



POLICE DEPARTMENT

54 E Moore St.
Walla Walla, WA 99362-0237
(509) 527-4434
FAX (509) 525-5057

******PRESS RELEASE****WALLA WALLA POLICE DEPT******

Police to “step up” enforcement of traffic laws

June 13, 2014

Walla Walla Police Officers have been directed by the City Manager and City Council to take a “zero tolerance” approach in enforcing traffic laws after several serious collisions in recent months involving pedestrians and bicyclists being struck by vehicles. The enforcement campaign will continue through the summer and will include violations committed by pedestrians and bicyclists, as well as the motoring public.

Two pedestrians have been struck this week while walking in the City. Dr. Horst Peter Rother, 70, visiting from Germany, was struck and killed while crossing Main Street in the crosswalk at the intersection of Palouse. Mary Morris, 68, was struck as she was walking along Whitman Street, near the intersection of Sturm Ave. She remains hospitalized in “satisfactory condition”. As the investigations continue, there is no indication the victims were doing anything that could have been a contributory factor in either collision.

Since the beginning of 2013, Walla Walla Police have investigated 31 collisions involving injuries to 15 bicyclists and 16 pedestrians. In eight of the collisions involving bicycles, the riders were committing some type of violation or riding in an unsafe manner. In two of the collisions involving pedestrians, one involved a subject attempting a nighttime mid-block street crossing, and the other involved a subject who ran into the side of a moving vehicle.

Motorists should remain focused on driving and not be distracted by their cell phones or other items in their vehicles.

Pedestrians need to remain vigilant of traffic around them and not to assume vehicles will see and yield to them. Pedestrians are reminded that jay-walking is a violation and officers will be citing offenders in the downtown area.

Bicyclists are reminded that they are required to obey all of the same “rules of the road” that apply to vehicles.

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Tim Bennett #245
Public Information Officer
Walla Walla Police Dept.
(509)524-4381