

MILES PER HOUR

NEWSLETTER OF THE OFFICE OF TRAFFIC SAFETY



Fall 2014

Director's Comments

It Keeps on Ticking

Donna Berger, Office of Traffic Safety



Every day, I check the Traffic Deaths to Date ticker on our OTS home page. And unfortunately, the numbers are always climbing higher with each additional person who loses their life on Minnesota roads.

Those numbers are just one part of *Minnesota Motor Vehicle Crash Facts*, our annual summary of traffic crashes derived from law enforcement reports that describes how, why and where crashes occurred and who was involved. On June 30, we released the [2013 edition of Crash Facts](#).

After a jump in 2012, Minnesota traffic fatalities dropped to 387 last year, the second lowest total in a decade. But, while fewer people died on our roads, the total number of crashes increased by 12 percent, to 77,707 in 2013.

Like previous years, we saw the same top contributing factors — illegal and unsafe speeds, driver inattention, impaired drivers and unbuckled motorists. That is why, using crash data on

traffic fatalities and serious injuries, we target these issues throughout the year with enhanced enforcement and publicity campaigns in order to positively change driver behavior and save lives.

From August 16 – September 1, for example, there were additional patrols and messaging to combat impaired driving. Why? Because far too many drivers still make poor and dangerous decisions about drinking and driving:

- Last year, 25,719 motorists were arrested for DWI, a 9 percent decrease from 28,418 in 2012, but anecdotal evidence suggests the challenge of filling law enforcement vacancies due to retirement may be contributing to the drop.
- One in seven Minnesota drivers has a DWI.
- A growing number of females are getting arrested — they represent 25 percent of the incidents in 2013, up 5 percent from 2003.

We still all have work to do to reach our goal of reducing crashes, deaths and injuries and improving driver behavior. That is what I keep in mind every morning when I check that Traffic Deaths to Date ticker. And I know our work can — and is — making a difference.

Keeping Roads Safe for the School Year

With the school year underway, we have more pedestrian, bicycle and bus activity on our roads. Everyone including students, parents and motorists has the responsibility of keeping our roads safe.

In Minnesota, school buses make at least 10,000 school bus trips daily. Last year, there were 732 traffic crashes on our roads that directly involved at least one school bus — a 32 percent increase from 553 crashes in 2012. This resulted in three deaths (none of which were school bus occupants) and 237 injuries.

continued on page 4

Decision to Drive Impaired Yields 1,340 Arrests

Summer fun came to an abrupt end for 1,340 motorists arrested during a DWI enforcement campaign Aug. 16 through Labor Day in Minnesota. That compares to 1,556 in 2013 and 1,872 in 2012. During the extra enforcement campaign, the highest alcohol concentrations recorded included:

- 0.33 (Ramsey County)
- 0.32 (Minnesota State Patrol)
- 0.319 (Itasca County)
- 0.31 (Columbia Heights)
- 0.3 (Moorhead)
- 0.3 (Chaska)

End-of-Summer DWI Campaign — Arrests by Agency

The Minnesota State Patrol reported 256 arrests during the extra enforcement campaign. In the Twin Cities, agencies with the most DWI arrests included:

- St. Paul — 44 arrests
- Minneapolis — 35 arrests
- Edina — 28 arrests
- White Bear Lake — 21 arrests

