building, private road, or driveway and pedestrian is crossing entrance on sidewalk
Vehicles shall exercise due care to avoid hitting a pedestrian

Honk the horn to warn if necessary

Exercise proper precaution when seeing a child or a confused/incapacitated person on a roadway
A pedestrian may **not** suddenly leave a curb or other place of safety and proceed into a crosswalk in the path of a vehicle so close that it is **impossible** for the vehicle operator to yield.
Protected Pedestrians...

Blind or Disabled Pedestrians

- a vehicle approaching an intersection or crosswalk where a pedestrian guided by an assistance animal or carrying a white cane is crossing shall take necessary precautions to avoid injuring or endangering the pedestrian.
It’s the Law…

Pedestrian shall yield ROW to vehicle:

0 when pedestrian is crossing a roadway somewhere other than in a crosswalk or where a pedestrian tunnel / overhead crossing is provided
Blind Pedestrians

- increased penalty for causing serious bodily injury or death to a blind person
  - must be shown at trial (alleged in charging instrument)
  - fine increased to maximum $500
  - and 30 hours of CS to organization that primarily serves blind or disabled persons, including sensitivity training
Protected Pedestrians...

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Protected Pedestrians...

Children (especially school age)

- no specific laws in Chapter 552

but see

- Passing a School Bus
- Offenses Committed in School Zone
Passing Other Stopped Cars

0 a vehicle approaching from the rear another vehicle stopped for a pedestrian crossing at a crosswalk may not pass the stopped vehicle.
Other Pedestrian Laws…

Solicitation By Pedestrians

0 may not stand in the road to solicit a ride, contribution, employment, or business from a vehicle

0 may solicit a charitable contribution if authorized by local authority

0 may not stand on or near road to solicit the watching or guarding of a parked vehicle
Court Issues:

What are the fines for pedestrian offenses?

VARIES depending on the offense

- generally $1-$200 general penalty
- note the higher penalty for SBI/death to blind/disabled pedestrian
- different fines for passing a school bus
WHY

Safety issues
Laws are mostly traffic 
Diverted Resources

We are all about to
WALK out of here
WALK to our cars
WALK across the street

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