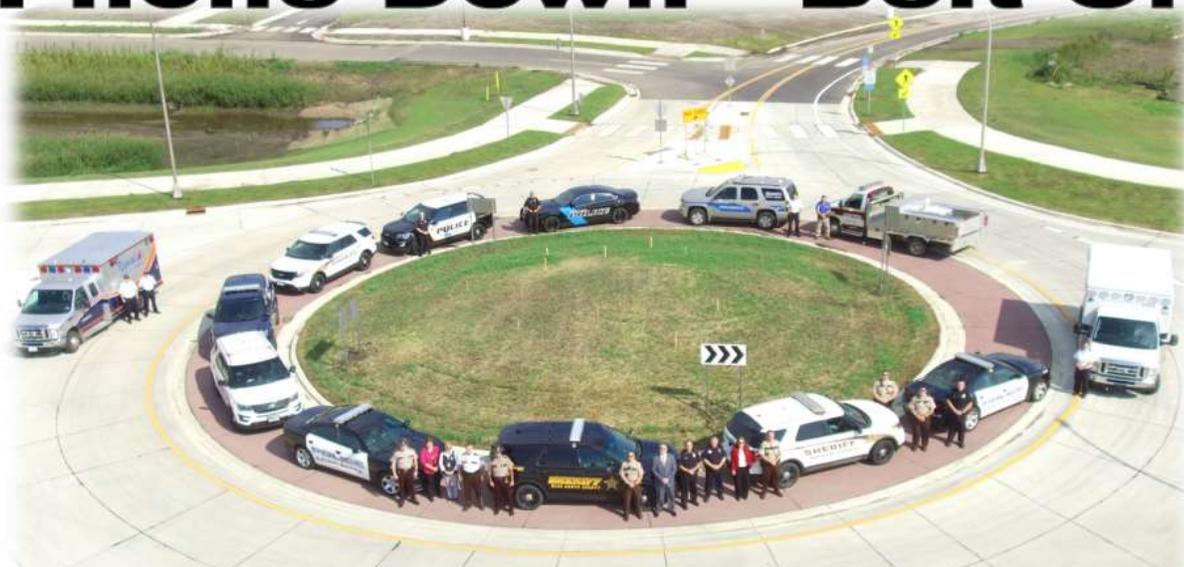


# South Central Toward Zero Deaths Region Annual Report

2016-2017

## Phone Down - Belt On



## Be Alert, Crashes Hurt!



Annette L. Larson  
October 24, 2017

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# Executive Summary

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## ***Background***

The South Central Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) program began in the summer of 2011. In 2016, there were 392 deaths on Minnesota roadways and 25 of these deaths occurred on south central roadways - an unacceptable number of lives lost. The South Central Minnesota TZD Region includes partners from the 13-county area: Blue Earth, Brown, Cottonwood, Faribault, Jackson, Le Sueur, Martin, Nicollet, Nobles, Rock, Sibley, Waseca and Watonwan. The counties work together to create programs to reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries.

## ***Mission***

To move south central Minnesota toward zero deaths on our roads, using education, enforcement, engineering and emergency medical and trauma services.

## ***Strategic Plan***

A regional strategic plan was developed in 2011 in order to identify goals and objectives to accomplish the mission. Baseline data was gathered in 2011 and compared to the most recent data to assist in gauging the goals. The strategic plan was updated this year to reflect the most recent data. Currently the steering committee is working to update their goals and plans to move forward in the years to come.

## ***Leadership Team***

The South Central Minnesota TZD co-chairs are Greg Ous, District Engineer for MnDOT District 7, and Captain Jeremy Geiger, district commander Minnesota State Patrol District 2200. The regional co-chairs, along with the TZD Regional Coordinator, act as the administrators of the steering committee and assure that plans passed by the steering committee are implemented within the region.

## ***Steering Committee***

The South Central Minnesota TZD Steering Committee met seven times in 2016-2017 and consists of a core group of 31 members who represent all 4Es (education, enforcement, engineering and emergency medical and trauma services).

## ***Seat Belt Survey***

The TZD Regional Coordinator, Annette Larson, partnered with 13 county engineers and Minnesota State Patrol to conduct observational seat belt checks at 2-3 intersection locations in each county. Observational seat belt surveys have been completed annually the week of April 3-9, 2017. The south central Minnesota regional seat belt usage rate was 86.9 percent. The 2017 rate is not a significant change from the 2016 rate of 86.91 percent. The big picture is telling us that seat belt usage is slowly climbing.

## ***Partnerships***

The South Central Minnesota TZD Region continues to grow. Growth in networking and relationships is essential to the success of the region. TZD Regional Coordinator's work is dedicated to educating key groups within the counties and the region to initiate and strengthen these partnerships.

Four coalitions continue their traffic safety efforts in Blue Earth/Nicollet, Faribault, Le Sueur and Nobles counties to help make Minnesota roads safer. Each coalition is currently at different stages from just starting to having completed many activities. New coalitions started in Martin, Watonwan, Cottonwood and Jackson Counties.

## ***New Partners***

New partners were contacted through 4E meetings in the counties. A Faribault County commissioner will join the coalition.

In Martin County, the Sheriffs office, Fairmont Police department, county engineer, Mayo Clinic Health Systems and Gold Cross.

In Watonwan County, emergency management director, assistant Chief of Police St James Police department, Watonwan County Sheriffs office, owner of St James electric, St James Fire department, St James Ambulance service, Madelia Ambulance service and Mayo Clinic Health Systems.

In Cottonwood County, the Sheriffs office and county engineer.

In Jackson County, EMS and Jackson County Commissioners.

## Mission

To move south central Minnesota toward zero deaths on our roads, using education, enforcement, engineering and emergency services.

## Goal 1 – Reduce TZD Fatality and Serious Injuries

To continuously decrease traffic related fatalities and serious injuries in south central Minnesota from the past **5-year average** (2012-2016\*) of 37 fatalities and 84 serious injuries. Note: New injury definitions were introduced in 2016 and may have contributed to a higher reported number of serious injuries.

## Objectives

A. To continuously increase regional seat belt use rates.

The statewide average **was 93 percent in 2016.**

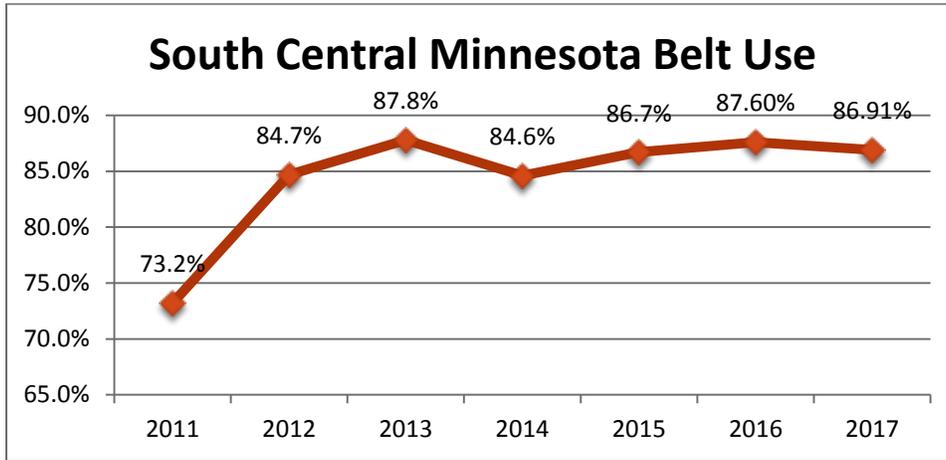
The regional seat belt rate was 86.9 percent in April 2017. The 2016 rate was 87.6 percent, this slight drop is not statistically significant.

## Regional Activities – Seat Belt Survey (April 2017)

The TZD Regional Coordinator, Annette Larson, partnered with 13 county engineers and Minnesota State Patrol to conduct observational seat belt checks at 2-3 intersection locations in each county. Observational seat belt surveys have been completed annually the week of April 3-9, 2017. The south central Minnesota regional seat belt usage rate was 86.9 percent. This slight drop is not statistically significant.

### South Central Minnesota Belt Use Observation Survey Conducted Annually

Year	Rate	Error Margin	Week of	Notes
2011	73.2%			
2012	84.7%			
2013	87.8%	3.4%	September 14-20	
2014	84.6%	3.1%	September 15-21	
2015	86.7%	3.9%	April 6-12	
2016	87.6%		April 4-10	
2017	86.91 %		April 3-9	



B. To examine the characteristics of the unbelted fatalities and serious injuries.  
 Calculation of seat belt use in fatal and serious crashes is possible with existing data.

C. To continuously decrease the following:  
**5-year average (2012-2016\*) in South Central Region**

*Contributing Factors:*

	Alcohol	Speed	Distraction**	Total
<b>Average Annual number of:</b>				
<b>Fatalities</b>	9	9	9	37
<b>Fatal Crashes</b>	8	8	9	32
<b>Severe Injuries</b>	18	21	16	84
<b>Severe Injury Crashes</b>	14	15	10	64

*Note: a crash may have more than one of the above listed or additional contributing factor*

**Total South Central Region (2016\*)**

	Fatalities	Fatal Crashes	Severe Injuries	Severe Injury Crashes
2016* Total	25	22	107	88
2012-2016* Total	185	162	418	320

*\*2016 data are preliminary.*

*\*\*Distraction data for 2016 are not available. The average for 2011-2015 has been provided.*

In conclusion, south central region had 12 less fatalities and 23 more severe injuries as compared to the five year average. As state before, new injury definitions were introduced in 2016 and may have contributed to a higher reported number of serious injuries.