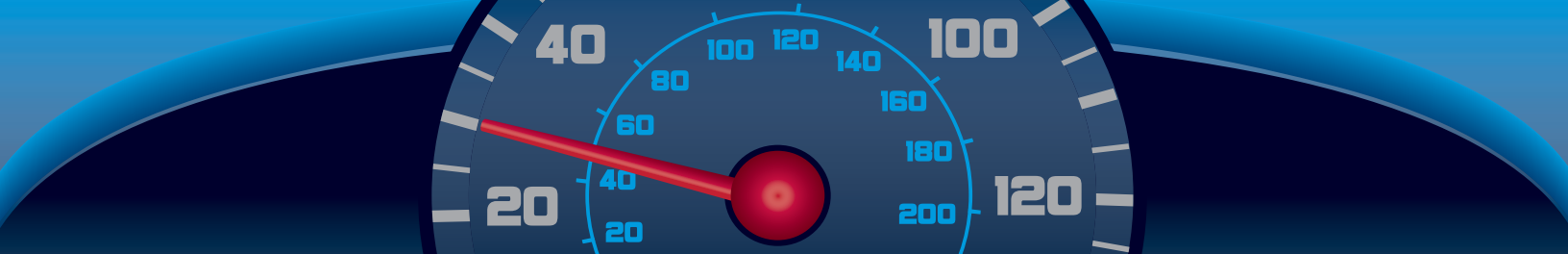
In Greater Minnesota, where 63 percent of the impaired-related traffic fatalities occurred in 2013, agencies with the most DWI arrests included:

- Red Lake Nation — 18 arrests
- Olmsted County — 14 arrests
- Duluth — 14 arrests
- Moorhead — 11 arrests

In the last three years (2011 – 2013), 279 people lost their lives in drunk driving crashes in Minnesota and 81 were killed last year. Beyond the fatalities, 2,300 people suffered injuries in alcohol-related crashes in 2013.

inside

- 2 DWI Enforcer All-Stars
July 4 Enforcement
Speed — There's no excuses
- 3 Motorcycle Road Guard Training
TZD Commissioner's Award
Enforcement Calendar



DWI Enforcer All-Stars Honored at Twins Game



Law enforcement from communities across the state were recognized before the July 24 Twins game at Target Field.

There's no reason to drive after drinking, especially when Minnesota State Patrol Trooper Gordon Shank is on duty. For the second year in a row, Shank was the top DWI enforcer in the state, with 216 DWI arrests in 2013.

Shank was among 37 law enforcement officers and prosecutors selected for outstanding service in enforcement and prosecution of drunk driving, and recognized as DWI Enforcer All-Stars during the July 24 Minnesota Twins' pre-game activities at Target Field.

Congratulations to our 7th annual DWI Enforcer All-Stars team (included with their number of 2013 DWI arrests):

Twin Cities All-Stars

- Tim Tourville, Crystal Police — 71
- Todd Groves, Eden Prairie Police — 81
- Don Birdsell, Elk River Police — 31
- Adam Stier, Lakeville Police — 85
- Matt Olson, Maple Grove Police — 76
- Tony Gabriel, Maplewood Police — 48
- David Bernstein, Minneapolis City Attorney Office Prosecutor
- Craig Isaacson, Minnesota State Patrol Drug Recognition Evaluator
- Paul Henstein, Minnesota State Patrol — 123
- Mark Hibbard, Minnesota State Patrol — 160
- Kyle Klawiter, Minnesota State Patrol — 128
- Andrew Martinek, Minnesota State Patrol — 130
- Eric Micek, Minnesota State Patrol — 108
- James Swanson, Minnesota State Patrol — 109
- Jack Tiegs, Minnesota State Patrol — 113
- Gordon Shank, Minnesota State Patrol — 216
- Cory Schmitz, New Prague Police — 23
- Ryan Larson, St. Francis Police — 26
- Santiago Rodriguez, St. Paul Police — 116
- Joshua Davis, Shakopee Police — 23

Greater Minnesota All-Stars

- Jeff McCormack, Austin Police — 44
- Chad Bonin, Blue Earth Police — 55
- Matt Ibberson, Brown County Sheriff — 16
- Ryan Flynn, Chisago County Prosecutor
- Matt Sobczak, Fond du Lac Tribal Police — 14
- Adam Connor, Lyon County Sheriff — 16
- Ken Baker, Mankato Police — 23
- Kyle Backer, Minnesota State Patrol — 81
- Phillip Bogojevic, Minnesota State Patrol — 74
- Raul Lopez, Moorhead Police — 37
- Paul Mathews, Pipestone County Sheriff — 10
- Adam Crain, Red Wing Police — 34
- Dan Fick, Rock County Sheriff — 10
- Joseph Jensen, Sauk Centre Police — 30
- Geoff Dowty, Sherburne County Drug Recognition Evaluator
- Josh Partlow, Windom Police — 14
- Chad Myers, Winona County Sheriff — 103

Wrap-up: Fourth of July

Fourth of July festivities go off with a bang. Unfortunately, the holiday is also one of the deadliest on Minnesota roads. And, although summer typically has fewer crashes than winter, motorists tend to drive at higher speeds and the crashes are more severe.

