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MARYLAND STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION'S VESTS FOR VISIBILITY PROGRAM PROMOTES PEDESTRIAN SAFETY DURING HALLOWEEN

Only Treats As Little Feet Hit the Street

(October 26, 2009) – “See and be seen” is the message from State Highway Administration (SHA) on Halloween. On Saturday, October 31, All Hallows Eve will cause Peter Pan and Tinkerbell, as well as Frankenstein and his bride to crowd the streets in search of sweet treats. As parents, guardians and neighbors prepare for out stretched arms and decorated faces, the Maryland Department of Transportation’s SHA is preparing to keep busy feet in plain sight and safe with the *Vests for Visibility* program.

SHA’s *Vests for Visibility* lends safety vests to parents or guardians – free of charge. The vests can be placed over children’s costumes, or can be the costume along with a hard hat, a pair of jeans, a t-shirt, and boots. The vests will be available in most counties at many SHA Maintenance shops on Wednesday, October 28; Thursday, October 29 and Friday, October 30 from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. each day (please see the attached sheet for participating SHA shop locations). Reflective vests will be issued on a first come, first served basis. Vests must be returned by Friday, November 6.

“There is nothing more frightening than a bump in the night that involves a car and a pedestrian,” said SHA Administrator and Governor’s Highway Safety Representative Neil J. Pedersen. “Unfortunately, on average, about 100 pedestrians are killed every year in traffic crashes in our State. On Halloween particularly, pedestrians and motorists must be vigilant in following the rules of the road – see and be seen.”

SHA also offers more safety tips for motorists and trick-or-treaters to ensure everyone has a safe Halloween:

TIPS FOR MOTORISTS:

- 🎃 Stop for pedestrians – Maryland law requires motorists to stop for pedestrians in marked crosswalks and intersections.
- 🎃 Obey the speed limit. Speeding only makes it more difficult to stop unexpectedly.

(More)

- 🎃 Motorists should be more cautious during peak trick-or-treating hours between 4 and 9 p.m.
- 🎃 Enter and exit driveways slowly.
- 🎃 Be alert for children darting across the street.
- 🎃 Watch for children crossing between parked cars.
- 🎃 When driving children to and from different activities, make sure all seat belts are fastened and let children out of the car on the curbside.
- 🎃 Never drink and drive. Designate a sober driver.

TIPS FOR PEDESTRIANS:

- 🎃 Look left, right, and left again before crossing the street.
- 🎃 Cross at crosswalks or intersections.
- 🎃 Be sure to see and be seen. Avoid dark clothing, wear bright colors and use reflective devices such as vests and blinking lights.
- 🎃 Avoid costumes that may impair vision.
- 🎃 Make eye contact with drivers when crossing the street.
- 🎃 Stay alert and be on the look out for cars traveling above the speed limit.

Every day in Maryland, there are at least 258 crashes, 130 injuries and at least one death. SHA encourages everyone to B-SAFE: **B**uckle up, **S**low down, **A**lways drive sober, **F**ocus, and **E**veryone share the road. For more tips and information regarding driving, biking and pedestrian safety, please log onto www.choosesafetyforlife.com.

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Editor's Note: Please see attached list of participating SHA Shops.