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“Barricades Vital for Public Safety”



Norfolk Police Captain Don Miller says it's a dangerous problem. People are occasionally moving and driving around street barricades and traffic safety cones.

“Police officers and other emergency personnel set up barricades and other safety devices to warn drivers of danger. These devices are used to protect drivers, pedestrians or workers in the area. Moving a barricade puts lives in danger,” Miller said.

He cited instances this month where people were driving around barricades and even moving them so they and others could drive into prohibited areas.

“The barricades are there for a reason. For many special events in Norfolk, citizens submit an application for approval. Many of these events require the closing of streets or special traffic control by Norfolk police. This is done to increase the safety of the participants and spectators as well as those in the area of the events,” Miller said. “As part of the traffic direction process Norfolk Police use barricades and cones provided by the Street Division, as well as officers being present at some locations. Driving into prohibited areas is dangerous for the police officers, the drivers and their passengers and also pedestrians.”

He added that violating the intent of traffic control devices such as the placement of cones or barricades is a Class V misdemeanor and punishable with a fine up to \$100 plus court costs.

Two North Platte teens died in May when they drove around barricades and into a flooded area of the South Platte River.

“There is a reason barricades or cones are placed where they are. Once a special event or an emergency is over or a street repair is done, the barricades are moved as soon as it's safe to do so. Until then, drivers need to be patient and take an alternative route if necessary,” Miller said.

Miller said the key is for people to be patient and obey the officer's directions at special events like parades.

“When officers are directing traffic at special events, we are doing so for safety and to disperse traffic as quickly and safely as possible. Even though motorists may not want to go the direction they are being sent, we direct them so that they don't find themselves in the middle of another congested intersection and further delays,” Miller said.