

## **City Code Chatter — Back-to-school, safety a concern**

Written by Chris Lee

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Crosswalks, flashing lights, kids and bikes. Back-to-school time has come and that means time to beef up safety and awareness.

Now that school has started, drivers throughout town need to be more cautious when coming to a crosswalk, Police Chief Phil Biersdorfer said.

By law, if a crosswalk is being used by anyone, all vehicles are required or obligated to stop and wait until the area is clear. Biersdorfer said Holyoke PD patrols the crosswalks when they can, both in the morning and afternoon.

The flashing signals on S. Interocean Ave. are in operation for about an hour in the morning and then again in the afternoon warning drivers of the slower posted speed. Times are from about 7:45-8:45 a.m. and then again from 2:45-3:45 p.m.

The speed limit usually is 35 m.p.h. but while the light is flashing, the limit is reduced to 20 m.p.h.

Fines for speeding through the zone while the lights are flashing are doubled. Biersdorfer mentioned a ticket for traveling as much as 20 m.p.h. over the speed limit can cost around \$500.

When traveling on the streets around the schools, Biersdorfer said to obey all speed limits and use caution. Many of the streets are permanent 20 m.p.h. zones.

### **City curfew enforced**

Biersdorfer wants everyone to remember the curfew for minors in Holyoke.

The city ordinance pertaining to the curfew reads, "it is unlawful for any child under the age of 17 years to loaf and/or loiter in any public street, alley or any other public place within the city,

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on foot or in any conveyance of any nature between the hours of 11 p.m. and 6 a.m. on Sundays, Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays or Thursdays; and between the hours of 12 midnight and 6 a.m. on Fridays and Saturdays, unless accompanied by a parent, guardian or adult member of his/her family.”

Biersdorfer said there has been some vandalism at the park where roughly 25 sprinkler heads have been pulled off and broken from the underground sprinkler system. He guesses the crime has been done while the sprinklers have been on, so they know about when it has been happening.

### **Parking issues around the schools**

Biersdorfer would also like people to keep in mind parking around the schools. The bus zone directly in front of the high school is closed from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on school days. The area directly in front of the grade school is restricted parking from 8-8:30 a.m. and then again from 3-3:30 p.m. to allow for buses to load and unload.

### **Neighborhood electric vehicles**

Senate Bill 75 has been passed which allows small electric vehicles on city streets in Colorado. Also known as neighborhood electric vehicles, they cut down on emissions and allow for quieter neighborhoods.

Sen. Gail Schwartz and Rep. Don Marostica were leaders in getting the bill passed.

Biersdorfer said vehicles such as golf carts fall under the category and are allowed on streets but must be street legal. Headlights, taillights, turn signals and brake lights are required, he said.

The vehicles may not travel on any street with a speed limit greater than 35 m.p.h.

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