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As the warmer weather comes to an end and the kids are going back to school, there is one important issue that comes to mind. Bus passing complaints! Do you know the most current Wisconsin bus passing laws? Here are some reminders.

Wisconsin law requires every school bus built after 2005 to display flashing amber lights before stopping. In general, the operator of a school bus must actuate the flashing amber warning lights at least 300 feet before stopping in a 45 miles per hour or greater speed zone or at least 100 feet before stopping in a less than 45 miles per hour speed zone. These amber lights allow drivers advanced warning that the school bus will be stopping and they need to prepare to stop for loading or unloading of children.

Treat these amber lights much like a yellow traffic light. You should be slowing down and coming to a stop, not speeding up to pass before the red flashing lights are turned on.

If you approach a school bus from the front or rear while it's displaying it's flashing red warning lights, you must stop your vehicle not less than 20 feet from the bus. You must remain stopped until the bus operator extinguishes the flashing red warning lights. Failure to do so could result in a fine between \$30 and \$300. This law does not apply to vehicles proceeding in the opposite direction on a divided highway.

Another complaint I would like to address is speeding. This is a year round problem and we receive daily complaints of speeding vehicles all over the county. This seems like an ever increasing problem with speeding and distracted driving. The hectic pace of life is affecting everyone's safety on the road. What can I say to convince people to slow down? I wish there were some magic words, but here some reasons to slow down.

1. Slowing down saves lives-driving faster shortens your response time and even a fraction of a second can mean the difference between life and death.
2. Speeding doesn't really save much time-You might think you're saving time, but it's not a lot of time. The small amount of time you save (like 5 minutes) isn't worth someone's life or the costly speeding citation.
3. Speeding costs a lot money-The best ways to save gas are to avoid excessive idling, more gradual accelerating and decelerating, and driving slower. If you get caught speeding, the citation and court costs can be hundreds of dollars.

Slow down and stay safe!

Deputy Leslie Fox
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