## Region Goal 2- TZD Partnership Goals

To continuously increase TZD awareness and partnerships across south central Minnesota for both the general public and traffic safety professionals

### 1. Establish the vision of TZD as a priority for all region, county, city (government agencies)

- A. Engage local government involvement in TZD steering committee and workshops
- B. Educate/promote traffic safety awareness of city/county officials
- C. Promote city/county employee education/policies that facilitate the TZD vision

(Activities: Recruitment of city and county to attend TZD event, giving TZD presentations to boards/councils, mailings/connections to Network of Employers for Traffic Safety)

This past year TZD stakeholders shared the local government presentation with county commissioners in the following counties:

Blue Earth, Cottonwood, Jackson, Le Sueur, Nobles, Sibley and Waseca

### 2. Create and Strengthen partnerships in the region

- A. Engage stakeholders
- B. Develop networking relationships
- C. Recruit membership of the TZD partnership

(Activities: EMS Conference booth/presentation, regional workshop, web, calendar, statistics, workshop, orientation)

TZD Regional Coordinator activities included:

- Worked with Le Sueur County Safe Roads coalition to obtain a signed resolution of support for them county commissioners.
- Numerous meetings with the MnDOT District Engineer, Public Affairs Coordinator, State Aid Engineer, Traffic Engineer, Minnesota State Patrol Captain, and Public Information Officer to work on TZD program.
- Worked with Minnesota State Patrol, South Dakota Highway Patrol for May seat belt saturation in Interstate 90.

- Attended and participated in the SMRTAC and SWRTAC meetings to network with area EMS and other trauma professionals.
- Attended Minnesota Emergency Medical Service Association annual conference and presented to MEMSA members.
- Two new safe roads coalitions started in the region
- Keeping current the contact list of more than 100 traffic safety partners.

### **Regional Activity – 2017 South Central Minnesota TZD Workshop (May 4, 2017)**

The South Central Region Toward Zero Deaths regional workshop was held May 4 in New Ulm. About 70 traffic safety advocates in attendance. The workshop highlighted the facts of traffic deaths and serious injuries occurring on area roadways. The data presented throughout the day gave attendees a snapshot of what a typical severe crash looks like and how these crashes can be prevented in the future through the work of a united front between the 4Es. Attendees learned about drowsy driving, social media, critical incident stress debrief, engineering 201, DWI eCharging & eWarrants process. Participants spent time working in county groups to help develop the south central regions action plan for the year.



Pictured above is Greg Ous MnDOT District 7 Engineer and Mark Griffith South Central EMS Director.

Sylvie (17-yr-old granddaughter) and Greg Tikalsky (Joe Tikalsky's son) share their personal story on how driver decisions have impacted not only their own life, but also the entire community, when a distracted driver killed Joe while he was getting his mail.



Pictured above is Sylvie Tikalsky



Pictured above is Greg Tikalsky

Toward Zero Deaths is the goal and every life is worth saving.

The south central Minnesota TZD program aims to reduce traffic deaths and severe injuries. As part of these efforts, an annual workshop is held. Below is the attendance over the past few years.

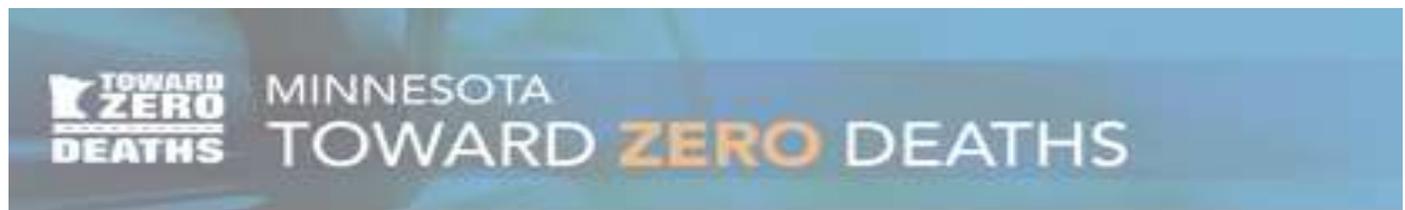
**Workshop Attendance:**

- 2012: 140 Participants  
(Joint workshop with Southwest Region)
- 2013: 92 Participants
- 2014: 75 Participants
- 2015: 73 Participants
- 2016: 70 Participants
- 2017: 62 Participants

The presentations slides can be found at:

<http://www.minnesotatzd.org/initiatives/regions/southcentral/workshop/2017/index.html>

During the 2017 workshop counties shared what they accomplished from the 2016 action plans and 2017 plans developed. These plans will be reviewed by the steering committee for support and used to update the current strategic plan.



South Central Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths

**Media Advisory**

May 2, 2017

2151 Bassett Drive  
Mankato, MN 56001

Contact: Annette Larson  
South Central Minnesota TZD Regional Coordinator  
Cell: 507.720.2101, [annette.l.larson@state.mn.us](mailto:annette.l.larson@state.mn.us)

*For Immediate Release*

**South Central Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths workshop convenes to address traffic deaths**  
*Family members share the tragic story of their loved one, whose death was caused by an inattentive driver*

**WHAT:** *Is one death acceptable on Minnesota highways?* South Central Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths traffic safety partners will discuss crash trends and determine best practices for reducing traffic deaths and serious injuries on south central Minnesota roadways.

**WHEN:** Thursday, May 4, 8:30 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.

**WHERE:** Best Western Convention Center, 2101 South Broadway St., New Ulm, MN

**WHY:** Since TZD's inception in 2003, traffic-related deaths have declined by 40 percent. During the last 10 years (2007 – 2016), motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of unintentional injury death for Minnesotans ages five through 24.

**WHO:** More than 80 regional traffic safety stakeholders will attend the 6<sup>th</sup> annual South Central Minnesota Regional TZD workshop. They represent law enforcement, engineering, education, emergency medical and trauma services as well as local leaders. The Minnesota Departments of Public Safety, Health and Transportation are hosting the event.

**Highlights:**

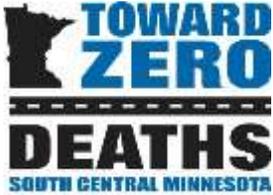
**8:30 a.m. – TZD regional efforts** – Greg Ous, district engineer, Minnesota Department of Transportation and Capt. Jeremy Geiger, Minnesota State Patrol

**11-15 a.m. – Critical Incident Stress Debrief** – Mark Griffith, executive director, South Central Minnesota EMS Corporation. Learn why you should participate in a debrief session and how to cope with incidents, both now and long-term.

**2 p.m. – The Challenges of Drowsy Driving** – Julie Hatfield, RN, BSN, Mayo Clinic Health System Regional Sleep Disorder Center. Most drivers have found themselves tired or falling asleep while driving. Drowsy driving is not just falling asleep at the wheel – it is a profound impairment that mimics alcohol-impaired driving in many ways.

**2:30 a.m. – "Hands on the Wheel, Eyes on the Road: In Memory of Joe Tikalsky"** – Sylvie (17-yr-old granddaughter) and Greg Tikalsky (Joe Tikalsky's son) will share their personal story on how driver decisions have impacted not only their own life, but also the entire community, when a distracted driver killed Joe while he was getting his mail.





**South Central Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths  
6<sup>th</sup> Annual Regional Workshop Agenda  
Best Western Convention Center  
2101 South Broadway St., New Ulm**

**May 4, 2017**

- 8 a.m. **Registration, Continental Breakfast, View Exhibits & South Central Regional TZD Accomplishments**
- 8:30 a.m. **Welcome** – *Greg Ous, District engineer, MnDOT District 7*
- 9 a.m. **Regional TZD Crash Facts overview** – *Captain Jeremy Geiger, Minnesota State Patrol*
- 9:15 a.m. **Social media!** – *Dave Boxum and Jennifer Longaecker, Public Information officers, Dept. of Public Safety, Office of Communications*  
Follow us... Like us... What's this mean? How can we do that? With all the social networking going on, how do we get our traffic safety messages out to the target audience? Learn from the communication experts on social media. Find the answers to your questions on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and so many more new social media tools! This session will provide real-life examples of how these emerging networks are being used for traffic safety campaigns, news conferences and other initiatives.
- 10 a.m. **Break, Exhibits & South Central Regional TZD Accomplishments**
- 10:15 a.m. **Breakout sessions**
- **TZD 101** – Whether you are just starting to think about developing a coalition or looking for ideas of what other areas have done, then you should attend this highly interactive breakout session. Gather “intel” on free resources and learn how to use tools available in the South Central TZD region. Representatives from Minnesota Safety Council, MADD, South Central EMS, Office of Traffic Safety Communications as well as local coalition coordinators will share their expertise.  
Room: Pre-function area and outdoors
  - **Navigating the DWI eCharging & eWarrants Process**  
*Mike Asleson, DWI deployment coordinator, Bureau of Criminal Apprehension and Gary Kalstabakken, product manager, Dept. of Public Safety.* Learn what's new with DWI eCharging, electronic search warrants and the DWI dashboard. Geared towards law enforcement, this session covers the arrests of impaired drivers. And, coming this spring, is eWarrants – which allows an officer to do electronic warrants in less time. In addition, the DWI Dashboard shows mapping of DWIs, along with severe injuries and fatal crashes, so law enforcement can see where they should focus their resources.  
Room: Gallery 1 and 2
  - **Engineering 201** – *Back by popular demand!*

*Brett Paasch, EIT, traffic engineer, MnDOT District 7, will share resources and explain the basic tips, latest tools and best practices for improving roadway safety from an engineer's perspective.*

Room: Gallery 3

11:15 a.m.

