

DID YOU KNOW???

30,000 ILLEGAL PASSING INCIDENTS IN ONE DAY

What is the most precious cargo transported over our streets and highways? If you answered “our children” to this question, I think you would be in the majority. If most of us believe our children are our most precious commodity, why, then, would 30,000 New York State drivers pass a stopped school bus EVERY DAY?

The New York Association for Pupil Transportation (NYAPT) released the results of a survey taken on November 18, 2015, to measure the incidence of motorists illegally passing stopped school buses. In the 28 school districts that participated, 1,020 school bus drivers reported that they were passed a total of 627 times. At that rate, when applied to over 50,000 school buses in NYS, the total estimated illegal passing rate is 30,735 for that day. The sample districts participating include predominately rural and smaller suburban areas with lighter traffic flow and a lower incidence of illegal passing.



What’s even more disconcerting is that nine of the 627 illegal passes were on the *passenger side* of the school bus.

NYAPT President, David Adam, noted that “This continuing disregard for the safety of our children is alarming and we urge parents and law enforcement officials to join us in urging all motorists to **STOP** for the school bus!”

NYS Vehicle and Traffic Law, section 1174, addresses “Overtaking and passing of a school bus”. The law basically prohibits passing a stopped school bus from either direction when the bus is receiving or discharging any passengers, or which has stopped because a school bus in front of it has stopped to receive or discharge any passengers, and has its red light flashing. You must stop your vehicle before reaching the bus. Furthermore, this law applies not only to any public highway, street or private road, but also to any area used for the parking of motor vehicles or used as a driveway located on the grounds of a school or of a BOCES facility, or any area used as a means of access to and egress from such school or facility. This means all school property, including parking lots.

NYAPT is seeking legislation that will allow cameras to be mounted on the STOP ARMS of school buses and the evidence from those cameras to be used to prosecute motorists who pass stopped school buses illegally. The Franklin County Traffic Safety Board will be pleased to support this initiative if requested.

For more articles on traffic law and safety, go to the traffic safety board’s web site at: www.franklincony.org and click on “Traffic Safety Board” under departments then look for Did You Know articles under “services”. You may also email me at: dwerner151@verizon.net