

# Information Bulletin - School Bus Safety



## **Information bulletin**

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### **Motorists play key role in school bus safety**

#### ***Use caution and be alert when driving near buses and in school zones***

A quarter million Alberta students start and end their day with a ride on a school bus. But children aren't the only ones who need to be taught about school bus safety, because most injuries happen before or after the bus ride.

Motorists need to respect the flashing lights on a school bus, which create a safety zone for children around the vehicle and are often the children's only defence when they get on or off the bus. Motorists should remember the following when approaching a school bus:

- Watch out for alternating flashing amber lights, which means a school bus is slowing to stop where students will either be getting on or off the bus.
- Slow down and stop when the school bus activates its alternately flashing red lights. This means you must stop whether you are approaching an oncoming bus or following one. The only exception to this rule is when the bus is on the opposite side of a two-way highway that is physically divided by a median.
- Proceed only when the red lights on the bus have stopped flashing.
- Watch for school buses loading and unloading children, even if the lights aren't flashing.
- Be on the lookout for children crossing the road.

When travelling in school zones, drivers must pay attention to the posted signs. School zones have a speed limit of 30 km/h in both urban and rural areas. These limits are in effect on school days from 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., or unless otherwise posted. The fine for passing a school bus with its red lights flashing is \$543 and six demerit points.

Some municipalities have bylaws that do not require school buses to use their alternating flashing lights when stopping. In this case, drivers do not need to stop but should still be cautious and watch for pedestrians when the buses are loading or unloading students. Drivers need to stop if they see the red lights flashing.

According to Transport Canada, school bus travel remains the safest mode of transportation to and from schools. It is 16 times safer than the family car. Maintaining this level of safety requires motorists to do their part too.

For more information about traffic safety, contact the Traffic Safety Office at (780) 422-8839 or visit <http://www.saferoads.com/>.