County of Riverside Safety Division

Safety Newsletter

Nov 2017

The Most Dangerous Time to Drive

As we 'Fall Back' to Shorter Days, Take Extra Care on the Road

Shorter days, fatigue, compromised night vision, rush hour and impaired drivers all contribute to making driving at night more dangerous than any other time of day. In fact, the risk of a fatal crash is three times greater at night, according to National Safety Council research.

As we bid farewell to daylight saving's time

When Daylight Saving Time ends – for 2017, that's Sunday, Nov. 5 – many people will find themselves spending more time driving in the dark. Depth perception, color recognition and peripheral vision can be compromised in the dark, and the glare of headlights from an oncoming vehicle can temporarily blind a driver.

Even with high-beam headlights on, visibility is limited to about 500 feet (250 feet for normal headlights) creating less time to react to something in the road, especially when driving at higher speeds.

What should you do to combat darkness?

- Aim your headlights correctly, and make sure they're clean;
- Dim your dashboard;
- Look away from oncoming lights;
- If you wear glasses, make sure they're anti-reflective ;
- Clean the windshield to eliminate streaks;
- Slow down to compensate for limited visibility and reduced stopping time;

http://www.nsc.org/learn/safety-knowledge/Pages/news-and-resources-driving-at-night.aspx

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Compromised Night Vision

Night vision is the ability to see well in low-light conditions. As we age, we have greater difficulty seeing at night. A 50-year-old driver may need twice as much light to see as well as a 30-year-old. At age 60 and older, driving can become even more difficult, according to the American Optometric Association. Some older drivers also may have compromised vision due to cataracts and degenerative eye diseases.

The AOA recommends older drivers:

◊ Have annual vision exams

◊ Reduce speed

◊ Take a driving course; even experienced drivers can benefit from a refresher course, and some of the rules have probably changed

◊ Minimize distractions, like talking with passengers or listening to the radio

◊ Check with your doctor about side effects of prescription drugs

◊ Limit driving to daytime hours if necessary

Fatigue

A National Sleep Foundation poll says 60% of adults have driven while they were tired, and another 37%, or 103 million people, have fallen asleep at the wheel. Of those, 13% say they fall asleep while driving at least once a month, and 4% say they have caused a crash by falling asleep while driving.

The reasons are many – shift work, lack of quality sleep, long work hours, sleep disorders – and it doesn't only happen on lengthy trips.

These staggering numbers are backed up by a report by NHTSA that 100,000 police-reported crashes are a result of driver fatigue. Most crashes or near-misses happen at the times you would expect drivers to be tired: 4 to 6 a.m., midnight to 2 a.m. and 2 to 4 p.m., according to NSF.

Drowsy driving puts everyone on the road at risk. Losing two hours of sleep has the same effect on driving as having three beers, and tired drivers are three times more likely to be in a car crash if they are fatigued.

Nov. 5-12, 2017, is Drowsy Driving Prevention Week. The National Sleep Foundation offers this

- Get seven or more hours of sleep a night
- Don't drive if you've been awake for 24 hours or more
- Stop every two hours to rest
- Pull over and take a nap if you're drowsy
- Travel during times you are normally awake

Rush Hour

Evening rush hour (between 4 and 7 p.m. weekdays) is a dangerous time to drive due to crowded roadways and drivers eager to get home after work. In winter, it's dark during rush hour, compounding an already dangerous driving situation.

How can you make it home safely during rush hour?

- Don't be an impatient driver; slow down
- Stay in your lane and beware of drivers who dart from lane to lane
- Even though the route may be familiar, don't go on autopilot; stay alert
- In unfamiliar areas, consult a map before you go and memorize your route
- Don't touch your phone, eat, drink or do other things that are distracting

Stay Alert, Stay Alive

While we do only one quarter of our driving at night, 50% of traffic deaths happen at night. It doesn't matter whether the road is familiar or not, driving at night is always more dangerous.

More than 35,500 people were killed in car crashes in 2013, according to *Injury Facts 2016*. By taking some extra precautions, we can all contribute to reducing these numbers.