This year, from July 3 at 6 p.m. to July 7 at 6 a.m., preliminary reports show 447 crashes resulted in seven fatalities and 210 injuries (15 of which were serious).

Speeding — There's No Excuse

"I didn't know I was speeding." "There must be something wrong with my speedometer." "I'm not from around here." Law enforcement officers have heard all kinds of excuses from speeders.

But with unsafe and illegal speed reported as the number one contributing factor in fatal crashes and the cause of 235 deaths statewide in the past three years, our message is, "There is no excuse!"

Nearly 400 Minnesota law enforcement agencies increased their activity and paid media messaging got the word out in two campaigns this summer — June 16–20 and July 10–27 — to help combat traffic crashes, deaths and serious injuries caused by speeding.

During the July campaign when citations are reported, 16,926 drivers were ticketed.

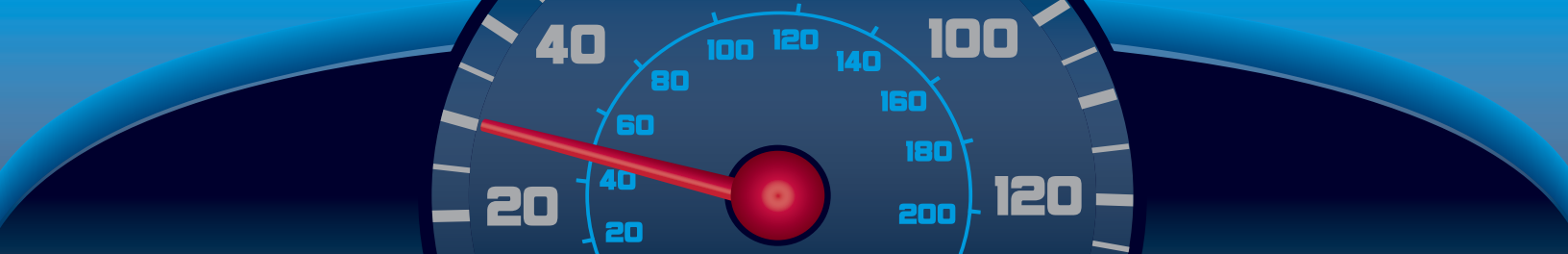
The [Minnesota statute on speed limits](#) requires motorists to drive with due care:

- Every driver must drive at a speed that is reasonable and prudent for the conditions.
- Motorists must be aware of actual and potential hazards on the highway and use due care in operating a vehicle.

Costs of speeding violations vary by county but typically ramp up to at least \$120 for traveling 10 mph over the limit. Motorists stopped at 20 mph over the speed limit face double the fine, and those ticketed at more than 100 mph can lose their license for six months.



[Youtube video](#) of trooper on the road stopping speeding motorists and stating several excuses he has heard from offenders.



Motorcycle Road Guard Certificate Announcement

The Minnesota Department of Public Safety (DPS) has been authorized to amend the rules included in the Minnesota Road Guard Certificate Law enacted in 2012. DPS has added a new chapter that establishes the safety, equipment and curriculum requirements for Motorcycle Road Guard certification.

The new rule was published in the July 28, 2014 edition of the State Register, and the new chapter became effective five business days after publication.

Motorcycle Road Guard Field Manual

As the designated training agency, the Minnesota Motorcycle Safety Center (MMSC) developed the *Motorcycle Road Guard Field Manual*. The manual contains guidelines on the flagging operations so important to the safety of the road guard, the motorcycle “group ride” riders and the motorists around them. This manual will be used in the classroom portion of the training course.

