



DRIVE SMART Virginia Newsletter

Fall 2009

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Dear DRIVE SMART Virginia supporters:

Thank you for your support as we continue to spread our traffic safety message throughout Virginia! We kicked off Virginia's first annual Cycling & Pedestrian Awareness Week earlier this month and were most excited to have 116 partners participate.

We also enjoyed our traditional Fall board gathering at the Farm Bureau in Richmond and learned some interesting information from Dr. Lori Rice at VCU and Matt Howard with Zoom Safer. Following our board meeting, 72 golfers participated in our 7th Annual Golf Tournament, held this year at Hunting Hawk Golf Course in Glen Allen.

Many thanks to our sponsors:

Gold Level: Allstate Insurance; GEICO; Liberty Mutual Insurance; State Farm Insurance; Virginia Farm Bureau Insurance

Silver Level: Enterprise Rent-A-Car; Erie Insurance; Nationwide Insurance; Trichilo, Bancroft, McGavin, Horvath & Judkins, PC; PCI Association of America

Team Level: Rockingham Mutual Insurance; Virginia Farm Bureau Insurance; Sinnott, Nuckols & Logan, PC; Insurance Institute for Highway Safety

Reception Sponsors: PCI Association of America; Gentry Locke Rakes and Moore

Individual Level: Bill Tibbens

Hole Sponsor: Sedgwick Claims Management Services

This fall is lining up to be very busy, with numerous speaking engagements, conferences such as the Virginia EMS Symposium and the Virginia Driver Education Teachers Conference, and the national Distracted Driving Summit. As always, thank you for all that you do as we all work together to achieve our goals of safer roadways for all Virginians!

*Janet Brooking
Executive Director
DRIVE SMART Virginia*

Virginia Cycling & Pedestrian Awareness Week



The first annual Virginia Cycling & Pedestrian Awareness Week took place September 13-20 and we are very pleased to announce that 116 businesses, organizations and clubs signed up to be a partner. Thanks so much for your support in helping us spread the news about this important traffic safety issue. Partners helped hang posters, pass out flyers, shared news releases with local media, set up events at their organizations, and sent email messages to their employees and members. Thanks again to the following partners:

AAA Mid-Atlantic, AAA-Tidewater, Active Williamsburg Alliance, Adventures Bike Shop, Alfa Insurance, Alliance for Community Choice in Transportation, Allstate Insurance, Annandale High School, Anthem, Arlington County: BikeArlington, Ashland Police Department, Atlantic Transportation Services, Blue Ridge Parkway National Park Service, Botetourt County Chamber of Commerce, Carillion Roanoke Memorial Hospital Level 1 Trauma Center, Chesapeake Police Department, Chesterfield County Police Department, Christiansburg Police Department, Citizens Telephone Cooperative, City of Charlottesville, City of Falls Church, City of Virginia Beach, City of Williamsburg, CNA Insurance, Colony Insurance, CommonHealth, Culpeper Police Department, Cyclist for the Bay, Danville Parks & Recreation, Deep Creek High School, DMV: The Virginia Highway Safety Office, Drive Safe Hampton Roads, Dumfries Police Department, Electric Ink Graphic Design, Emporia Police Department, Erie Insurance Group, Fairfax Advocates for Better Bicycling, Fairfax County Police Department, Fairfax County Department of Transportation, Farmers Insurance Group, Frontier Culture Museum, George Mason University, GEICO, Gloucester High School, Godsey & Gibb Associates, Goodwill Industries of the Valleys, Inc., Grundy High School, Hampton Health Department, Hampton Police Department, Harrisonburg Police Department, Henrico County Police Department, Heritage High School, Herndon Police Department, Horizon Milling, JD Miles and Sons, Kettle Run High School, Kenbridge Construction, La Crosse Police Department, Law Offices of Jay R. Peluso P.C., Liberty Mutual Insurance, Longwood University Cycling Club, Mathews High School, Mathews Police Department, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, National Institute for Fitness & Sport, Nationwide Insurance, Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, New Kent County Sheriff's Department, Old Dominion University, Virginia Operation Lifesaver, Osage BioEnergy, Parsons Brinckerhoff, Partnership for Smarter Growth, Patrick Henry Community College, Printpack, Inc, Poquoson Police Department, Portsmouth Police Department, Powhatan County Public Schools, Progress Printing, Progressive Insurance Group, Purcellville Police Department, Richmond Area Bicycling Association, Richmond Pro Cycling, Richmond Triathlon Club, Roanoke Fire-EMS, Robert E. Lee High School, Rockingham Group, Rutherfordord Benefit Services, Safe Kids Virginia, Salem City Schools, Sam Perry Photography, SaveShoreDriveDay.net, State Farm Insurance, Studio Organics, Team Natures Path, Tennaco, Town of Orange Police, Town of Purcellville, Truck Enterprises, VAMAC, Inc, Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police, Virginia Automobile Dealers Association, Virginia Department of Health, Division of Injury and Violence Prevention, Virginia Department of Labor & Industry, Virginia Department of Transportation, Virginia Farm Bureau Insurance, Virginia Motor Vehicle Dealer Board, Virginia State Police, Virginia Tech, Virtexco Corporation, VML Insurance Programs, West Point Police Department, Youth of Virginia Speak Out, 28 Media, 3Sports

Distracted Driving Summit



After several high profile accidents that focused public attention on using cell phones on the road, the Obama administration has decided to hold a two-day summit this week on distracted driving.