Lighting

As we are approaching mid-autumn, you may have noticed the parking lot to be darker as you go to your car. As such, parking lots, garages and structures should be equipped with adequate lighting for safety. So, how much lighting is required? The horizontal illumination recommendations for exterior parking lots range from a minimum of .2 for basic to .5 foot-candles for enhanced security at any given point in a parking area http://www.codepublishing.com/wa/redmond/cdg/rcdg20d/RCDG20D90.html#20D.90.10-090 (Section 20D.90.10-030)). However, these standards apply to energy usage and consumption and takes into consideration non-business hours. Full-output lighting for most parking facilities is usually needed beyond business hours and is imperative for employees traversing parking lots and entering parking vehicles safely during the late evening. Due to the environment and locations of some county facilities (e.g. transients, animals, trip/slip hazards, etc.) the average illumination levels should be maintained at a minimum of 4 foot-candles at any given point (Standard for Pedestrian Pathways and Access Routes) beyond normal business hours (See table 1, Pedestrian pathways and access routes).

Recommended Security Lighting Levels in Foot-candles (fc)

Table 1

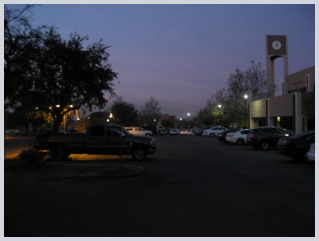
Security Lighting Application	Average Horizontal Illumination Level on Ground
Large Open Areas	0.5 – 2.0 fc[1]
Buildings	0.5 – 2.0 fc[1]
Perimeter Fence	0.5 fc[2]
Entrances	10 fc[3]
Gatehouses	30 fc[4]
Pedestrian Pathways and Access Routes	4 – 6 fc

So, when heading to your car, please take into account the following tips:

- Regardless of the presence of security, do not text while walking to your car; do so after you have entered and locked your doors;
- Be aware of speed bumps conditions and locations, they should be either painted or reflected (see photos);
- Scan the area before leaving a building; do not leave if you observe any suspicious individuals or activities;
- Check the back seat of your car before entering;
- If feasible, leave the building in groups;
- If a coworker is parked remotely, drive him or her to their car and wait until they enter safely;
- Do not park at the same spot every day;
- Have your key or fob in your hand before approaching your car;
- Avoid parking in remote areas of a parking lot or garage.

As a proactive measure, report any of the following:

- Broken parking lot lights to facilities or responsible party;
- Lights obstructed by trees or other shrubs;
- Unpainted and broken speedbumps; and
- Other trip or slip hazards you encounter.



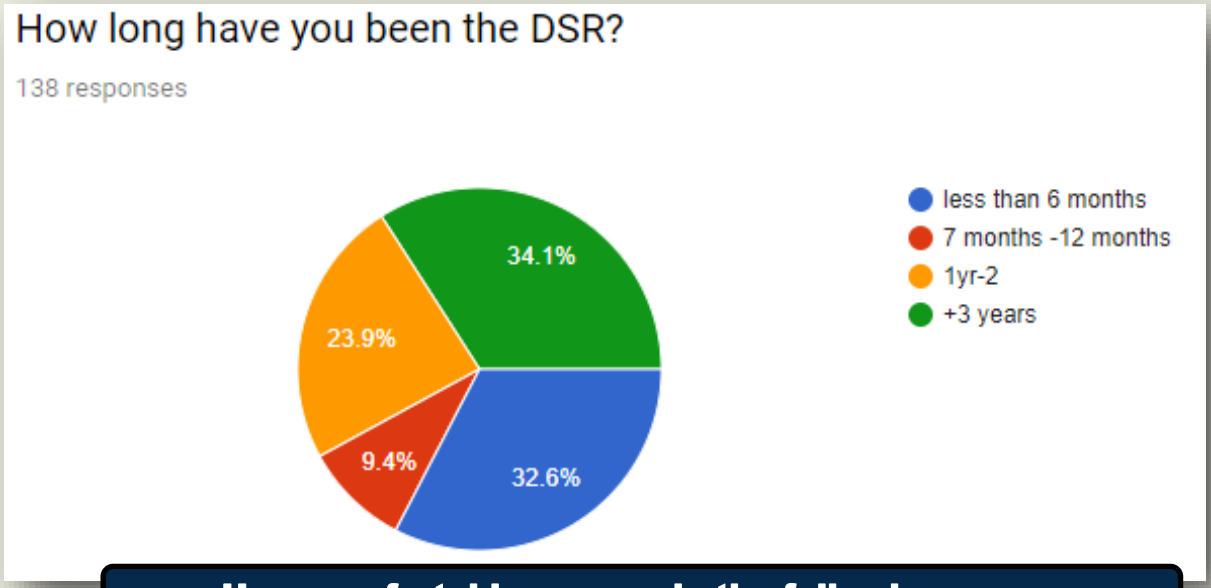
Calling all DSR's!

