

CITY OF CHINO HILLS

PRESS RELEASE



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BACK TO SCHOOL – DRIVE SAFELY

Students in the Chino Valley Unified School District start back to school on Monday, August 24th. With school back in session, that means more drivers on the roads and more kids walking to school. The City of Chino Hills wants to remind motorists to pay full attention and to be sure to set a good example by obeying all traffic laws and parking regulations.

“We’d like to offer some back-to-school advice for parents and students – try to get to school 15 to 30 minutes before school starts,” said Denise Cattern, spokesperson for the City. “With hundreds headed to each elementary school, over a thousand headed to each junior high, and several thousand headed to both high schools – there is no way around school traffic.”

She said drivers who plan strategies that will reduce the stress they feel because of school traffic will actually help improve safety for students and motorists in the area.

City officials encourage motorists to be alert around schools and to watch for students crossing the street. Motorists need to be aware of crosswalks and pay attention to signage that may prohibit left or right turns, u-turns, parking, or stopping. Drivers need to obey all traffic regulations. Deputies from the Chino Hills Police Department will be conducting extra enforcement around schools.

“No speeding, no texting, no cell phones, and no u-turns where signs are posted,” said Ms. Cattern. “That’s a good start.”

A “no parking” sign means that motorists may briefly stop to drop off students safely at the curb but they may not park their car or impede traffic. A “no stopping” sign means that motorists may not even stop to drop off students.

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"Motorists need to remember that posted signs are not just suggestions," said Ms. Cattern. "If you don't follow the rules, you just might get a ticket."

City officials also want to remind high school students to obey the "walk" and "do not walk" signs that coincide with green and red traffic signals. If student pedestrians ignore the signals and block the flow of traffic that has a green light and the right-of-way, complete gridlock can occur. Tickets can be issued to students, and sometimes their parents, for this type of violation.

"Our goal is to prevent accidents," said Captain Robert Guillen of the Chino Hills Police Department. "Right-of-way violations and stopping violations cause a majority of accidents in school zones. If motorists give themselves enough time to get to school, and are courteous to other drivers, our City streets and school zones will be a lot safer."

"The City of Chino Hills and the School District often work together to address safety concerns related to school traffic," said Steve Nix, City Engineer. "When student drop offs are prohibited or "no left turn" signs are posted, they were placed to address safety concerns caused by those actions."

Parking in some school neighborhoods is limited to residents with permits. A permit is required to park in neighborhoods near Litel Elementary School and Chino Hills High School between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Residents may obtain a free permit at City Hall for vehicles registered to their address. On-street parking on Eucalyptus Avenue is limited to two hours except for vehicles that display a permit, which is issued through Litel Elementary School to parents and others who have business with the school.

"These neighborhoods requested the permit system because the on-street parking was filling up with student vehicles that parked all day," said Ms. Cattern.

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Ayala High School and Litel Elementary School

Ayala High School and Litel Elementary School traffic will be impacted by the ongoing construction underway at Peyton Drive and Eucalyptus Avenue. Parents are encouraged to get an early start and use several tools that provide information about the project. The City website, www.chinohills.org/PeytonConstruction, includes a link to two webcams that provide a live view of the project area 24/7 so motorists can check traffic conditions. One view is of northbound Peyton Drive from Morningfield Drive, and the second camera view is a southbound view of the Peyton Drive / Eucalyptus Avenue intersection. Smartphone app, OxBlue Camera Viewer, is available and allows users to view the webcams from a smart phone, iPad, or tablet device. Links to the app and directions for use are available on the City website.

The contractor is required to maintain one lane of traffic in each direction at all times, unless otherwise approved by the City Engineer. In an effort to reduce the impact on morning school traffic, the contractor has been directed to make every effort to avoid encroaching into the travel lanes from 7:00 – 9:00 a.m. and after 3:30 p.m., unless absolutely necessary, and approved in advance. Normal working hours for the project are 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. No work will be done on weekends or holidays. Schedules and plans are subject to change due to emergencies, weather, and other factors.

Ayala students need to be aware that parking at the Government Center is reserved for Government Center visitors. The City will begin the school year with an educational effort, followed by an enforcement effort, to ensure that students do not park at the Government Center lot according to Ms. Cattern.

Parking in the City's parking structure is limited to two hours between 6:00 a.m. and noon unless the vehicle has a parking permit issued to employees of The Shoppes at Chino Hills or the Government Center. Motorists should not drive through the parking garage as a shortcut. Motorists driving within the Government Center should travel at a safe speed, should not stop and block traffic within the travel lanes, and should make a complete stop at all stop signs. Parents picking up students in the parking lot must wait in a parking space.

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Parents of Ayala students can take advantage of a student drop-off area at the Chino Hills Community Center, 14250 Peyton Drive. Motorists will be required to enter the parking lot at Bulldog Way, then turn left to the southern parking lot before dropping off students. Staff will provide direction to motorists during the first few weeks of school. All motorists must exit south on Peyton Drive, no exceptions. Safety will be enhanced if motorists follow this one-way traffic flow during drop-off and pick-up periods. Student drop off is not allowed anywhere on Peyton Drive.

The north side of Boys Republic Drive from City Center Drive to Peyton Drive may also be used to drop off Ayala High School students. A wider lane allows drivers travelling on Boys Republic Drive from Grand Avenue to Peyton Drive to pull over on the north side, between City Center Drive and Peyton Drive, to drop off students.

“Ayala parents have the option to travel from Grand Avenue to southbound Boys Republic Drive to access the drop-off area,” said Ms. Cattern. “And remember, once students are dropped off, they must use the crosswalk to safely cross the street; and no u-turns are allowed.”

Many businesses along Peyton Drive, including the Post Office and several churches, prohibit student parking and drop offs because their parking lots were built to accommodate their customers, not students. Ayala students will also find the gate closed at Chino Hills Community Park in the morning to prevent student parking and retain parking for daytime events scheduled there.