Training Overview

- **Length** – The course is three hours long, including two hours of classroom and one hour of practical training at a live intersection near the college.
- **Cost** – \$30
- **Date** – Road guard training classes will begin in April 2015. April through October, the courses will be offered the first Saturday of the month. Class size is limited to 12. Each training site may run up to four classes per Saturday.
- **Locations by region** —
 - Minnesota State College in Detroit Lakes (NW)
 - Minnesota West College in Marshall (SW)
 - Lake Superior College in Duluth (NE)
 - Rochester Community and Technical College (SE)
 - Dakota County Technical College (Metro)

For more information, visit the MMSC [Motorcycle Road Guard Certificate web page](#).

TOWARD ZERO DEATHS

St. Cloud Enforcement Grant Recognized with Commissioner’s Award

On May 21, the first Commissioner’s Award was presented to the St. Cloud Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) Enforcement Grant in recognition of their outstanding performance in the 2013 grant year.

Grant recipients were nominated for this award based on their enforcement activities, performance and excellence in meeting the following criteria:

- Demonstrated continuous coordinated enforcement efforts through the year
- Had timely reporting and invoicing
- Short reports were not missed by any of the grant’s partner agencies during the grant year
- Warnings generally did not exceed citations
- Participated in community policing activities, such as mock car crashes, bike rodeos, child passenger safety clinics, safety education in school, etc.

The St. Cloud TZD Enforcement Grantees included:

- Albany Police Department
- Avon Police Department
- Benton County Sheriff’s Office
- Cold Spring/Richmond Police Department
- Foley Police Department
- Kimball Police Department
- Melrose Police Department
- Paynesville Police Department
- Rice Police Department
- St. Cloud Police Department
- St. Joseph Police Department

continued on page 4

Enhanced Enforcement Calendar

Upcoming traffic safety enforcement and education efforts include:

2014

October 10 – 26
Belts and Child Seats

November 28 – 29 and December 4 – 6,
11 – 13, 18 – 20, 26 – 27 — Impaired Driving

2015

April 13 – 18
Distracted Driving

May 18 – 31
Belts and Child Seats

July 10 – 26
Speed

July 10
Statewide Speed Enforcement Day

August 21 – September 7
Impaired Driving

August 31
Trooper Ted Foss Move-Over (optional)

Extra DWI patrols also will be conducted in the state’s 25 counties with the highest number of alcohol-related deaths and serious injuries:

2014

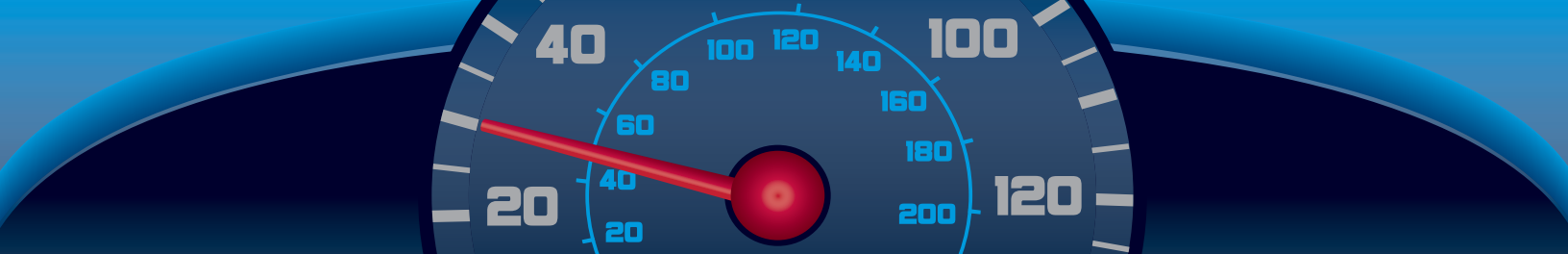
October 31
November 26

2015

March 17
May 8
July 3
August 21

Save the Date for TZD

Mark your calendars for the 2014 TZD Conference, to be held Nov. 13-14, at the Duluth Entertainment Convention Center.



