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Intersection safety reminder

It is no secret that many accidents occur at intersections. Often collisions at intersections occur right around the time the lights change to stop one direction and give the right of way to the other direction.

All too often drivers speed up to try and get through an intersection before the light turns red. The opposing traffic anticipates a green light and starts moving prematurely. The same goes for pedestrians ? they try to rush across the street at the last second before the cross traffic light turns green and the opposing pedestrians anticipate their right of way prematurely.

All drivers must remember that an intersection is a busy place for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians. Therefore drivers approaching intersections must be extra careful ? not rushing through to save a few seconds getting to their destination.

Always slow down when approaching an intersection. Even when you have the right of way, be sure to look for pedestrians, cyclists and other vehicles and make sure they are yielding that right of way to you. Especially at this time of year when children are walking to and from school every weekday; drivers need to be cautious and alert. Children can be unpredictable.

A very dangerous habit that too many drivers have is to accelerate when the light turns amber. This habit is especially dangerous when a car, cyclist or pedestrian in the other direction anticipates their right of way prematurely.

The MTO driver's handbook states that ?a yellow ? or amber ? light means the red light is about to appear. You must stop if you can do so safely; otherwise, go with caution?. The key is MUST STOP or GO WITH CAUTION ? not accelerate and try to beat the red.

The Highway Traffic Act is also very clear on this. Many drivers may not realize that not stopping for an amber light has the same fine and demerit points as not stopping for a red light. Section 144(15) of the highway traffic act states the total fine for failing to stop for an amber light is $180 and 3 demerit points.

The Shelburne Police encourages all drivers to make safety the priority when travelling on all roadways. The potential consequences property damage, injury or worse; by rushing through an intersection are not worth saving a few seconds to get to your destination!