



PRESS RELEASE

**Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office
SHERIFF ERIC FAGAN**



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Oct. 6, 2023

Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office Urges Vigilance Amidst Rise in Auto-Pedestrian Incidents

(FORT BEND COUNTY, TEXAS) – The Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office urges both drivers and pedestrians to exercise caution in response to an increase in auto-pedestrian incidents.

In Fort Bend County, Texas crash records for 2023 indicate the number of accidents involving motor vehicles and pedestrians has more than doubled, increasing from 14 incidents in August to 27 in September. This is a significant fourfold increase compared to the 6 incidents reported in July.

Similarly, crashes involving motor vehicles and pedalcyclists have seen an uptick. In July, two such incidents were reported, while September saw a surge to 12. In August, three auto-pedalcyclist crashes were reported in Fort Bend County.

In response to the increase, the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office urges all road users to play their part in reducing these incidents on Texas roadways. Drivers are especially urged to exercise heightened vigilance in areas that witness heavy foot traffic from children. The following guidelines are provided for the safety of both drivers and pedestrians.

For Drivers:

Exercise Caution: Reduce your speed, maintain vigilant awareness, and prepare to come to a complete stop when approaching a crosswalk.

Stay Alert: Pay close attention to your surroundings, adhere to all traffic signs and signals, and actively avoid distractions while driving.

Yield to Pedestrians: Always prioritize the safety of pedestrians in crosswalks by yielding the right-of-way and refrain from passing a vehicle stopped at a crosswalk.

Know the Law: Texas drivers should also be aware of the Lisa Torry Smith Act, which amended section 544.007 of the Texas Transportation Code. It requires drivers to stop and yield the right of way to pedestrians or cyclists lawfully in the intersection or an adjacent crosswalk. An offense under the Lisa Torry Smith Act is a Class A misdemeanor, except in the case that the pedestrian or cyclist suffers serious bodily injury. In that event the offense is a state jail felony.

For Pedestrians:

Stop and Look: Before entering a crosswalk, pause and carefully scan for approaching vehicles. Make sure it's safe to cross.

Stay Alert: When walking put away electronics that take your eyes and ears off the road.

Assist Children: If you have younger children with you, guide them safely through the crosswalks, ensuring they understand the importance of looking out for vehicles.

"Stay vigilant, stay safe." said Sheriff Eric Fagan. "By following these guidelines, both drivers and pedestrians can contribute to safer crosswalk experiences for everyone."

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About the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office

The Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office was founded in 1837 and is the largest and most diverse law enforcement agency in Fort Bend County. The Sheriff's Office has over 900 employees, including 615 sworn peace officers and 22 reserve volunteer deputies dedicated to protecting and serving nearly 900,000 Fort Bend County residents. Among the 10 fastest-growing counties in the nation, Fort Bend covers 885 square miles and includes 21 unincorporated communities.

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