



MetroWest Public Safety Offers Back-to-School Tips

With the first day of school in Orange County, August 11, right around the corner, MetroWest Public Safety urges everyone to follow these tips for safely sharing the roads with our children, whether they are walking, riding the bus, or riding their bikes to school.

Watch out for young pedestrians

- Obey the posted speed limit, especially in school zones
- Don't block the crosswalk when stopped at a red light or waiting to make a turn, forcing pedestrians to go around you and putting them in the path of traffic



- When flashers are blinking in a school zone, stop and yield to crossing pedestrians
- Always stop for a school patrol officer or crossing guard holding up a stop sign
- Take extra care to look out for children in school zones and near playgrounds and parks
- Never pass a vehicle stopped for pedestrians

Be careful around school buses

- When behind a bus, allow a greater following distance than if you were driving behind a car to give you more time to stop once the yellow lights start flashing
- Never pass a bus from behind – or from either direction if you're on an undivided road – if it is stopped to load or unload children

- If the yellow or red lights are flashing and the stop arm is extended, traffic must stop

- The area 10 feet around a school bus is the most dangerous for children; stop far enough away to allow them space to safely enter and exit the bus



- Be alert; children can be unpredictable and may ignore hazards



Safely share the road with kids on bikes

- Bikes can be hard to see and children riding bikes often aren't able to accurately assess traffic conditions
- When passing a bicyclist, proceed in the same direction slowly, leaving three feet between your car and the cyclist
- When turning left and a bicyclist is approaching in the opposite direction, wait for the rider to pass
- If you're turning right and a bicyclist is approaching from behind on the right, let the rider go through the intersection first, and always use your turn signals
- Watch for bike riders turning in front of you without looking or signaling
- Watch for bikes coming from driveways or behind parked cars
- Check side mirrors before opening your door

Extreme Weather Forces Cancellation of MusicWORKS 2025

Due to extreme weather conditions, including flash flood warnings, the MetroWest Master Association made the difficult decision to cancel MusicWORKS 2025. While we are all disappointed that the July 3 event could not go on as planned, concern for the safety of attendees, volunteers, exhibitors and performers was the top priority.

Thank you to all MusicWORKS sponsors for this year!



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Calendar

August 1 - 31

Florida Back-to-School Sales Tax Holiday



August 7

Aldi opens (tentative)

August 11

First day of school (OCPS)



September 25

Publix reopens

MetroWest Connect is a quarterly publication of MetroWest Master Association distributed at no charge to residents and businesses in the community. One of Orlando's first master-planned communities, MetroWest was developed in 1986 and features award-winning landscaping, MetroWest Golf Club, Valencia College campus, as well as high-performing public schools. MetroWest also provides convenient access to both I-4 and 408 from the west side of Orlando. MetroWest offers a community lifestyle with neighborhood businesses and outdoor recreation options. The diverse community is complemented by a range of living options, from single-family homes of all sizes to apartments and condominiums. For more information, please visit www.metrowestcommunity.com or call (407) 601-5995.



MetroWest Master Association Check Presentation



The MetroWest Master Association annually presents \$5,000 each to MetroWest Elementary School and Westpointe Elementary School at MetroWest MusicWORKS. This year, pictured are from left, Shauana L. Harris Ed.S, Principal of MetroWest Elementary, and Dr. Atresa Grubbs-Holmes, Principal of Westpointe Elementary.

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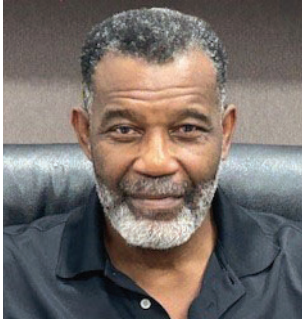
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MetroWest Master Association Announces Appointment of Derwin J. Bradley as Public Safety Director



The MetroWest Master Association is pleased to announce the appointment of Derwin J. Bradley as the new MetroWest Public Safety Director effective July 7, 2025.

Bradley brings more than 30 years of progressive experience in law enforcement, antiterrorism, and security, including a distinguished 33-

year career with the Orlando Police Department. His extensive background and deep understanding of public safety make him uniquely qualified to lead the MetroWest Public Safety program.

Bradley is no stranger to the MetroWest community. He previously served as the community's Crime Prevention Officer and Crime Free Multi-Housing Coordinator, and was assigned to

MetroWest while serving in the Orlando Police Department's West Patrol Division.

"I am aware of MetroWest's progressive efforts to maintain a safe community and was intrigued when offered the opportunity to further those efforts," said Bradley. "I am committed to the mission and will do all that I can to ensure MetroWest has one of the best public safety programs in the country."

As Public Safety Director, Bradley will oversee a wide range of initiatives, including leadership and coordination of the safety team, collaboration with the Orlando Police Department, analysis of safety data and trends, community engagement and communication, and strategic planning for public safety events and initiatives. His role is central to maintaining MetroWest as a welcoming, thriving, and connected community.

Addressing Back-to-School Anxiety

Do you have an anxious child? If so, going back to school may be a stressful time for them and you. The Anxiety & Depression Association of America (www.adaa.org) and Grace Berman, LCSW, offer these seven tips to make the transition from summer to school a little easier:

1. Get back into routines before school starts, including bedtime, morning, meals, and limiting screen time a few weeks before the first day of school.
2. Check in with stress levels – parents and children alike – because back to school is stressful for parents and caregivers too.
3. Listen to your children and validate their thoughts and feelings; just saying "don't worry" will cause more anxiety and possibly deter kids from expressing themselves comfortably.
4. Prepare for what you can – anxiety thrives in uncertainty – so do a test run for school, go to open houses or school community events offered before the beginning of school and even in the first few weeks of the start of school.
5. Create a "cope ahead" plan: think of ways for the child to envision how they can act or react to something that makes them anxious at school and then rehearse the plan for different scenarios.
6. Talk to school mental health professionals; this is particularly important if a child has significant anxiety or a mental health diagnosis. Contact with the school-based mental health team can facilitate creating a response plan, communicating with school staff and outside providers, and dealing with any social, emotional or behavioral issues.
7. Blend back to school with fun activities so transition is less sudden. For example, plan a water or amusement park trip, a shopping or movie outing, camping, or whatever your child has enjoyed over the summer. These can be done on weekends or on days off school at the beginning.

Connect with us!

Like us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/MetroWestMasterAssociation) to ensure that you don't miss any MetroWest community news. Also, scan the QR code for our website. It provides a wide range of timely news and updates about MetroWest, including events, business, community stories and more.



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Publix Confirms Reopening Date

The Publix at MetroWest Village Station
has confirmed a reopening date of
Thursday, Sept. 25.



Aldi Expects Early August Opening

The Aldi store that is taking over the
former Winn Dixie space is
now tentatively projected to open
Thursday, Aug. 7.