**Critical Incident Stress Debrief**

*Mark Griffith, executive director, South Central Minnesota EMS Corporation*

"Critical incident stress" is the emotional and sometimes physical response that most people experience in a traumatic event, such as a fatality or severe injury. Learn why you should participate in a debrief session and how to cope with incidents, both now and long-term.

12:15 p.m.

**Lunch, Exhibits & South Central Regional TZD Accomplishments**

1 p.m.

**Powerful Dreams Inspire Powerful Action**

*Annette Larson, South Central Minnesota TZD regional coordinator*

You have the power to change our traffic safety culture! Challenge the "keep on, keeping on." Report back on 2016 action plans. What can we accomplish for 2017?

2 p.m.

**The Challenges of Drowsy Driving**

*Julie Hatleli, RN, BSN, Mayo Clinic Health System Regional Sleep Disorder Center*

Most drivers have found themselves tired or falling asleep while driving. Drowsy driving is not just falling asleep at the wheel – it is a profound impairment that mimics alcohol-impaired driving in many ways. Learn how key sleep disorders and chronic disease play a part in drowsy driving and what we can do about it.

2:30 p.m.

**"Hands on the Wheel, Eyes on the Road: In Memory of Joe Tikalsky"** – Sylvie (17-yr-old granddaughter) and Greg Tikalsky (Joe Tikalsky's son) will share their personal story on how driver decisions have impacted not only their own life, but also the entire community, when a distracted driver killed Joe while he was getting his mail.

3 p.m.

**Wrap up & Adjourn** – *Greg Ous, District engineer, MnDOT District 7;*

*Capt. Jeremy Geiger, Minnesota State Patrol*

***Please take time throughout the day to visit the traffic-safety exhibit tables for reference materials and ideas to implement in your community.***

## 5/4/17 SOUTH CENTRAL TZD REGIONAL WORKSHOP

### EVALUATION SUMMARY

Number Registered: 83

Number Registered + Walk-ins: 93

Total number of attendees (includes pre-registered + walk-ins - no-shows): 62

Total number of evaluations: 33

Number of paper evaluations: 28

Number of electronic evaluations: 5

<b>General Sessions</b>	<b>Average Rating (out of 4.0)</b>
<b>Welcome</b>	3.4
<b>Regional TZD Crash Facts Overview</b>	3.6
<b>Social Media!</b>	3.3
<b>Critical Incident Stress Debrief</b>	3.6
<b>Powerful Dreams Inspire Powerful Actions</b>	3.2
<b>The Challenges of Drowsy Driving</b>	3.3
<b>“Hands on the Wheel, Eyes on the Road”</b>	3.9
<b>Wrap Up and Adjourn</b>	3.7

#### Comments:

- Very good. Everyone did a very nice job. (x2)
- The personal impact speakers were great – it is amazing to see how they have been fighting to turn their tragedy into positive action.
- Would love to see other counties here. Keep up the great work!
- Adjourning at 3 is good.
- Informative.
- Drowsy driving needs to be more driving and traffic focused.
- The Challenges of Drowsy Driving was interesting, but it didn't provide much information on how to reach the public on this issue.
- The drowsy driving portion did not relate to TZD very much. It would have been nice to hear more about the driving portion of drowsy driving, rather than all of the statistics on sleep. The

Powerful Dreams Inspire Powerful Action was good for local agencies, but did not apply to the State Patrol very much. Also, I believe there needed to be more structure to this portion.

- CISD session was very moving and informative. What a powerful service these folks provide to our public service providers!
- Greg Ous should do Toastmasters as a courtesy to listeners.

**Breakout Session: TZD 101**

Number of evaluations received: 7

	Average Rating (out of 4.0)
<b>Format and length</b>	2.9
<b>Topics covered were timely and useful</b>	2.9
<b>Content was appropriate and helpful</b>	3.0
<b>Facilitator was knowledgeable and managed the group well</b>	3.0

Comments:

- Could be a shorter session (x2).
- Really good way to network, learn, and see what others are doing and some resources that are available.

**Breakout Session: Navigating the DWI eCharging & eWarrants Process**

Number of evaluations received: 13

	Average Rating (out of 4.0)
<b>Format and length</b>	3.6
<b>Topics covered were timely and useful</b>	3.5
<b>Content was appropriate and helpful</b>	3.8
<b>Facilitator was knowledgeable and managed the group well</b>	3.9

Comments:

- Needed to be longer (x3)
- Mike is always excellent. (x3)
  - He did an excellent job in presenting the new information about eWarrants and demonstrating how easy it is to use.
- Great topic. Very helpful. (x2)
- Impressive leverage of technology.

- Focus more on eWarrants.

**Breakout Session: Engineering 201**

Number of evaluations received: 6

	<b>Average Rating (out of 4.0)</b>
<b>Format and length</b>	3.2
<b>Topics covered were timely and useful</b>	3.3
<b>Content was appropriate and helpful</b>	3.3
<b>Facilitator was knowledgeable and managed the group well</b>	3.0

Comments:

- Great discussion

<b>Arrangements</b>	<b>Average Rating (out of 4.0)</b>
<b>Convenience of the registration process</b>	3.8
<b>Location of venue</b>	3.5
<b>Facilities were comfortable and appropriate</b>	3.7
<b>Food served for meals and breaks was satisfying</b>	3.7
<b>Participant materials were helpful and useful</b>	3.4
<b>Mounted regional crash maps</b>	3.2

Comments on arrangements:

- Excellent venue. (x6)
  - Good food, staff was helpful and attentive, and a spectacular AV team. Sound and visuals were great all day. (x2)
- Good and well-organized. (x2)
- Great location.
- It seemed like the majority of people were from the Mankato area. I know you were trying to change it up a bit, but I think bringing it back to Mankato would be a better decision. There were only a couple from Brown County there.
- Materials were online, and unavailable to me as I did not have a computer. Advance notice would have been good.
- Mounted county maps are better than the regional maps. There is better detail.
- Have more maps that are broken down for specific years instead of a 4-year period.
- Need breaks. Without the breaks audience does not listen well.

Suggestions for topics at future workshops:

- Impact statements really hit home. (x2)
- Child Passenger Safety (x2)
  - CPS tech focused information. Children and safety facts in car crashes.
- More information / instruction on how the engineering and enforcement disciplines contribute to driver education curriculum and/or public outreach.
- Include public health and a little less enforcement oriented.
- What the automobile industry is doing to help out in the decrease of traffic-related deaths.
- What can people not directly involved in TZD do?
- More about TZD funds and shifts that are available to work... More on what is expected out of each specific TZD shift.
- Testing – stay with it!

Suggestions for building and maintaining support within region for MN TZD's initiative:

- Get information out to more of the smaller agencies. Make TZD more "user-friendly" and making it easier for smaller agencies to get in on.
- Public health from schools, county, state, and health educators.
- Keep or continue to be visible to the general public by partaking in events, social media, etc.
- Disappointed in attendance. Did remind the county engineers to attend, and we got 3 to come. Should have had a lot more. Perhaps more DSA (Gordy) encouragement?
- Expand coalitions for public involvement.

Any other comments:

- Overall great experience, looking forward to next year. (x2)
- Bring the Tikalsky family to MnDOT.
- Incorporate TZD with MnDOT MVA prevention.
- We need to endorse bill on hands free. We need to endorse certain initiatives region wide.
- Provide a list of participants and contact information.

*See appendix for media coverage.*

## Steering Committee

The South Central Minnesota TZD Regional Steering Committee has a core group of 32 members, with all 4Es represented. The Steering Committee reviews the fatal and serious injury crashes on the state highway system at each monthly meeting. This is a very valuable tool in giving the members a snapshot of what types of crashes are occurring, contributing factors of the crash and the fatal or serious injuries on south central roadways.

Seven Steering Committee meetings were held on the following dates:

2016: October 6, December 1

2017: February 2, March 9, June 1, August 3 and September 7

### 3. Promote & implement effective traffic safety initiatives in the region

- A. Develop and distribute resource materials
- B. Provide enforcement wave support in community
- C. Promote evidence based countermeasures
- D. Collect data and statistics within region
- E. Implement best practices within region

(Activities: web, brochure, one-pagers, presentations, news advisories, workshop, seatbelt observational survey and omnibus survey, media messaging and media events, news releases re: activities woven into existing messages, worksite education and policy development, parent component to drivers education, sober cab development, youth enforcement and education activities)

- Updated and distributed the South Central Minnesota TZD Regional overview
- Updated and distributed the South Central Minnesota TZD Strategic plan.
- Updated and presented the South Central Minnesota PowerPoint presentation.
  - This past year TZD stakeholders shared the local government presentation to county commissioners in Blue Earth, Cottonwood, Jackson, Le Sueur, Nobles, Sibley and Waseca Counties.

## Regional Activity – News Conferences (2016-2017)

TZD Regional Coordinator worked with the local coalitions on educational efforts during the enforcement waves.

A total of five media news conferences held.

- Distracted driving wave in April 2017
- Seat belt wave in May 2017 (two)
- DWI Holiday's 2016 and August 2017

Additional news conferences held in Watonwan and Le Sueur counties.

