



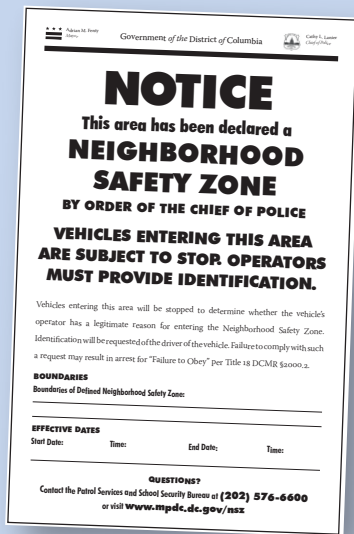
## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

### Legitimate reasons for entering an NSZ

- » You reside in the NSZ.
- » You are employed in the NSZ or are making a commercial delivery.
- » You attend school or a day-care facility in the NSZ.
- » You are taking a child to, or picking a child up from, a school or day-care facility in the NSZ.
- » You are a relative of a person who resides in the NSZ.
- » You are seeking medical attention, or are elderly or disabled.
- » You are attending a verified organized civic, community, or religious event within the NSZ.

### Knowing when a DFZ is occurring

Signs like that below will be posted in a community where an NSZ has been declared.



To learn more about this program, see [www.mpdc.dc.gov/nsz](http://www.mpdc.dc.gov/nsz)

## Resources

### 24-Hour Violent Crime Tip Line

Crime Tip Line ..... (888) 919-CRIME  
Text Message Tip Line ..... 50411



### Emergency

Emergency ..... 911

### Mayor's Call Center

City Services ..... 311

## Get Involved!

No one individual or agency working alone can prevent crime. It takes police and citizens working in partnership. The District of Columbia's community policing strategy provides many ways for police and communities to work together to prevent crime and build safer neighborhoods. These include regular PSA (Police Service Area) meetings in your community, problem-solving groups, citizen patrols and more. To learn more about community policing activities in your neighborhood, call your local police district:

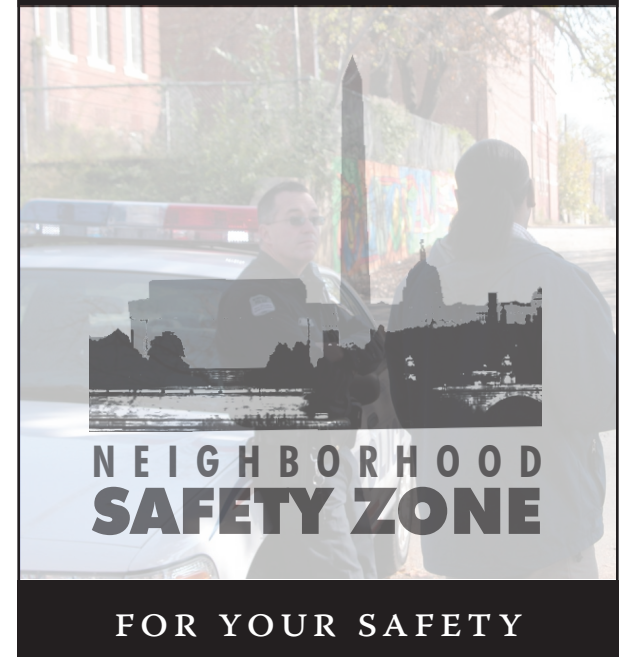
1st District Station Desk:	698-0555	TTY: 863-4032
2nd District Station Desk:	715-7300	TTY: 364-3961
3rd District Station Desk:	673-6815	TTY: 518-0008
4th District Station Desk:	715-7400	TTY: 722-1791
5th District Station Desk:	698-0150	TTY: 727-5437
6th District Station Desk:	698-0880	TTY: 398-5397
7th District Station Desk:	698-1500	TTY: 889-3574



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
Metropolitan Police Department  
300 Indiana Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20001

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## Neighborhood Safety Zones



*Understanding How the NSZ Program Can Improve Safety in Your Community*



Adrian M. Fenty  
Mayor

Cathy L. Lanier  
Chief of Police

# Creating safer neighborhoods helps everyone.

One of the most challenging issues facing law enforcement — particularly in violent crimes — is the fact that many crimes occur using a motorized vehicle. With criminals equipped with an easy getaway, police are often put at a disadvantage to try to stop or solve crimes.



## What is a Neighborhood Safety Zone?

A delineated geographic area designated by the Chief of Police in response to documented crimes of violence — the purpose of which is to provide high police visibility, prevent and deter crime, and create safer District of Columbia neighborhoods — by prohibiting vehicles with no legitimate purpose to enter the area.

