

Police need to crack down on drivers who ignore crosswalks in New Bedford

The majority of New Bedford drivers ignore crosswalks and the New Bedford police should crack down on these reckless drivers – something that could easily generate \$20,000 a week.

Earlier this week I was walking to the New Bedford City Hall and needed to cross North 6th Street to get there. While waiting at a crosswalk, several cars ignored me and blasted past the crosswalk. Finally, one vehicle stopped, but as I was crossing the driver behind the stopped car decided to pass on the left missing me by a few feet. A second car decided to follow but had to slam on the brakes as I was now visible on the crosswalk. This is a typical experience for me with crosswalks in New Bedford, not the exception.

A few years ago my brother was hit by a car on a crosswalk in downtown New Bedford. The driver yelled out “You’re lucky I even bothered to stop.” Luckily, it wasn’t a serious accident and he didn’t need medical attention, but it shows the mentality of some of the drivers on the road. Someone I knew was seriously injured and his companion killed in 2011 while using a crosswalk in Fairhaven. It’s time for the New Bedford police to act before someone is killed in New Bedford.

The penalty in Massachusetts for ignoring a crosswalk is up to \$200. New Bedford police would easily catch 100 violators a week generating \$20,000 in fines and likely removing some of the most dangerous drivers from New Bedford streets. Word would get out and New Bedford would be a safer place to walk, especially if the police enforced crosswalks on a monthly basis. Crosswalk enforcement would also generate a ton of revenue, saving the taxpayers some money.