*News stories can all be found in the appendix for all the news conference events that follow.*

## Regional Activities – Holiday DWI Media Event (November 22, 2016)

Control drink impaired driving education on Nov 22, five local radio DJ's participated along with four participants from area companies. Facebook live and live broadcasting took place during the event. Throughout the event DWI trivia, myth busting and Field Sobriety Test took place.

Before the controlled drink took place local radio stations post messages to Facebook and talk about it on the air. Additional coverage in the appendix.



Pictured above is Lt Casey Meagher providing participants with some impaired driving facts before the controlled drink started.

Pictured below on the left, is Lake Crystal Police Department and on the right Blue Earth County Sheriffs office providing FST to two of the local radio DJ's.



At the wrap of the controlled drink law enforcement had participants drive a pedal kart to show the effects impairment has on your driving. Pictured above on the right are Brad and Sarah from Z99. Brad is attempting to assist Sarah through the course as Sarah tried to move the cone out of her way.



So the participants that felt there was no way you could drive this kart through the cones a member of Radio Mankato, Stunt Monkey, who was there doing the live broadcast and Facebook live, drove the kart with no issues at all.

Pictured above is one of the Facebook live recordings. This post had 3.1K views, allowing us to reach our target audience.



As a follow up to the controlled drink law enforcement and SC EMS go back on the air in December to provide some additional follow up and education. Four radio interviews completed.

*News stories can all be found in the appendix for all the news media that follows.*

### **Regional Activities – Distracted Driving News conference (April 2017)**

This year the TZD regional coordinator worked with the local law enforcement to do live radio interviews. Enforcement completed eight radio interviews on eight different radio stations. TZD Partners that assisted with the radio interviews included Eagle Lake Police Department, Blue Earth County Sheriffs Office, Minnesota State Patrol and the SC TZD Regional Coordinator.



#### **Highlight from one of the radio interview:**

- We witnessed a near miss crash, a driver who was shaving almost ran into the back of a school bus as we stood waiting to go on the air. So we used this as an opportunity to educate people that distracted driving is not just texting or your cell phone.
- Blue Earth County Sheriff's Office has Cellslip bags available for the community to help cut down on distracted driving. Stop in and pick one up.

*Lots of great coverage during the month of April on Distracted Driving in the region. Please see appendix for news coverage.*

### **Regional Activities – Seat Belt Mobilization News Conference (May 22, 2017)**

The Blue Earth Nicollet County TZD Safe Roads Coalition partners up with local Boy Scout Troop to paint the buckle up message across Blue Earth County.

The Boy Scouts completed seat belt checks in local parking lots looking for driver and passengers that were wearing their belts. They reached out to area businesses to see if they could paint the message in their parking lots. The boy scouts safely paint the buckle up message in 17 of parking lots, of area churches, high schools, Menards, Wickersham Clinic and Hy-Vee. They provided educational materials to organizations to encourage people to put their seat belts on.

The coalition plans to expand the effort into Nicollet County in the fall of 2017.



**TZD Partners:** *Madison Lake Police Department, Minnesota State Patrol, Blue Earth County Sheriffs Office, SC EMS, Mapleton Police Department and local Boy Scout Troop.*

Minnesota State Patrol also recognizes a MnDOT snowplow driver with the “Saved by the Belt” award at the news conference. Chad Swehla, the driver of the snowplow, made that smart choice to buckle up. He is pictured below receiving the “Saved by the Belt” award from Trooper Nate Walton.





# MINNESOTA TOWARD ZERO DEATHS

South Central Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths

## Media Advisory

May 19, 2017

2151 Bassett Drive  
Mankato, MN 56001

**Contact:** Annette Larson  
South Central Minnesota TZD Regional Coordinator  
Office: 507.304.6110/ Cell: 507.720.2101  
[annette.l.larson@state.mn.us](mailto:annette.l.larson@state.mn.us)

### Boy Scout Troop caught spray painting across Blue Earth County

Buckle up stencil campaign part of statewide seat belt education and enforcement effort with South Central Minnesota law enforcement and Toward Zero Deaths traffic safety partners

**What:** Minnesotans are making smart choices as a high rate of motorists continue buckling up (93 percent) in Minnesota, compared with 88.5 percent nationally.

Even so, failing to put a seat belt on even one time can mean the difference between life and death.

That is why south central Minnesota regional law enforcement officers, community members, Toward Zero Deaths partners and Boy Scout Troop 130 are coming together to kick off enhanced enforcement and education. The buckle up stencil effort is part of the statewide *Click or Ticket* campaign that runs May 22 – June 4. Troop members worked with local organizations such as schools, churches and businesses across the county to allow the boys to paint the message in parking lots.

A “Saved by the Belt” will be awarded to a snowplow driver after he was rear-ended by a semi on Interstate 90.

**When:** Monday, May 22, 10 a.m.

#### Speakers:

- Mark Griffith, executive director, South Central Minnesota EMS Program
- Deputy Tom Coulter, law enforcement TZD coordinator, Blue Earth County Sheriff's Office
- Lucas Kruse, Boy Scout Troop 130
- Captain Jeremy Geiger, Minnesota State Patrol
- Trooper Nate Walton, Minnesota State Patrol

**Where:** St Clair High School  
121 Main St W  
St Clair, MN

#### Why:

- 25 unbelted motorists have died in Minnesota crashes in 2017 (preliminary).
- In 2016, preliminary numbers show 79 unbelted motorists lost their lives on Minnesota roads.
- In a five year period (2011 – 2015), 38 percent of the 1,379 people killed while riding in motor vehicles were not wearing seat belts.
- Nationally, seat belts saved 13,941 lives in 2015 (NHTSA).





# MINNESOTA TOWARD **ZERO** DEATHS

The South Central Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths program brings area law enforcement, public health educators, engineers and emergency medical and trauma services together to reduce the number of traffic fatalities and severe injuries to zero in south central Minnesota. The 13-county area encompasses: Blue Earth, Brown, Cottonwood, Faribault, Jackson, Le Sueur, Martin, Nicollet, Nobles, Rock, Sibley, Waseca and Watonwan counties.

###





# MINNESOTA TOWARD ZERO DEATHS

South Central Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths

## NEWS RELEASE

May 22, 2017

2151 Bassett Drive  
Mankato, MN 56001

**Contact:** Annette Larson  
South Central Minnesota  
TZD Regional Coordinator  
Office: 507.304.6110/cell:  
507.720.2101  
[annette.l.larson@state.mn.us](mailto:annette.l.larson@state.mn.us)

### Join the crowd and save your life or someone else's – Buckle up!

Mankato, Minn —There will be extra patrols and education efforts May 22 - June 4 to help south central Minnesota residents make the right choice and buckle up. The efforts are part of the statewide *Click It or Ticket* campaign involving deputies, police officers and troopers.

A typical day for Minnesota drivers includes encounters with distracted drivers, farm machinery, road rage, deer and other unplanned situations. The danger is that being a safe, confident driver won't make a difference if a crash happens and the person isn't buckled up. With the arrival of Memorial Day weekend and the anticipation of warmer weather, road trips, barbeques and fun at the lake, seat belt safety should be a part of every Minnesotan's plans.

The south central Minnesota campaign event highlighted how critical seat belts are to saving lives:

- Mark Griffith, executive director, South Central Minnesota EMS Regional System, shared what happens to the body when not wearing a seat belt.
- Captain Jeremy Geiger, Minnesota State Patrol, talked about motorists who are not buckled increase their odds of being injured by six-times if they are in a crash.
- Boy Scout Troop 130 assisted with educational efforts by painting the buckle up message at 17 locations across Blue Earth County including churches, area schools, Wickersham Clinic, Menards and Hy-Vee.

### The Good News and Bad News

Fortunately, most Minnesotans are making the life-saving decision to buckle up.

- According to the 2016 Minnesota Observational Seat Belt Survey, 93 percent of front seat occupants are wearing their seat belts.
- Severe injuries are going down. In 1987, there were 4,176 vehicle occupants who suffered severe injuries in traffic crashes. That number dropped to 745 in 2015.
- According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, seat belts saved an estimated 227 people ages 5 and older in Minnesota in 2015.

For those choosing not to buckle up, the results are tragically hurting families across Minnesota.

- In 2015, 91 unbelted motorists lost their lives on Minnesota roads.
- In 2015, 87 percent of the unbelted deaths occurred in Greater Minnesota (outside the seven-county Metro area).



Blue Earth County Sheriff's office Deputy Tom Coulter said, "In 2017, preliminary crash numbers show we have lost 25 unbelted motorists in Minnesota crashes. That is too many lives lost. All of us here today and so many others participate in the extra enforcement to save lives."

A "Saved by the Belt" was awarded to Chad Swehla. The snowplow he was driving was rear-ended on Interstate 90 by a semi. Swehla made that smart choice to buckle up.

### **Speak Up about Buckling Up**

An unbelted motorist can crash into a windshield and get thrown into other passengers. Often times, an unbelted occupant is ejected from the vehicle and killed.

Drivers are in charge of their vehicles and of the safety of their passengers. They can refuse to start the car until every passenger is belted. Passengers also can speak up if the driver is endangering everyone in the vehicle by not buckling up.

### **The Law is for Safety**

Minnesota law states that drivers and passengers in all seating positions must be buckled up or seated in the correct child restraint. Officers will stop and ticket unbelted drivers or passengers. Seat belts must be worn correctly — low and snug across the hips, and shoulder straps should never be tucked under an arm or behind the back.