## Are such zones Constitutional?

Yes. The U.S. Courts have found that such zones are Constitutional when limited in scope, and when conducted for a legitimate law enforcement purpose. A citation from a New York city case follows:

### *Maxwell v. City of New York* (2nd Circuit)

In 1992, in response to four drive-by shootings, the New York City Police Department implemented a temporary vehicular checkpoint in an eight squareblock where most of the drive-by shootings had taken place. Officers stopped every vehicle (not pedestrians) seeking to enter the area in order to ascertain the driver's connection to the neighborhood. Area residents, commercial vehicles, those dropping off small children or visiting the local church were permitted to enter the area. The court balanced (1) the gravity of the public concerns served by the checkpoint; (2) the degree to which the checkpoint effectively addressed those concerns; and (3) the severity of the intrusion upon individual liberty and held that the establishment of a vehicle checkpoint did not violate the 4th Amendment. The instructions given for the checkpoint were sufficiently detailed to be Constitutional.

## What is the purpose of a Neighborhood Safety Zone (NSZ)?

NSZs are designed to decrease crime in areas that are experiencing an increase in violent crime. Vehicles are often used in committing serious crimes, particularly armed violent crime. In April and May 2008, the city saw 33 incidents of shootings or homicides in which a vehicle was involved.

## What factors will be considered in selecting an area for as an NSZ?

The Chief of Police will consider several important factors before declaring a Neighborhood Safety Zone in a community. These include:

- » A review of pertinent recent crime data.
- » Information contained in citizen and community reports and complaints related to documented violent crimes in the area.
- » Information gathered from criminal intelligence sources relevant to documented violent crimes in the area.
- » The NSZ will not interfere with routine community activities and will cause minimum delays to normal traffic patterns.

## Who will approve the establishment of an NSZ?

The Chief of Police, or a designated Assistant Chief of Police, based upon a recommendation from a Police Department official of at least the rank of Commander and a legal sufficiency review by the Police Department's General Counsel.

## How will the NSZ operate?

- The Neighborhood Safety Zones will be carried out by a team of specially-trained members of the MPD, as follows:
- » Posters will be placed in the area in advance to announce the establishment of the NSZ.
  - » The NSZ will be established for no more than 5 days, unless the Chief of
  - » Police approves an extension of no more than 5 days.
  - » During this authorization period, the NSZ will be in place 24 hours a day.
  - » The established NSZ will be managed by an official of at least the rank of Lieutenant or above. Teams of officers will staff Safety Checkpoints set up along the perimeter of the area in order to stop every vehicle seeking entry to the area.
  - » Only those motor vehicle operators who provide a **legitimate** reason will be permitted entry. (See inside panel for examples.)
  - » Operators who cannot or do not wish to provide a legitimate reason will be denied access.
  - » Operators who do not comply with the directions of

a law enforcement officer may be arrested for "Failure to Obey" per Title 18 DCMR Section 2000.2.

## Does this mean that friends wishing to visit someone residing in an NSZ will be denied entry?

No. Friends may enter the neighborhood on foot.

## What information will motor vehicle operators need to provide?

Vehicle operators entering an NSZ will need to provide personal identification (i.e., driver's license) and information sufficient for determining the accuracy of the reason for entering the area. For example, operators can provide the telephone number of the address to which the person seeks entry or an invitation to a verified organized community or religious event being held within the NSZ.

## Will operators be compelled to present a reason for entry?

No. However, if the operator does not present a legitimate reason, the vehicle will be denied entry. The operator may park the vehicle elsewhere and enter the NSZ on foot.

## Will each vehicle that attempts to enter the NSZ be subject to search?

No. A vehicle entering the NSZ may be subject to search, but only in instances in which there is probable cause to conduct a search.

## What information will be maintained on the stopped vehicles?

- » For vehicles that are denied entry, the operator information, vehicle description, vehicle tag number, and reason for denial.
- » For vehicles permitted entry, and in cases where the operator elects to leave the checkpoint without offering a reason for entry, the vehicle tag number and, where appropriate, the reason for entry.

## How will the NSZ affect pedestrians?

For the purposes of the NSZ, pedestrians will be permitted to enter and exit an NSZ without being stopped. Vehicles exiting the NSZ also will not be stopped.

## Will Department members be trained in advance on how to implement an NSZ?

Yes. The Department's Training Academy will train all officers in advance concerning all procedures and standards as well as related U.S. constitutional law and case law.

## Will this operation take officers from other areas of the community?

No. The NSZ will be staffed by members of special mission units, who will be supported by PSA members who are familiar with the neighborhood and community.