U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood will be holding the summit on Wednesday, September 30 and Thursday, October 1. More than 200 safety experts, researchers, elected officials and members of the public will gather in Washington, D.C. to share their experiences, provide feedback and develop recommendations for reducing the growing safety risk that distracted driving is imposing on our nation's roads. "We must act now to stop distracted driving from becoming a deadly epidemic on our nation's roadways," said Secretary LaHood. "This Summit will give safety leaders from across the nation a forum to identify, target and tackle the fundamental elements of this problem."

The Distracted Driving Summit will bring together respected leaders from around the country for interactive sessions on the extent and impact of the problem, current research, regulations, best practices and other key topics. The two day Summit will feature five panels - on data, research, technology, policy, and outreach - with a range of experts discussing each topic.

The Summit will begin with a context setting panel where participants will examine the scope of the issue and the various distractions that exist, followed by a panel that will review currently available research. Day one wraps up with an examination of distractions caused by technology and efforts made to assess and reduce negative effects caused by current and planned devices. Panelists will also consider technology that can prevent the consequences of driver distraction.

Day two features a review of legislative and regulatory approaches for dealing with distracted driving; evaluations of the impact of such measures; and enforcement issues. Members of Congress and their staff will also have the opportunity to contribute to the discussion. Day two concludes with a discussion with teens about their experiences with distracted driving followed by an examination of various public awareness initiatives and research regarding the effectiveness of these efforts.

To watch this conference by live webcast, [click here](#).

7th Annual Golf Outing

Our 7th annual golf tournament was a great success, bringing in \$15,000 for DRIVE SMART. 72 golfers signed up and the rain held off, thankfully! The competition was tough but the Erie Insurance team comprised of James Timm, Steve Bacon, John James and Todd Sumser were



awarded 1st place.



In 2nd Place was the Virginia Farm Bureau team of Donnie Knowlson, Erwin Mitland, Davis Ashwell and Derek Mason. Congratulations are also in order for the State Farm team which earned 3rd place: Jon Hannah, Robert Scott, Tim Johnson and Ben Moody.

Good job to those who won the contests, too! Taylor Jones won the putting contest, Jim Maass won the closest to the pin contest and the longest drive winner was Dave Ashwell.

Hit and Run Accidents on the Rise

According to AAA Mid-Atlantic, it appears hit and run accidents have increased in 2009. "About 60 percent of the people killed in hit-and-run crashes are pedestrians," said John B. Townsend II, AAA Mid-Atlantic's manager of public and government affairs, adding that "one in five pedestrian fatalities involve hit-and-run drivers." 6757 such accidents were reported last year in the state and they usually happen in urban areas like Northern Virginia, Richmond and the Tidewater Region. [Full story.](#)

Distracted Driving and School Zones Findings



As kids head back to school, Safe Kids' new study entitled "Characteristics of Distracted Drivers in School Zones: A National Report" reveals a scary truth: One out of every six drivers in school zones is distracted.

With cell phones, email and text messaging being added to the list of more traditional distractions like eating and grooming, there are more ways than ever for drivers to become distracted - and potentially dangerous to children as they walk to and from school.

About 10 percent of drivers were caught using hand-held electronics - such as cell phones, PDAs, and Smartphones. These devices were the leading cause of distraction. And while laws on using electronics while driving are still being hotly debated, this research shows that simply having a law on the books could help reduce distracted driving. States that have laws are 13 percent less likely to have distracted drivers in school zones.

[More Information and Tips on Minimizing Distractions](#)

Virginia Goes Green

Governor Tim Kaine has announced his support for EcoDrivingUSA, a national initiative to promote green driving. Virginia is one of 18 states involved in the program, which was introduced to empower consumers to take green driving into their own hands by adjusting

their driving and vehicle maintenance habits. The group hopes to raise awareness of how subtle and easy-to-use driving and vehicle maintenance best practices can improve mileage by an average of 15 percent.

According to the EcoDriving website, EcoDriving produces the highest mileage from every single vehicle, regardless of vehicle size and age, so it offers an unmatched reach in addressing energy and climate issues by potentially affecting the nation's entire fleet of 245 million automobiles. The program's benefits are potentially huge:

- If just half of all drivers nationwide practiced moderate levels of EcoDriving, annual carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions could be reduced by about 100 million tons, or the equivalent of heating and powering 8.5 million households.
- If all Americans practiced EcoDriving, it would be equal to 450 billion miles traveled on our roadways without generating any CO₂ emissions. That's 1,500 CO₂-free miles for every man, woman and child in the United States each year.

[Read More](#)

Upcoming Events

October 5 -10

[Drive Safely Work Week](#)

November 3, 4

[Military Civilian/Transportation Safety Workshop](#)

November 11 - 15

[Virginia EMS Symposium](#)

November 16 -29

[Click It or Ticket Mini-Mobilization](#)