### **Minnesota Child Car Seat Law and Steps**

- In Minnesota, all children must be in a child restraint until they are 4'9" tall, or at least age 8, whichever comes first.
- Rear-facing child seats - Newborns to at least 1 year and 20 pounds; recommended up to age 2. It is safest to keep a child rear-facing as long as possible.
- Forward-facing seats - Age 2 until around age 4. It's preferable to keep children in a harnessed restraint until they reach the maximum weight limit.
- Booster seats - Use after outgrowing a forward-facing harnessed restraint; safest to remain in a booster until 4 feet 9 inches tall, or at least age 8, whichever comes first.
- Seat belts - Use when children can sit with their back against the vehicle seat and have their knees bent comfortably over the edge with their feet touching the floor.

### **Toward Zero Deaths**

The Click It or Ticket seat belt enforcement and education is a component of the state's Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) program. A primary vision of the TZD program is to create a safe driving culture in Minnesota in which motorists support a goal of zero road fatalities by practicing and promoting safe and smart driving behavior. TZD focuses on the application of four strategic areas to reduce crashes — education, enforcement, engineering and emergency trauma response.

###

## Regional Activities – Seat Belt Mobilization News Conference (May 26, 2017)

Once again, South Dakota and Minnesota troopers plan a joint I-90 safety operation ahead of Memorial Day. The zone extends across the entire distance of both states. As part of that safety operation the buckle up message was painted at area rest stops across the South Central region. As travelers stop along their travels before they leave the parking lot they are seeing the seat belt reminder.



*Please see appendix for news coverage.*

## Regional Activities – Impaired Driving News Conference (August 21, 2017)

The south central TZD region held an impaired driving news conference.

Minnesota State Patrol Captain Gieger spoke at the news conference that Labor Day is number one and not in a good way. Four-point-six drivers are arrested per hour during the Labor Day holiday period. That's right, more than St. Patrick's Day, New Year's Eve. Again, it's number one. For some reason people are celebrating the end of summer at the cabin, by the lake or maybe at a friend's and not making the safe choice to line up a designated driver, and that is unacceptable.



**TZD Partners:** Minnesota State Patrol, South Central EMS, Blue Earth County Sheriffs office, Nicollet County Sheriffs office, Mankato Public Safety, North Mankato Police Department, Madison Lake Police Department, St Peter Police Department, Ridgeview Le Sueur Ambulance, Le Center Ambulance, Rivers Edge Ambulance, Le Sueur County Emergency Management, Blue Earth County Public Health, Blue Earth County Commissioner & Nicollet County Attorney.



# MINNESOTA TOWARD ZERO DEATHS

South Central Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths

## Media Advisory

Aug. 18, 2017

Contact: Annette Larson  
South Central Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths coordinator  
507.304.6110, [annette.l.larson@state.mn.us](mailto:annette.l.larson@state.mn.us)

### **Remember: Make the Right Choice *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over***

*Extra DWI Patrols on Minnesota Roads Aug. 18 – Sept. 3*

**What:** To save lives on Minnesota roads, South Central Minnesota regional law enforcement officers, Toward Zero Deaths Safe Roads coalitions, regional traffic safety stakeholders, the Minnesota Department of Transportation and the Minnesota Department of Public Safety are coming together to announce an enhanced enforcement and education campaign to decrease impaired driving.

Families and friends are coming together and celebrating the end of the summer. Sadly, this festive time has also become a dangerous time for Minnesota's roads, as many drunk drivers get behind the wheel after celebrating. Your life and the lives of others depend on you making the right choice to not drink and drive.

During the DWI enforcement wave law enforcement and establishments will be thanking those who give up their keys and take alternate transportation home.

Starting August 21 local establishments will start placing thank you notes on vehicles left overnight by drivers who recognized they had too much to drink and made the right choice to not drive home.

Thank you notes are being handed out in Mankato, St Peter and Le Center as a way to encourage others to get home safely to their families.

**When:** 10 a.m., Monday, Aug. 21

**Where:** River's Edge Hospital & Clinic Emergency Department, 1900 Sunrise Dr, St Peter.

**Who:**

- Mark Griffith, executive director, South Central Minnesota EMS Program
- Captain Jeremy Geiger, Minnesota State Patrol
- Drew Campbell, Blue Earth County Commissioner, Blue Earth Nicollet Safe Roads coalition

**Why:**

- Nearly one out of every four deaths on Minnesota roads is drunk driving-related.
- In the last five years (2011 – 2015), 16 percent of all fatal crashes in Minnesota during the Labor Day holiday period were drunk driving-related.
- Preliminary numbers show 73 people lost their lives in drunk driving-related crashes in 2016.
- From 2012 – 2016, there were 432 drunk driving-related traffic deaths in Minnesota. Nearly 26,000 drivers are arrested for DWI in Minnesota each year.

The South Central Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths program brings area law enforcement, public health educators, engineers and emergency medical and trauma services together to reduce the number of traffic fatalities and





# MINNESOTA TOWARD **ZERO** DEATHS

severe injuries to zero in south central Minnesota. The 13-county area encompasses: Blue Earth, Brown, Cottonwood, Faribault, Jackson, Le Sueur, Martin, Nicollet, Nobles, Rock, Sibley, Waseca and Watonwan counties.

###



Aug. 21, 2017

Contact: Annette Larson  
South Central Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths coordinator  
507.304.6110, [annette.l.larson@state.mn.us](mailto:annette.l.larson@state.mn.us)**Remember: Make the Right Choice - Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over**  
*Extra DWI Patrols Aug. 18 – Sept. 3*

ST PETER, Minn. – Whether it's having fun on the boat or playing beach volleyball, it's easy for a person to lose track of how much alcohol they're drinking while out celebrating the final days of summer. It's easy to forget that driving home with a buzz is drunk driving.

As summer winds down, officers, deputies and troopers from more than 300 agencies statewide will be working overtime with funding provided by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The Minnesota Department of Public Safety Office of Traffic Safety (DPS-OTS) coordinates the extra enforcement and education effort, which runs Aug. 18–Sept. 3.

As law enforcement kicks off the extra enforcement period, Mark Griffith, South Central EMS director, is speaking out as a reminder to make good choices when celebrating the upcoming Labor Day holiday.

"Everyone plays a role in public safety, especially on our roads. When you get behind the wheel, make sure you are not putting yourself or anyone else at risk — and if you have been drinking, make sure you have a plan for a sober ride home," said Griffith. "Don't be afraid to speak up. Take the keys away from a friend or loved one, and find them a sober ride home. It could save a life, even yours."

According to Blue Earth County Commissioner Drew Campbell, "The focus of the local safe roads coalitions in Blue Earth, Nicollet and Le Sueur counties has been on getting impaired drivers off our roads."

The local coalition members have partnered with local bars and law enforcement to place thank you notes on vehicles left in the parking lots of these establishments. "These individuals made the right choice to call a cab, friend or family member, to pick them up," said Campbell.

**Drivers Heeding the Warnings:**

Preliminary numbers show there were 73 drunk driving-related fatalities last year compared with 95 in 2015, a 22 percent decrease.

(more)



*Impaired Driving News Release p. 2*

“We have confidence that people will make the right choice during the upcoming Labor Day holiday and beyond by planning ahead for a sober ride,” said Cpt. Jeremy Geiger, Minnesota State Patrol. “But if you choose to drive impaired, Troopers will be out on the roads, focusing on getting drunk drivers off the road before they hurt or kill themselves or others that are sharing the road. To help make the summer travel season safe and enjoyable for everyone, motorists need to drive sober, pay attention, slow down and buckle up.”

**DWI Consequences:**

- Loss of license for up to a year, thousands of dollars in costs and possible jail time.
- Repeat DWI offenders, as well as first-time offenders arrested at 0.16 and above alcohol-concentration level, must use ignition interlock in order to regain legal driving privileges or face at least one year without a driver’s license.
- Offenders with three or more offenses are required to use interlock for three to six years, or they will never regain driving privileges.

**Commit to a Sober Ride:**

- Plan for a safe ride — designate a sober driver, use a cab/public transportation, or stay at the location of the celebration.
- Speak up – Offer to be a designated driver or be available to pick up a loved one anytime, anywhere. If you see an impaired person about to get behind the wheel, get them a safe ride home.
- Buckle up — the best defense against a drunk driver.
- Report drunk driving — call 911 when witnessing impaired driving behavior. Be prepared to provide location, license plate number and observed dangerous behavior.

The enhanced DWI enforcement campaign is a component of the state’s [Toward Zero Deaths \(TZD\)](#) program. A primary vision of the TZD program is to create a safe driving culture in Minnesota in which motorists support a goal of zero road fatalities by practicing and promoting safe and smart driving behavior. TZD focuses on the application of four strategic areas to reduce crashes – education, enforcement, engineering, and emergency medical and trauma response.

###

Media that attended: KEYC TV, St Peter Herald. Please see appendix for news coverage.

## Regional Activities – Blue Earth/ Nicollet County Safe Roads Coalition (2016-2017)

### Distracted Driving education:

This past year, the coalition provided radio interviews to educate the community about the dangers of distracted driving. Eight radio interviews completed.

### Traffic Safety Station events:

The coalition held a traffic safety event at Lake Crystal Wellcome Memorial High School. Great student participation. The focus is to change the traffic safety culture of the students and get them to drive safely and help us reach out to the community on the importance of just driving.

