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STATE POLICE

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Wolf Administration, Safety Partners Stress Safe Driving Around School Buses, Announce Results of Operation Safe Stop 2022

Harrisburg, PA – The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) was joined today by the Pennsylvania State Police, the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Newberry Township Police, and West Shore School District transportation partners to reinforce the importance of school transportation safety and highlight the potential school transportation challenges posed by changing daylight conditions. The results of Operation Safe Stop, an annual school bus enforcement and education initiative that was held on October 19 this year, were also announced.

Operation Safe Stop data revealed that participating school districts and law enforcement agencies reported witnessing 155 violations of the law, down from the 252 reported last year. The initiative is held in conjunction with local and state police departments, school districts, and pupil transportation providers to conduct enforcement, raise public awareness about the consequences of improper passing of school buses, and reduce occurrences. Convictions for breaking the [School Bus Stopping Law](#) increased from 314 in 2020 to 348 in 2021.

“The increase in convictions of the School Bus Stopping Law last year is just one reason why we’re reminding motorists of its importance. One incident of passing a school bus is one too many,” said Acting Deputy Secretary for Highway Administration Mike Keiser. “With additional challenges such as darkness coinciding with more of our students’ school bus ride times and the distraction of the quickly approaching holiday season, it is important that motorists remain vigilant while sharing the road with school buses and students.”

The School Bus Stopping Law requires motorists to stop at least 10 feet from the bus when approaching a school bus with its red lights flashing and stop arm extended. Motorists approaching from all directions are required to stop. The only exception to this law is when motorists encounter a school bus stopping on the opposite side of a divided highway when lanes of the highway are clearly separated by a divider, such as a concrete barrier or grassy median.

“Drivers might consider the penalties if convicted of disobeying Pennsylvania’s School Bus Stopping law steep - a \$250 fine, five points on your driving record and a 60-day license suspension,” said Corporal Zeina Black, Permits and Bus Safety Unit Supervisor with the Pennsylvania State Police. “But even worse than these penalties, a tragedy could occur if either a driver or a student is not paying attention to their surroundings.”

Some safety tips for students to remember while waiting for or loading and unloading the bus include:

- Get to the school bus stop five minutes early, so you won't have to run across the road to catch the bus.
- When waiting for the bus, stay away from traffic.
- Line up at least five giant steps away from the curb or the roadway to wait for the bus.
- Never run after the school bus if it has already left the bus stop.
- Never push when getting on or off the school bus.

"Student safety at school bus stops and in school zones is of the utmost importance and requires the undivided attention of all motorists," said Department of Education Secretary Eric Hagarty. "Local school districts work hard to identify the safest locations possible for school bus stops and to train their staff. But to ensure that students remain safe, we urge all drivers to watch for the flashing lights of school buses and always stop when students are getting on and off."

For more information about school bus safety, visit PennDOT's [School Bus Safety Tips](#) page on PennDOT's [Driver and Vehicle Services](#) website. The website also offers an interactive video illustrating Pennsylvania's school bus stopping law.

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