



CITY OF BURNSVILLE, MINNESOTA POLICE DEPARTMENT

100 Civic Center Parkway
Burnsville, Minnesota 55337
952-895-4600 • Fax 952-895-4640

Robert T. Hawkins
Chief of Police
952-895-4614

Contact:
Jeffrey W. Witte
Sergeant/Public Information Officer
952-895-4596
Jeff.witte@ci.burnsville.mn.us

ATTENTION: NEWS DIRECTOR FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Burnsville Police Department Urges Back-to-School Bus Safety

Burnsville, Minn. – Aug. 29, 2007 – High on the checklist of back-to-school preparation is a list of bus safety reminders for parents, children and motorists. Every Minnesota resident is responsible for knowing school bus laws and common ways to prevent school bus accidents.

The Burnsville Police Department is urging families to have discussions with their children and for motorists to pay attention to current bus safety laws. Children who know the procedure of where they can wait and how to walk around the bus can avoid becoming the victim of an accident. Motorists who become more aware also can help with school bus safety.

Whether children walk to school, ride the bus or ride with parents, the most important thing each morning is that the child makes it safely to the school entrance. Often families are so focused about what book needs to get into the backpack, or what's the school lunch that day, that distractions come easily in the midst of traffic and bus riders waiting at bus stops.

As part of "back-to-school" homework, the Burnsville Police Department encourages residents to know their bus safety laws and what to tell their kids to do to be safe-to-school.

Parents

- Teach children to follow these common sense practices to make school bus transportation safer.

Drivers

- When backing out of a driveway or leaving a garage, watch out for children walking or bicycling to school.

- When driving in neighborhoods with school zones, watch out for young people who may be thinking about getting to school, but may not be thinking of getting there safely.
- Slow down. Watch for children walking in the street, especially if there are no sidewalks in the neighborhood.
- Slow down. Watch for children playing and congregating near bus stops.
- Be alert. Children arriving late for the bus may dart into the street without looking for traffic.
- Learn the “flashing signal light system” that school bus drivers use to alert motorists of pending actions:
 - **Yellow flashing lights** indicate that the bus is preparing to stop to load or unload children. Motorists should slow down and prepare to stop their vehicles.
 - **Red flashing lights** and extended stop arms indicate that the bus has stopped, and that children are getting on or off. Motorists must stop their cars and wait until the red lights stop flashing, the extended stop sign is withdrawn, and the bus begins moving before they can start driving again.

Children

- Get to the bus stop at least five minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive.
- When the bus approaches, stand at least three giant steps (6 feet) away from the curb, and line up away from the street.
- Wait until the bus stops, the door opens, and the driver says that it’s okay before stepping onto the bus.
- If you must cross the street in front of the bus, walk on the sidewalk or along the side of the road to a point at least five giant steps (10 feet) ahead of the bus before you cross. Be sure that the bus driver can see you, and you can see the bus driver.
- Use the handrails to avoid falls. When exiting the bus, be careful that clothing with drawstrings and book bags with straps don’t get caught in the handrails or doors.
- Never walk behind the bus.
- Walk at least three giant steps away from the side of the bus.
- If you drop something near the bus, tell the bus driver. Never try to pick it up because the driver may not be able to see you.

Here is a link for additional resources about bus laws:

- **“Know and obey Minnesota School Bus Laws”** and **“Common Mistakes Motorist Make”** <http://www.msboa.com/pam.html>

The Burnsville Police Department is serious about improving roadway safety along with protecting the safety of students in our schools. Along with an active school liaison officer program, neighborhood police officers are assigned to each school in the city through the innovative “B.L.U.E. in the School” program. More information on the Burnsville Police Department is available at www.burnsville.org/police.