Photos of Blue Earth County Sheriffs office providing education impaired driving and Lake Crystal EMS showing what happens after a crash.



**Traffic safety partners in attendance at LCWM high school event:** Lake Crystal EMS, Lake Crystal Police Department, Gold Cross Ambulance, Blue Earth County Sheriffs office, Minnesota State Patrol

## Seat Belt education:

The coalition partnered with a Boy Scout on the buckle up stencil project. He did seat belt checks at locations throughout the county, offered education at one of the locations and worked with his troop to paint 17 parking lots. The Scout also attended the May seat belt wave kick off and talked with the media at the news conference.

*See appendix for the story.*

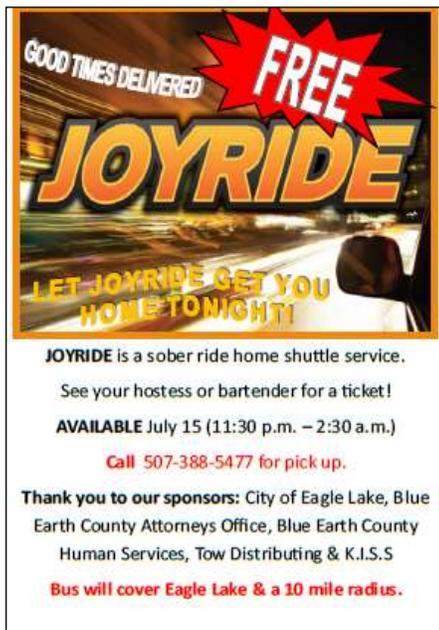


## JOYRIDE

The JOYRIDE program was offered on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving, St Patrick's Day and at two community events over the summer. The two summer events took place on July 15<sup>th</sup> in Eagle Lake and July 22<sup>nd</sup> in Madison Lake. JOYRIDE nights covered the city and the 10 mile radius. A total of 166 people delivered home safely through the sober cab program. The coalition hopes to continue to grow the number of events covered in the county. Plans are already underway for 2018.



Pictured above is Kato Independent Shuttle Service (KISS) that partnered with the coalition to provide transportation. KISS had two vehicles in the parade to promote JOYRIDE.



This is a sample of the table tent used to help promote the program.

### Fatal and serious injury review committee:

The coalition held fatal and serious injury review meeting. The coalition plans to hold a crash review twice a year.

### Regional Activities – Faribault County Safe Roads Coalition (2016-2017)

Blue Earth Area and United South Central High Schools held a mock crash April 2017. Educating the students on traffic safety and about the importance of paying attention when you’re behind the wheel. Prior to the mock crash students record traffic safety PSA’s for the local radio station. Plans are under way for another mock crash in the fall of 2018.

### Traffic safety message in the sports program:

Both high schools placed this add in the sport program for fall and winter sports.



## Seat belt education:

Both high schools help remind the community about seat belts by painting the buckle up stencil in business parking lots. The top two photos are the students from Blue Earth High School the bottom two photos are students from United South Central High School.



Other seat belt plans are to place the bang head here window clings, pictured below in the fall of 2017. They have been ordered and are waiting for events. They plan on doing a seat belt selfie pledge project in the fall of 2017.



## Regional Activities – Le Sueur County TZD safe road coalition (2016-2017)

### Seat belt education:

They plan on doing a seat belt selfie pledge project in the fall of 2017. Held a Child Passenger safety event see more on page 38. Pictured below are CPS techs educating a soon to be parent on car seat safety.



### Distracted Driving Education:

In January, the Cleveland High School health class, participated in a distracted driving educational event. The SC TZD Regional coordinator and Nicollet County Sheriff's office presented to the students. Students had the opportunity to learn more about drive distracted with the use of the distract-a-match game.

### Fatal and serious injury review committee:

The coalition held fatal and serious injury review meeting. Below you will find the letter submitted to the paper on these crashes. The coalition plans to hold a crash review twice a year.

#### **Fatal/Serious Crash Review Committee Emphasizes Roadway Safety**

A group of professionals from several different safety-related disciplines meet in Le Sueur County to review the fatal and serious injury roadway crashes that have occurred in our county. This committee discusses possible contributing factors to crash outcomes in order to make recommendations in each of four areas: roadway engineering, emergency response, enforcement and education. At our recent meeting the committee asked that the people who drive on our area roads be reminded about several safety issues:

- **Drive smart.** Stay within the speed limit, and be aware that the posted speed limits are maximum speeds at ideal road, weather and traffic conditions.
- **Share the road.** Public Safety officials urge motorcyclists to:

- Wear protective gear, including a DOT-approved helmet and brightly-colored protective gear for visibility and protection.
  - Drive the posted speeds, taking into consideration road conditions and follow road signs.
  - Stay focused on the road.
- **Don't drive impaired.** If you are planning to have a few drinks make sure you have a safe ride home. If you are having a gathering of friends plan for safe ways for friends and family to get home or allow them to stay the night on your sofa; you could save a life. Just don't drink and drive.

The Fatal/Serious Crash Review Committee would like to extend our sympathy to those who have lost a loved one to traffic crashes. We would also like to remind everyone to please drive safely as we work toward having zero deaths on our area roadways.

Dave Struckman  
Le Sueur County Sheriff's Office

Darell Pettis  
Le Sueur County Highway Engineer

Marvin Sullivan  
Le Sueur Ambulance

Scott Reiten  
Region 9 Development Commission

Missy Eisert  
Montgomery Police Department

Annette Larson  
MnDOT/Regional TZD Coordinator

Sgt. Dan Anderson  
Minnesota State Patrol

Mark Griffith  
SC EMS Director

Stan Stocker  
Le Center Ambulance

Ann Traxler  
Le Sueur County EMS

Jeff Eppen  
TCU High School

Scott McConkey  
OTS Southern Minnesota Law Enforcement Liaison

## Impaired Driving

The coalition has been talking about what they can do to impact the number fatal and serious injury crashes that involve impaired driving.

The first thing the coalition brought to address this area was opening up to the entire county a responsible server training. It is currently offered in only a few locations but the members reached out to the area trainers to see if they would be willing to assist with a county wide training. The first training was held in February of 2017. They had 10 people attend the training. They plan to host another event in the fall of 2017. In the appendix is a sample of the note sent to local establishments.



At the responsible server training the coalition members used this as an opportunity educate the establishments about program called JOYRIDE and how that would work. The coalition wanted to try the program at one event in 2017. They didn't think that many people would use the program but they decided to give it a try. So in March of 2017 the first sober ride home program was offered. In one night over 100 people used the service. Community members asked the coalition if they would offer this again. The program was well received in the county and since the March event they have offered rides at 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireman's dance in Elysian, two nights at Kolochoy Days in Montgomery. Over **319** rides given in the county. The coalition has plans to expand the efforts in the future.

As an effort to recognize the success of the program the coalition held an event at the county commissioners meeting in August. The coalition was able to share with the commissioners the numbers of rides given and asking for the county commissioners to sign a resolution in support of TZD.



***TZD traffic safety partners: Minnesota State Patrol, Le Sueur County Sheriffs Office, Le Sueur Emergency Preparedness, Le Center EMS, and area JOYRIDE sponsors.***

Local sponsors received this certificate like the one posted below along with TZD window clings.

Le Sueur County TZD Safe Roads coordinator and the Sheriff presenting Proud Sponsor certificate at the County Commissioners meeting on Aug 15.



Local media covered the event find articles in the appendix.



# MINNESOTA TOWARD ZERO DEATHS

## Media Advisory

August 14, 2017

Contact: Ann Traxler  
Le Sueur County Emergency Management Director &  
Le Sueur County Toward Zero Deaths coordinator  
507-357-6255, atraxler@co.le-sueur.mn.us

### **JOYRIDE: ASSURES SAFE RIDE HOME EVERY TIME**

*Toward Zero Deaths traffic safety stakeholders seek to expand JOYRIDE program  
to decrease impaired driving in Le Sueur County*

**WHAT:** The Le Sueur County JOYRIDE program is making a difference to save lives. Le Sueur County JOYRIDE program delivers over 319 impaired people home safely.

To save lives on our roads, Le Sueur County Toward Zero Deaths Safe Roads Coalition, Le Sueur County Sheriff's Office, Minnesota State Patrol, regional traffic safety stakeholders, MnDOT and the Department of Public Safety are coming together recognize the JOYRIDE program success, plans to expand the program in the county and to acknowledge community-led sponsors who recognized the need to decrease impaired driving and get people home safely.

**WHERE:** Le Sueur County Courthouse, 88 South Park Ave., Le Center.

**WHEN:** 10:45 a.m., Aug. 15

**WHO:** Brett Mason, Le Sueur County Sheriff  
Ann Traxler, Le Sueur County Emergency Management director & Le Sueur County  
Toward Zero Deaths coalition coordinator

**WHY:**

- Nearly one out of every four deaths on Minnesota roads is drunk driving-related.
- Preliminary numbers show 73 people lost their lives in drunk driving-related crashes in 2016.
- In the last five years (2011 – 2016), there were 432 drunk driving-related traffic deaths in Minnesota.
- Each year in Minnesota, approximately 25,800 drivers (2011 – 2016) are arrested for DWI.

The South Central Minnesota Regional Toward Zero Deaths program brings area law enforcement, public health educators, engineers and emergency medical and trauma services together to reduce the number of traffic fatalities and severe injuries to zero in south central Minnesota. The 13-county area encompasses: Blue Earth, Brown, Cottonwood, Faribault, Jackson, Le Sueur, Martin, Nicollet, Nobles, Rock, Sibley, Waseca and Watonwan counties.