What's A DSR?

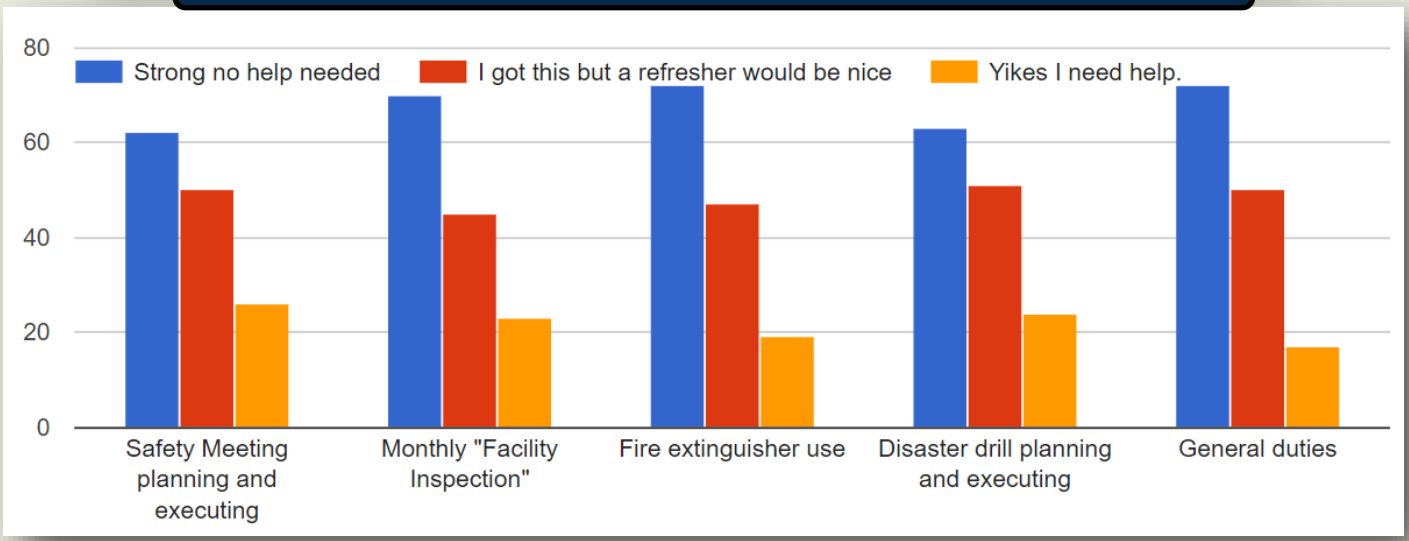
A DSR is a Department Safety Representative (DSR). They are your onsite Safety Representative responsible for complete your monthly facility inspections and communicate issues to the Safety Division Coordinator assigned to your department.

Below is information gathered from last months survey..

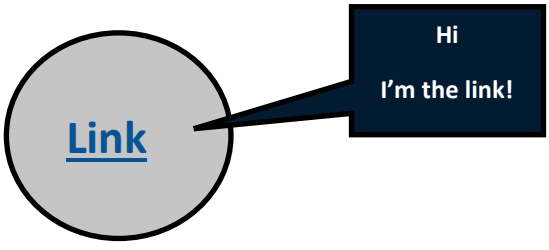
Please if you didn't complete the survey click on the link at the bottom DRS's ONLY



How comfortable are you in the following areas;



Have you (DSR'S) completed your survey?



To be completed by current DSR's only

If further assistance is needed
Contact the Safety Division
951-955-3520