

## **SCHOOL SAFETY: School zones require reduced speeds, increased awareness**

BOISE - Flashing yellow lights and fluorescent signs clearly identify most school zones and pedestrian/bicycle crossings in Idaho.

Drivers who fail to slow down to school-zone speeds (generally posted at 20 mph or slower when children likely will be present) pay enhanced fines.

Unless otherwise posted, school-zone speed limits do not apply on non-school days. The posted speed limit signs indicate the school zone, the reduced speed limit and one of the following:

- Hours of the day when the speed limit is in effect
- The speed limit is in effect when an electrical or mechanical sign indicates, or
- The speed limit is in effect at all times on school days

Some schools also use crossing guards at intersections. Motorists are required to slow or stop as the guards dictate.

Drivers accustomed to traveling unimpeded through school zones the past three months will need to renew their vigilance. They also need to watch for inattentive children stepping from curbs, wayward bicycles straying into traffic, and buses stopped for student loading and unloading.

School children also share a responsibility to be aware of increased traffic along primary school routes. Parents and teachers should encourage children to watch for distracted drivers and realize that cars may not slow for flashing lights or crossing guards.

Awareness and anticipation are keys to ensuring the next nine months are free of casualties, enabling children and vehicles to coexist safely.