



Division of Capitol Police

News Release

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Capitol Police step up safety for Capitol Square streets

RICHMOND -- The Division of Capitol Police announced a campaign Tuesday aimed at improving vehicle and pedestrian safety at intersections in and around Capitol Square.

"As a community, all of us who work in and visit Capitol Square can do better when it comes to safety," said Col. Anthony S. Pike, the Capitol Police chief. "It falls on all of us to not only be vigilant as we go through our workday, but to know the laws and put them into practice, whether we are driving to and from work or making our way around the grounds each day."

Capitol Police have increased their presence in recent months at some of the busiest intersections in the city, including 14th and Bank/Franklin streets. Their goals have been twofold: to work with drivers and pedestrians to create safer conditions, and to improve traffic flow during morning and evening rush hours.

"One discovery from that increased presence that is particularly concerning is the number of drivers who illegally enter pedestrian crosswalks and block the intersections as the lights cycle," Pike said. "Not only are they breaking the law by entering the so-called box illegally, but they're putting pedestrians in great danger. Pedestrians have no way to defend themselves against motor vehicles."

Pike said officers are going to step up efforts to inform drivers about Virginia laws governing pedestrian crosswalks. Those efforts will include a partnership with the Richmond Police Department through the use of electronic message boards as well as officers speaking with drivers and pedestrians.

Pike said motorists and pedestrians can expect to see a continued stepped-up presence of police at 14th and Bank/Franklin as well as other key intersections in and around the Capitol Square complex in the months ahead.

"We're going to keep reaching out to our stakeholders and working with them," he said. "We're making progress, but to reach our goal of a safer Capitol Square, we need everyone to not only think safety, but to practice it."

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