St. Cloud TZD Enforcement Grant coordinators presented Tom Kummrow with a plaque recognizing his 13 years of service as a Law Enforcement Liaison.

St. Cloud TZD Recognized with Commissioner's Award continued from page 3

- Sartell Police Department
- Sauk Centre Police Department
- Sauk Rapids Police Department
- Stearns County Sheriff's Office
- Waite Park Police Department
- Seat Belt — Chris Boucher (Cold Spring), Casey Jansky (Avon) and Eric Boucher (Cold Spring)
- Speed — Kari Bonfield (Sartell), Joe Jenson (Sauk Centre) and Aaron Baros (Albany)

Sheriff's Office

- DWI — Matt Mayers (Stearns), Brent Curtis (Stearns), Dave Bonfield (Stearns), Garth McFadden (Benton), Andrew Struffert (Stearns) and Nathan Watson (Stearns)
- Seat Belt — Chad Meemken (Stearns), Andrew Struffert (Stearns) and Steven Noetzel (Stearns)
- Speed — Chad Meemken (Stearns), Steven Noetzel (Stearns), Matt Mayers (Stearns) and Brent Fair (Benton)

The family of Officer Joseph Schmitz of the Sartell Police Department accepted a Recognition of Service Award in his memory.

As DPS Commissioner Mona Dohman shared at the ceremony, working toward zero deaths truly is possible, "if we stay the course, make use of improving engineering and technology, do everything possible to improve response times and treatment, and use resources wisely and make public education messages effective."

In addition to each agency receiving a plaque, the fiscal lead of the grant, Lt. James Mortenson, attended the Lifesavers Conference last April and each grant agency will have the option to send one additional person to the upcoming TZD Conference in November.

Individual awards were presented to: St. Cloud Police Department

- DWI — Ryan Priebe, Matthew Pribnow and Brian Cameron
- Seat Belt — Christopher Jennissen, James Mortenson and Ryan Sayre
- Speed — Darin Vossen, David Stone and Nicholas Carlson

Minnesota State Patrol

- DWI — Kyle Backer, John Fritz and Aaron Dix
- Seat Belt — Tony Mazzone, Tony Butler and Robyn Birr
- Speed — Tony Butler, Dan Orth and Jason Steinert

Small Agencies

- DWI — Joe Jenson (Sauk Centre), Steve Mathews (Sartell) and Chris Boucher (Cold Spring)

Keeping Roads Safe for the School Year continued from page 1

Despite the increase in crashes, school buses are the safest mode of transportation for students, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Children are eight times safer riding in a bus to school than in any other vehicles.

Keep These Tips in Mind:

Bus Riders

- When getting off a bus, look to be sure no cars are passing on the shoulder (side of the road).
- Before crossing the street, take five "giant steps" out from the front of the bus or until the driver's face can be seen.
- Wait for the driver to signal that it's safe to cross.
- Look left-right-left when coming to the edge of the bus to make sure traffic is stopped. Keep watching traffic when crossing.

Pedestrians

- Cross only at intersections or crosswalks.
- Obey all traffic signs and signals.
- Do not enter a crosswalk if a vehicle is too close or moving too fast to stop safely.
- Remember, the law requires that pedestrians take responsibility for their own safety.

Parents

- Teach and demonstrate to your children what to do around buses: how to cross safely; the importance to stay back from the road while waiting for the bus; the importance to make eye contact with the driver before crossing to ensure the driver sees them and can help keep an eye out for the child.

Motorists

- Motorists must stop at least 20 feet from a school bus that is displaying red flashing lights or a stop arm when approaching from the rear and from the opposite direction on undivided roads.
- Red flashing lights on buses indicate students are either entering or exiting the bus.
- Motorists are not required to stop for a bus if the bus is on the opposite side of a separated roadway — but they should remain alert for children.
- Watch for pedestrian traffic and prepare to stop if a pedestrian is approaching the intersection.
- Stop for pedestrians in crosswalks.
- Remember, the law applies to both intersections with marked and unmarked crosswalks.

Send story ideas for Miles Per Hour to dave.boxum@state.mn.us