

Drivers failing to stop for school buses

The OPP is gearing up for this year's back-to-school season by encouraging everyone to be vigilant and patient when you encounter school buses.

The Independent School Bus Operators Association (ISBOA) conducted a province-wide study with their school bus companies between May 5, 2014 and May 9, 2014. During this period, bus drivers reported incidents where vehicles failed to stop for the school bus when lights were flashing.

Results show that approximately 151 such incidents occurred each day during the 5-day study. The majority of these incidents (75 per cent) happened while the vehicle was approaching the bus from the front. These numbers concern the OPP because bus drivers are not the only people who are responsible for the lives of our children.

As drivers, we know that at certain times of the day we can expect to encounter school buses during our travels. Drivers need to be vigilant and pay attention to the flashing red lights and other safety equipment used on buses. Our children's safety depends on it, said West Region OPP Traffic Inspector Ian Chappell.

The Highway Traffic Act of Ontario indicates that when a school bus is stopped on the roadway with its red lights activated and Stop sign out, drivers must come to a complete stop in-front of and behind the bus. Motorists must not pass the stopped bus until the stop arm is retracted and the red lights are turned off. The owner of a vehicle can be charged if their vehicle fails to stop for a school bus even if they were not the driver.

Back-to-school is always a busy time for everyone. The OPP and ISBOA are working together to educate the public and to raise awareness about the possible serious consequences of ignoring school bus flashing lights.

Family-owned school bus companies across the province are pleased to be working with their local law enforcement agencies to raise awareness about the dangers of passing a stopped school bus, said Steve Hull, President of ISBOA. Our common goal is to make back-to-school and the rest of the school year safe for all children who ride the bus.

For more information on the study please visit the ISBOA website at: [I Stop You Stop Campaign](#)