

Emphasis on Traffic Safety

One of the responsibilities of the police department is traffic enforcement. Enforcement ensures the safe and orderly movement of vehicles on our roadways. Most agree that absent any regulations for vehicle operation, chaos would result. The *Rules of the Road* in Tennessee are similar to every state across the nation. Violations are described as moving or non-moving. Moving violations address vehicle operation and may result in points assessed against a driver's record. Non-moving include areas such as licensing, registration, parking, and equipment.

A traffic enforcement program must address all types of violations. It could be the driver that tries to beat the traffic signal when everyone else is stopping; the driver that rolls through the stop sign; the driver that exceeds the speed limit on a residential road. People complain of vehicles parking in handicap spaces not displaying a handicap plate or a hanging placard; or children not restrained in car seats. These violations and many more, are all areas that the police department must enforce.

An officer has a range of tools to deal with traffic safety issues, including warn the driver, issue a citation, or if appropriate - make an arrest. Violations of child safety restraint, no proof of insurance, registration, and defective or inoperative equipment are especially important issues. The vehicle operator is encouraged to correct the issue prior to the court date. Protecting children is important and the department has a car seat inspection and replacement program that is free to the public. We all have a responsibility to ensure our vehicles are safe to operate, registrations and insurance are current, and we abide by the rules that are designed to provide for safe roads. Traffic accidents and citations affect us monetarily; obedience to the rules of the road will reduce that impact. Let's all do our part.

If you have any questions about this topic or any Police issue, please contact the department at (931) 455-0530, or you can reach me at pblackwell@tullahomatn.gov.