

Firemen vs. Permanent
 Rescue truck No. one of the Birmingham fire department was hastily dispatched to the McBrook building, 185 Pierce, Tuesday afternoon when building occupants reported a strong odor of gas. Firemen quickly found the odor to be emanating from a first floor room where a patented type home permanent was being administered to a lady. "Sure smelled like gas," commented a fireman.

City Drops to 7th Place in National Traffic Ratings

By GIL HERMAN

A group of city officials met last week in the commission room of Birmingham's municipal building to hear a report by the National Safety Council on the 1952 traffic safety record of the City of Birmingham.

Representing the safety council was Corporal Joseph Chaput, Michigan state policeman, who delivered the report. He pointed out that Birmingham's traffic program had good results in that only one person was killed in the city's 1952 traffic.

However, the safety council's report is not only concerned with vital statistics of traffic. It reaches into every phase of traffic safety from the contribution of governmental agencies to the safety attitudes of the man of the street.

Podigious effort is expended in the compilation of such a report, both on the part of the safety council and agencies of the city. First, agencies of the city compile reports on the traffic

REPORTS ARE prepared on the police department, the court, the engineering department, a school's traffic programs, the amount of traffic information presented to the public, and the activities of civic safety organizations. This material is forwarded to the safety council where it is evaluated

on the basis of standards set forth by that body. Each area of traffic safety is adjudged by an expert in the field.

The reports of cities of equal size and character are then grouped together and judged competitively.

Among 407 cities in its category, Birmingham ranked in seventh place for 1952. This represented a downward slide of five notches from its tie for second place in 1951.

THE PICTURE of Birmingham's traffic record cannot be thoroughly evaluated from the foregoing figures since in point score Birmingham showed an improvement over last year's record. In 1951 the city scored 7133 points out of 1,000, in 1952 the point total increased to 7197 to win an honorable mention citation for the city.

Corporal Chaput pointed out that Birmingham's slip in the

standings was undoubtedly due to the increased activity of other cities in programs of traffic safety.

INCLUDED IN its analysis of Birmingham's traffic record are recommendations by which the city may improve its standing.

The safety council suggests that citizens are failing to cooperate with police in reporting property damage accidents. This opinion is based on national averages and statistics with which Birmingham's records do not conform.

The safety council recommends that a program should be initiated to inform citizens of their responsibility in reporting these accidents.

In regard to traffic engineering, the safety council recommends that more time be spent in traffic signal maintenance. Also recommended is posting of more special speed limits

to facilitate a better flow of traffic. MORE CROSSWALK markings are needed as well as more street lighting and greater use of progressive type traffic signal lights.

Greater use of one-way streets is suggested, also more pedestrian indications at signalized intersections, and expansion of street mileage with prohibited parking on one or both sides of the street.

Birmingham's traffic law enforcement operations were commended in the report. However, it was suggested that supervisors of uniformed personnel should in most cases receive additional administrative training.

Arrests of hit and run drivers and numbers of drunk drivers arrested were termed below average, and adoption of better methods of field direction of police units was advised.

ENFORCEMENT of pedestrian regulations should be pressed immediately, was the opinion of the safety council. This was urged since pedestrians account for almost half of the traffic deaths in cities and in the majority of cases when such deaths occur the pedestrian is committing an illegal or manifestly unsafe act.

Expansion of traffic training in Birmingham schools was stressed for improvement, and as the report shows, improvement cannot be made without the cooperation and help of all city institutions and agencies as well as that of the individual citizen.

AS THE SAFETY council indicated, a report of this kind gives more attention to the shortcomings of a city than to its good points. That Birmingham complied with high standards of the Council is indicated that a commendable job is being done in regards to traffic safety.

There is, however constant need for improvement, and as the report shows, improvement cannot be made without the cooperation and help of all city institutions and agencies as well as that of the individual citizen.

A PRACTICE session on the new police teletype takes up part of the day of Patrolman Anthony Stiel, who is one of the seven members of the Birmingham department trained to operate the machine.

Stiel, with Lt. Henry Timm, Det. Sgt. Merlin Holmquist and Patrolman Charles Blashfield, Robert Pennerell, Robert Schuele and Policewoman Betsy Blackinton, have been trained by the Michigan Bell Telephone instructors in Detroit.

The teletype will provide a closer link for law enforcement officers in Wayne and Oakland counties. Wayne county messages will be relayed to Pontiac which will in turn send out teletype messages to whatever Oakland county department is concerned.

The local hook-up will go into operation Sept. 1. (Eccentric Staff Photo)

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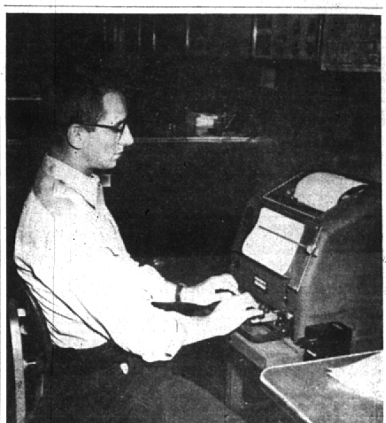
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