

October 24, 2013

News Release

*For Immediate Release*

### **City bringing new traffic safety education program to Springfield elementary students**



On average, the City of Springfield's Public Works-Traffic Operations division records about 120 traffic crashes involving pedestrians or bicyclists each year.

In an effort to promote traffic safety to children, the Public Works - Traffic Operations staff members are bringing a four-week pedestrian and bicycle safety education program to four Springfield elementary schools in a pilot project kicking off at a morning assembly at Pittman Elementary School Monday, Oct. 28.

In 2009, the City secured \$24,779 for educational programming through a federal Safe Routes to School grant and has partnered with the Greene-County Health Department, Safe Kids Springfield, the Healthy Living Alliance, Safety Council of the Ozarks, the Parent-Teacher Association, and others to bring active and fun safety lessons to Springfield schools.

The program utilizes educational materials from Mighty Kids Media, who specialize in empowering children to lead healthy, safe and responsible lives. The "Danger Ranger" cartoon series of DVDs, books and songs playfully teaches children how to be safe and how to make good choices.

Westport, Cowden, Pittman and Bowerman students will receive a visit from traffic engineers and "Danger Rangers" characters Sully and Kitty; participate in special school assemblies and a walk-to-school event; and learn safety lessons over a four-week time period.

If the pilot project is a success, traffic engineers hope the program will be available at all area elementary schools in the future.

## Program Overview

Public Works staff formed a committee and has partnered with Safe Kids Springfield, the Healthy Living Alliance, Safety Council of the Ozarks, the Greene County Health Department, A&B Cycle, Springfield Parent-Teacher Association and many more to execute the program. Each class (K-3rd) has been provided with Danger Ranger DVDs, dealing with wheeling and pedestrian safety.

- **Week 1:** A kick-off assembly will be held at each school, starting with Pittman on Oct. 28. Students will meet two Danger Rangers and discuss safety rules. Later that week, each individual class will receive education on general traffic safety. Parents will also be provided with information; after all, it falls on the parents to instill safe practices into their children's lives.
- **Week 2:** Instructors will visit each class again, playfully teaching bike safety.
- **Week 3:** Each class learns about pedestrian safety and practices on a pedestrian-safety mat, provided by the Safety Council of the Ozarks. An after-school bike rodeo is also scheduled to take place. A&B Cycle will check the children's bikes for safety, and a Danger Rangers character make an appearance.
- **Week 4:** An organized walk to school accompanied by one of the Danger Rangers. Children and their parents will receive incentives for their participation.

Teachers will be equipped with lesson plans and other materials to allow them to teach safety to generations to come.

**MEDIA ONLY:** For more information and to RSVP to attend the kick-off assembly Monday at Pittman, please contact Mandy Buettgen-Quinn, Public Works – Traffic Operations, 864-1801.

Download a [hi-res version of the Danger Ranger photo](#), pictured above.