###



## TZD attends Family Fun Night (September 19, 2017)

Wrapping up the summer the Le Sueur Safe Roads focused on distracted and impaired driving by using the wheel of distraction and the pedal kart at the family fun night. They also partnered with the Ambulance Service and held a car seat check at the event.



Hot Dogs  
Brat Burgers  
Meal (includes beverage and chips)

Face Painting  
Bounce House  
Ring Toss

Come check out the rehab trailer and see what TZD has in store for us!

Popcorn  
Cotton Candy

Silent Auction Bidding ends at 7:30 p.m.

Meet some of your local EMT's, First Responders and Firemen!

**VOLUNTEER!**  
Are you ready to make a difference in our community?  
We are now looking for members to join our team!  
Contact Stan Stocker at: 507-381-7432 or talk to any one of our members!

**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2017**  
**4:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M.**  
**FAMILY FUN NIGHT!**  
Le Center Volunteer Ambulance Service

*Bring your family for a family friendly night out in the community! We will have fun for all ages. Our silent auction bidding will end at 7:30 p.m. Are you interested in learning more about joining our service? We have openings! Talk to any one of our members to learn more about what it's like to serve as a volunteer EMT. \*All training is paid for by Le Center Ambulance.*

**EMS**  
ONE MISSION. ONE TEAM.

Le Center Ambulance ► Family Fun Night 2017  
August 16 at 6:15pm · Le Center · 📍



**FREE!**

### Carseat Inspection Clinic

Brought to you by-

Le Sueur County Public Health &  
Le Center Volunteer Ambulance Service

**Don't Risk Your CHILDs LIFE!**

9 out of 10 carseats are used improperly.

Let us show you how to protect your most precious passengers!

**WHEN:** Tuesday September 19<sup>th</sup>

**WHERE:** Le Center Ambulance Hall  
136 S Cordova Ave, Le Center

**TIME:** 3:30pm - 6:00pm (during Family Fun Night)

**CALL FOR APPOINTMENT:** Le Sueur County Public Health  
507-357-8246



## Regional Activities – Nobles County TZD Safe Roads coalition (2016-2017)

### Distracted Driving:

Worthington Police Department work to place “it can wait” messages on students cars. Below you will see the Facebook post and photos. They plan to place these messages on student cars again in the fall of 2017.



Worthington Police Department added 2 new photos.  
April 12 · 🌐

The Worthington Police Department is out in full force enforcing Distracted Driving. On April 4th, Bud's Bus Service donated one of their buses to the cause. Chris Keilblock drove a Worthington Police Officer around town for a few hours as he watched for distracted drivers. You never know... the next time you see a school bus, a police officer may be watching to see if you're texting and driving.

After our bus enforcement, several officers placed distracted driving reminders on cars at the Worthington Senior High School. We want to remind everybody...EYE'S UP...PHONES DOWN.

Worthington Police Department  
May 13 at 7:49am · 🌐

On 05/12/16, the Worthington Police Department passed out IT CAN WAIT reminders to all cars at the Worthington High School. Since September 2015, our goal was to place educational information on student cars at the high school in hopes to reduce accidents and improve driving skills. In Nobles County, distracted driving, impaired driving and speed are the main factors in accidents with serious injuries and fatalities. We'll continue our campaigns throughout the summer and into the next school year to reduce and end traffic related injuries and fatalities. Thanks for making it a safe school year!

👍 Like    💬 Comment    ➦ Share

The coalition also brought the distracted driving simulator to Worthington High School after prom to educate the students on the dangers of driving distracted. Below are a few photos of the event.



The Worthington Police department place information on the Facebook page of the activities, see below.



In August the TZD Regional coordinator and Worthington Police Department attended the county fair to provide education on distracted driving and impaired driving. The use of the pedal kart and wheel of distraction (pictured above on the right) was used. Both tools provided eye opening discussion and education that night to many fair goers.

### Older Driver:

The coalition created a brochure to help with older driver education and when its time to consider stopping driving. The group is currently working to develop an education event on older drivers with the hospital.

See the appendix for the brochure.

## Fatal Review:

The coalition held a fatal and serious injury review meeting. Below you will find the letter submitted to the paper on these crashes. The coalition plans to hold a crash review quarterly.

### Fatal/Serious Crash Review Committee Emphasizes Roadway Safety

A group of professionals from several different safety-related disciplines meet in Nobles County to review the fatal and serious injury roadway crashes that have occurred in our county. This committee discusses possible contributing factors to crash outcomes in order to make recommendations in each of four areas: roadway engineering, emergency response, enforcement and education. At our recent meeting the committee asked that the people who drive on our area roads be reminded about several safety issues:

- **Drive smart.** Stay within the speed limit, and be aware that the posted speed limits are maximum speeds at ideal road, weather and traffic conditions. Remember to follow the posted traffic control devices such as yield and stop signs.
- **Pay attention to your driving.** Avoid distractions when driving. Distractions come in many forms and are not always just from your phone or texting. Eating, adjusting your radio, passengers, lost in thought, singing and dancing also take your attention away from the road. So stay focused when you drive.

The Fatal/Serious Crash Review Committee would like to extend our sympathy to those who have lost a loved one to traffic crashes. We would also like to remind everyone to please drive safely as we work toward having zero deaths on our area roadways.

Brett Wiltrout  
Worthington Police Department

Stephen Schnieder  
Noble County Highway Engineer

Dwayne Haffield  
Worthington Engineer

David McNab  
Worthington Ambulance

Brett Paasch  
MnDOT District 7 Traffic

Annette Larson  
MnDOT Regional TZD Coordinator

## Regional Activities – Watonwan TZD safe road coalition (2016-2017)

### Move Over News Conference (March, 2017)

The Watonwan County TZD Safe Roads coalition held an event to get people to move over on the roads. The Move Over law is critical to the safety of law enforcement, emergency workers and responders, and road crews. The intent of the law is to keep safe any and all people who provide important services on the shoulder of the road.



The coalition used this time to invite all the first responders, fire, EMS, enforcement and road crews to attend. They created a move over poster that will be used to educate the community.

### Some highlights of the news conference

- “We work to keep the motoring public safe,” says Mark Griffith, executive director, South Central EMS. “We need the public to keep us safe by moving over a lane when they see flashing lights. If you are not able to move a lane away, reduce your speed.”
- St James Fire Chief Jason Monnens, said “The signs behind me are to serve as a reminder. We all have people waiting for us to return home safely from work so remember.... Slow down and move over for husbands, wives, daughters and sons. Slow down and move over for friends, family and neighbors. Slow down and move over for all of us!
- The crashed crash cushion was there for the media to see the importance of moving over.



MINNESOTA

TOWARD ZERO DEATHS

South Central Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths

Media Advisory

Contact: Annette Larson

South Central Toward Zero Deaths Regional coordinator  
507.304.6110, [annette.l.larson@state.mn.us](mailto:annette.l.larson@state.mn.us)

March 22, 2017

District 7, Mankato

2151 Bassett Drive Mankato, MN 56001

Slow Down, Move Over

Watwan County Toward Zero Deaths Safe Roads Coalition, local law enforcement, EMS and first responders, county fire departments, towing companies and Minnesota Department of Transportation join forces to remind motorists to move over with the arrival of spring weather, increasing travel and road construction.

**What:** Flashing lights mean slow down and move over. By ignoring the Ted Foss Move Over law Minnesotans endanger the lives of law enforcement, emergency workers and road crews assisting the public and improving the roads.

To educate motorists about the importance of moving over, south central Minnesota regional law enforcement officers, emergency medical service providers, county fire departments, Watwan County Toward Zero Deaths Safe Roads Coalition, towing companies and the Minnesota Department of Transportation will hold a news conference.

Minnesota established the Ted Foss Move Over law in honor of Corporal Foss, a 15 year veteran of the State Patrol, who was hit and killed by a passing vehicle in August of 2000 during a traffic stop on the shoulder of interstate 90 in Winona.

The law not only keeps emergency workers safe, it also keeps motorists from crashing into stopped vehicles.

**When:** 9 a.m., Saturday, March 25

**Where:** MnDOT Truck Station  
1513 7th Avenue S.  
St James, MN

Speakers:

- Fire Chief Jason Monnens, St. James Fire Department
- Mark Griffith, Executive Director, South Central Minnesota EMS Regional System
- Hear stories from first responders/law enforcement on close calls with motorists who failed to move over

**Why:** The Ted Foss Move Over law is designed to keep those working on the side of the road and motorists safe. On the roadway with two or more lanes, motorists must keep a full lane away when passing a stopped ambulance, fire truck, tow truck, road repair or law enforcement vehicle.

All citizens are asked to make a personal pledge to always move over and slow down to make Minnesota roadways safer for everyone.

The South Central Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths program brings area law enforcement, public health educators, engineers and emergency medical and trauma services together to reduce the number of traffic fatalities and severe injuries to zero in south central Minnesota. The 13-county area encompasses: Blue Earth, Brown, Cottonwood, Faribault, Jackson, Le Sueur, Martin, Nicollet, Nobles, Rock, Sibley, Waseca and Watwan counties.

###



See appendix for news story and poster.

