

Hackensack joins pedestrian safety campaign

Rodrigo Torrejon, Staff Writer, @rod_torrejon Published 4:52 a.m. ET Oct. 26, 2017

HACKENSACK — The city police plan to combine strict enforcement of traffic rules with an education campaign to reduce the number of people hit by cars.

For the next month, city officials and the Police Department will launch an awareness campaign that aims to reduce car crashes involving pedestrians. Fliers and banners with the program's slogans "Heads Up, Phones Down" and "Check your vital signs" will be distributed throughout the city to reduce distracted driving and walking.

"It's educating pedestrians and drivers on how to be safer and conduct yourself while you're driving," Mayor John Labrosse said news conference Wednesday.

The police will also crack down on drivers not stopping for pedestrians and pedestrians that jaywalk, Labrosse said. He said it would be similar to the strict "Click it or ticket" enforcement campaign. One of the areas of focus will be the busy Prospect Avenue corridor.

The campaign was detailed Wednesday at a news conference announcing the Hackensack is joining the Street Smart NJ pedestrian safety campaign.

Through the collaboration with EZ RIDE Transportation Management Association, the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority and Hackensack University Medical Center, the city hopes to battle some of its grim statistics

Between 2012 and 2016, there were 273 car crashes involving pedestrians in the city, an official from the North Jersey Transportation Authority said. The crashes resulted in 264 injuries, and nine deaths.

In the past two years, there have been 256 pedestrians involved in car accidents admitted to the hospital, said Dr. Sanjeev Kaul, the hospital's chief of trauma and surgical critical care and injury prevention. Of those, nine percent resulted in fatalities.

"Amongst the patients that are admitted to our institution, almost a quarter of them had head injuries," said Kaul. "So it's a very significant event."

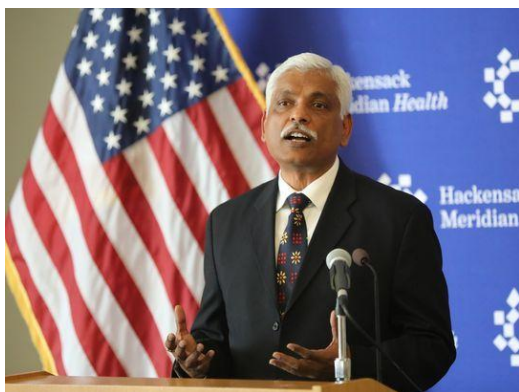
In September, as part of the campaign, EZ Ride conducted a four-hour study at the intersection of Prospect Avenue and Thompson Street, said Lt. Tina Cappadonna.

During a 20-minute period, 553 cars went through the intersection. Of those cars, almost 50 percent did not stop at the crosswalk, said Anvish Gupta, assistant executive director of EZ Ride.

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Bergen County Executive, James Tedesco, says that some people are looking down at their phones while walking through a crosswalk which is a recipe for disaster. Tedesco was at a press conference to kickoff the Street Smart NJ pedestrian safety campaign in Hackensack. The purpose of the campaign is to try to reduce the amount of pedestrian vs. vehicle accidents. Wednesday, October 25, 2017 (Photo: Kevin R. Wexler/NorthJersey.com)



Assistant Executive Director of EZ Ride Transportation Management Association, Avnish Gupta, speaks at a press conference to kickoff the Street Smart NJ pedestrian safety campaign in Hackensack. The purpose of the campaign is to try to reduce the amount of pedestrian vs. vehicle accidents. Wednesday, October 25, 2017 (Photo: Kevin R. Wexler/NorthJersey.com)



Bergen County Executive, James Tedesco, speaks at a press conference to kickoff the Street Smart NJ pedestrian safety campaign in Hackensack. The purpose of the campaign is to try to reduce the amount of pedestrian vs. vehicle accidents. Wednesday, October 25, 2017 (Photo: Kevin R. Wexler/NorthJersey.com)