

Traffic:



With traffic enforcement, the goal of the Powell Police is to promote traffic safety and to gain voluntary compliance with Wyoming Statutes and Powell City Ordinances. This includes all traffic violations from officer observed violations, traffic crash investigations, and enforcement action taken as the result of a citizen complaint. One of the main goals in traffic enforcement is keeping all the citizens of Powell safe. In 2010 there were 178 reported traffic collisions in Powell. The monetary value of the property damage, not to mention the injuries sustained by the people involved, is staggering for a city of our size.

Question: Do the police have a ticket quota?

Answer: No, the officers can write as many citations as they want. Seriously, the Powell Police are not required and never have been required, to write a given number of citations in a given period of time. Traffic enforcement is just one part of the job that officers do in Powell.



Question: How come I got a ticket and my (fill in the blank) only got a warning?

Answer: The decision on whether to issue a citation or a warning is based on many different factors an officer encounters during the traffic stop. Some of those factors would include prevailing circumstances or conditions, the offender's motive (their actions were inadvertent or intentional), the potential for danger to themselves or others, the need to protect other involved person's interests (property damage), past violation history, and that the officer determines the action he takes is sufficient to deter a future violation. The Powell Police rely on an officer's judgment at the moment when that officer makes the decision to issue a citation or a warning on a traffic stop for a specific violation.

Question: My wife was stopped at night and was "surrounded" by officers, she isn't dangerous, why so many officers?

Answer: At night for officer safety reasons, one officer will make a stop and another will arrive as backup or as a cover officer. One of the most dangerous activities conducted by police officers is a traffic stop. Officers don't know who or what is in the car, and each year dozens of officers are killed at a "routine traffic stop". Another safety concern is because of reduced visibility, an officer can be struck by a passing motorist, the extra officer can help keep an eye out and help if needed.



Question: Am I automatically guilty if I sign the citation?

Answer: No, signing the citation is NOT an admission of guilt; it is simply a promise to appear in court on the specified date written on the citation. If you decide to appear in court, the Judge will decide if a violation has occurred and the appropriate fine.

Question: Do I have to appear in court?

Answer: Not usually, most traffic citations will include a bond amount written on the citation. If you decide not to appear and pay the bond, this is considered an admission of guilt for that specific violation. By paying the bond, you also give up your right to appear before the judge and explain your side of the story. Some citations are "Must Appear", these are for more serious violations, no bond will be written on the citation and the must appear box will be checked. With these citations you are required to appear in court on the specified date.

Question: I forgot to pay my fine or appear in court, what now?

Answer: Contact the court which is written on the top of your citation immediately. Tell them you have forgotten or whatever the reason may be. When signing a citation you are promising the court that you will appear before them. If you do not appear and do not make other arrangements, a warrant will be issued for your arrest and when arrested, you will sit in jail until the next court session. If that is on a Friday, usually you will see the judge on Monday.



Question: I don't think vehicles are obeying the traffic laws in my neighborhood, what can I do about that?

Answer: Contact the Powell Police if the violation occurred within the city limits. Give them as much information as you can, such as a description of the car, a license plate number if possible, a description of the driver, time of occurrence or a time the violation usually occurs. For an officer to cite a driver, the

violation must occur in their presence, in other words they have to witness the violation. Powell Police's dispatch center may ask you if you can identify the driver and ask if you would be willing to sign the citation as the complainant. If you have enough information to identify the driver and agree to sign the citation, you become the person issuing the citation and will be required to appear in court and explain what you saw to the judge.

Question: Do the police always issue a citation at a traffic accident?

Answer: Not always, but many times they do. A collision is usually caused by some sort of driver error or violation of the law. Many collisions can be avoided by using caution when driving and looking out for the "other guy". The main violations that lead to collisions in Powell are: careless or reckless driving, fail to yield the right of way (at a stop sign, yield sign or to oncoming traffic), following too close, improper backing, and driving too fast for conditions.

Question: Why do the Powell Police make such an effort to enforce the drunk driving laws?

Answer: Driving while intoxicated is a violation of the law and is extremely dangerous to innocent drivers. The Powell Police are trying to make the streets safer for ALL motorists. Drinking and driving is a choice, if an alcohol related accident occurs it is 100% preventable. Most people know someone who has been injured or killed by a drunk driver. Nothing makes the Powell Police happier than seeing a person making the choice not to drive drunk and finding a safe way home.



Question: Can I pay my ticket at the Powell Police Department?

Answer: Only tickets issued by Powell Police Officers into Judge Allison's Powell Municipal Court can be paid at the Police Department. During business hours, Monday through Thursday, 9:00am to 5:00pm, you must pay the ticket at Judge Allison's Office, which is at 126 N Bent St in Powell. If that office is not open, you can pay the ticket at the Powell Police Department anytime. It may be best to attempt to contact Judge Allison's office to determine if anyone is there to take your fine. The phone number there is 754-5749.