

Dear Residents and Business Owners:

It might not come as a surprise that our area leads the state with the greatest number of aggressive drivers. Not only do we often hear about cases in which aggressive driving has led to accidents, but many of us witness such driving on our daily commute. I understand the frustration that comes along with being stuck in traffic, getting cut off by another motorist and being honked at in bumper-to-bumper traffic, but getting a handle on this can make the difference when it comes to your safety and the safety of others. According to the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, an average of at least 1,500 men, women and children are injured or killed each year in the United States as a result of aggressive driving.

When discussing aggressive drivers, most people would say they don't fall into that category, but in fact, they may. The National Highway Safety Administration (NHTSA) describes aggressive driving as a combination of moving traffic offenses that endanger other persons or property, and in a study by the same organization, 50 percent of Americans admitted to occasional aggressive driving. That means one of every two people knowingly exceeds the posted speed limit, follows another vehicle too closely, makes erratic or unsafe lane changes, doesn't obey traffic signs or signals and runs red lights.

To try to curb the problem, the Broward Sheriff's Office joined forces in October 2008 with the Florida Highway Patrol and more than a dozen police agencies in Broward County to create the Multi-Agency Aggressive Driving Task Force. In this very successful initiative, we utilize unmarked vehicles to zero in on aggressive drivers on Broward County interstates, toll roads and highways. Every enforcement operation has resulted in hundreds of citations for a multitude of infractions. Additionally, the interaction with motorists has given us an opportunity to educate our residents about aggressive driving and how their actions can cause severe consequences.

Drivers need to consider if rushing to their destinations is more important than making it there safely or more important than seeing their loved ones again. We should all ask ourselves these questions as we get behind the wheel. Research has found there's no specific age group or gender to classify aggressive drivers. They could be men, women, teens, adults, all ethnicities and all backgrounds. Broward Sheriff's Office deputies are committed to keeping everyone safe on our roadways by continuing our enforcement operations and stopping aggressive drivers, but sometimes we only encounter aggressive drivers at the scene of an accident, after it's too late to prevent a tragic crash. It's up to you to make sure you don't drive aggressively.

We can each set an example for other drivers and our children when we show a little patience on the roadway. A small, kind gesture in a traffic jam and a deep breath can go a long way to help curb aggressive driving.

Stay safe!

Sheriff Al Lamberti

[Click here](#) to view Sheriff Lamberti's video message.