## Share the Road Event (May 2017)

In the spring the coalition worked with a local trucking company to come in and hold a share the road event. Education to the students about the No zones and what semi drivers can see. Students walked through the four different stations and one of which was the opportunity to sit in the driver's seat of the truck. The goal of the event was not only to educate the students but also get them to share their experience with their parents. One student did just that when his parent was following too close behind the truck.



## Seat Belts (2017)

The coalition painted the buckle up stencil in Madelia and St James over the summer to serve as a reminder to the community to buckle up. Below you will see photos from Madelia and the Facebook post from painting in St James.



Watsonwan County Toward Zero Deaths added 13 new photos.

September 8 at 3:00pm

Watsonwan County TZD spent the morning of August 31st painting "Buckle-Up" reminders at the schools and a few businesses around St. James. Special thanks to Smithfield Foods for supplying the paint and the manpower and to Brian Solheid for donating his time and sprayer to help us quickly and neatly accomplish this goal!



*News articles to follow in the appendix.*

## Roundabout Education (August 31, 2017)

The Safe roads coalition attended the roundabout rodeo on August 31, 2017. The coalition provided education on impaired driving and distracted driving. Pictured below on the left is a Facebook post of the night and on the right is the Watonwan TZD Safe Roads chair doing some distracted driving education at the roundabout event using the wheel of distraction.



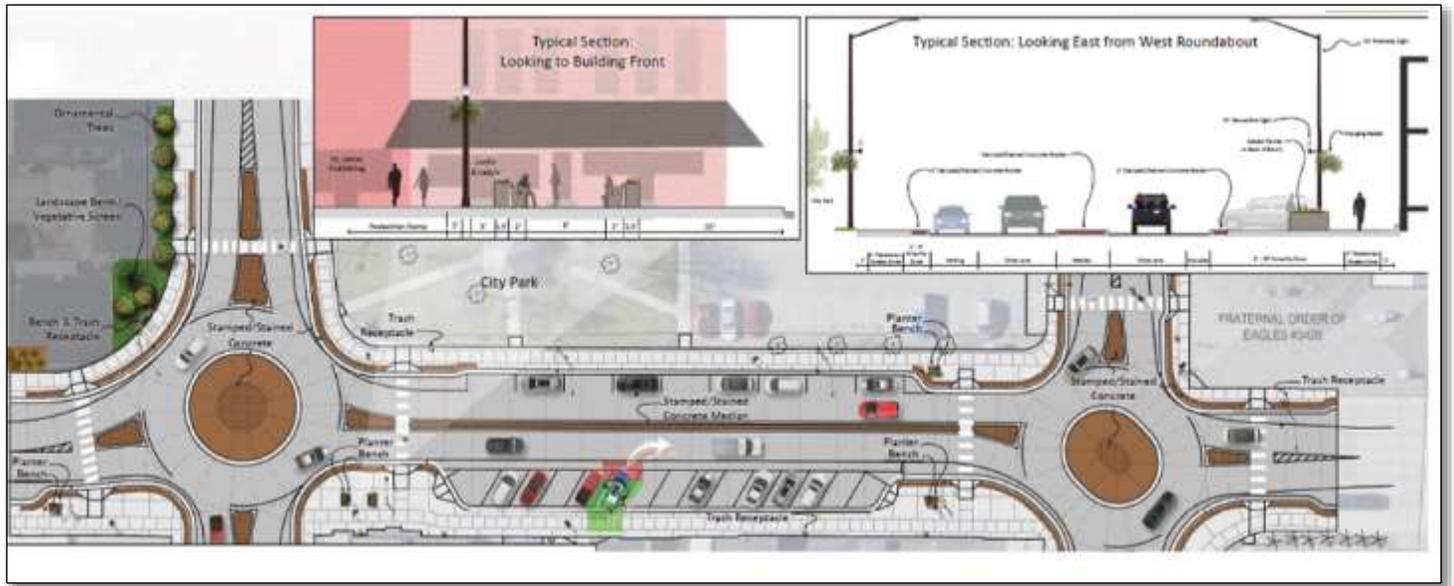
*Stories in the appendix.*

## Regional Activities – Engineering the County Safety Projects 2017

The 2017 Safety Improvement Projects included in the table below are for bike and pedestrian trails, ADA improvements, paved shoulders, railroad crossing gates, roundabouts and J-turns. Not all were HSIP funded, however are projects that would reduce traffic-related deaths in the south central region.

County/City	Project Description	Total Cost
Blue Earth County	County wide curve and intersection safety improvements	\$654,700
Cottonwood County	Overlay, pave shoulders and rumble stripes on County State Aid Highway 1	\$3,500,000
MnDOT	Upgrade existing signal system County State Aid Highway 5 and 3rd Ave	\$385,205
MnDOT	Install gates, County State Aid Highway 3 & O Connell Ave	\$226,711
MnDOT	Upgrade existing signal system Trunk Highway 99	\$390,977
MnDOT	Install gates, M46 & Main St	\$207,264
Blue Earth County	New road and roundabout at County State Aid Highway 12 and Trunk Highway 83	\$10,000,000
MnDOT	Roundabout at County State Aid Highway 12 and Trunk Highway 83	\$750,000
Worthington	Mill and overlay and ADA on Diagonal Road in Worthington	\$640,000
Mankato	Intersection improvement and pavement marking along S Riverfront in Mankato	\$287,020
Rock County	Construct ped/bike trail in Luverne	\$701,740
MnDOT	Mill and overlay, end post replacement and lighting, along I 90	\$9,692,000
MnDOT	Rehab bridges, lighting and RWIS, along I 90	\$4,600,000
MnDOT	Reconstruct roadway, ADA, roundabout and lighting in St James	\$15,685,646
MnDOT	Mill and overlay, guardrail replacement, flasher system and ADA along Trunk Highway 13 and in New Richland	\$6,400,000
MnDOT	Mill and overlay, ADA, rehab bridges and signals in New Ulm	\$7,700,000
MnDOT	Mill and overlay, ADA and signal system in Fairmont	\$4,800,000
MnDOT	Right turn lanes in Wells	\$147,800
MnDOT	Construct four lane roadway and lighting, along Trunk Highway 60 from Windom to Mountain Lake	\$19,680,267
St Peter	Reconstruct roadway, median, sidewalk and ADA in St Peter	\$250,000
MnDOT	Reconstruct roadway, median, sidewalk and ADA in St Peter	\$280,000
MnDOT	Mill and overlay, ADA, lighting and signal systems in Worthington	\$1,385,000
MnDOT	Districtwide Striping & Signing	\$1,200,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>89,564,330</b>

Pictured below are the mini roundabouts and back in angle parking in Watonwan County.



## Regional Activity – Extra caution urged on highways during Labor Day weekend, beginning of school year (August 2017)



### News Release

Aug. 31, 2017

Contact:

Kevin Gutknecht

651-366-4266

[Kevin.gutknecht@state.mn.us](mailto:Kevin.gutknecht@state.mn.us)

### Extra caution urged on highways during Labor Day weekend, beginning of school year

**ST. PAUL, Minn.** - The Minnesota Department of Transportation urges motorists to use extra caution during Labor Day weekend. Although most road construction is shut down over the Labor Day holiday, there are still highway work zones in place.

Motorists are also asked to be alert for pedestrians and bicyclists as many children return to school around the state.

“This is our last big weekend of the summer. School starts for most next week,” said Commissioner Charlie Zelle. “Drive safely through the work zones this weekend. Plan ahead, add extra time if needed. We want you to arrive safely and ready to enjoy this final bit of summer.”

Motorists may encounter bypasses, lane closures and detours. MnDOT recommends that motorists be prepared for slower moving traffic, think about using alternate routes, and call 5-1-1 or go to [www.511mn.org](http://www.511mn.org) to get information about road construction detours.

Highway projects that may affect weekend travel include:

### **Twin Cities**

- Interstate 94 between St. Paul and Maplewood – lane closures and ramp closures, expect delays
- I-94 between Minneapolis and Brooklyn Center – lane closures and slow traffic
- Highway 169 Golden Valley to Edina – detour
- I-694 between Arden Hills and Vadnais Heights – two lanes in each direction, eastbound lanes separated by concrete median barrier
- Highway 10 at I-35W – ramp from Highway 10 to northbound I-35W closed
- I-35W between County Road H and County Road I – ramp closures

### **Central Minnesota**

- Highway 10 in Elk River – Eastbound single lane near Lake Orono, plan for delays, westbound lanes open
- Highway 27/Highway 71 in Long Prairie – narrow lanes, no shoulders
- Highway 65 Cambridge to Anoka County – single lane in each direction, plan for delays
- Highway 210/Highway 169 north of Aitkin – narrow temporary bypass lanes at creek
- Highway 371 Nisswa to south Pequot Lakes – single lane in each direction, with access changes, follow signs

### **Northern Minnesota**

- Highway 1/ Highway 169 Eagles Nest project – lane closures, flaggers
- Highway 10 in Detroit Lakes – lane closures
- I-94 Evansville to Garfield – single lane in each direction
- I-35 over Highway 61 in Carlton County – single lane in each direction
- Highway 53 relocation project in Virginia – single lane in each direction; Highway 135 – closed, detour
- Highway 61 in Beaver Bay – single lane traffic in each direction

- Highway 169, Highway 37 in Hibbing – single lane in each direction
- Highway 73 in Kettle River – closed, detour
- Highway 2 Kennedy Bridge between East Grand Forks, Minn., and Grand Forks, N.D. – closed, detour

### **West central Minnesota**

- Highway 7 – detour
- Highway 29 in Montevideo – detour

### **Southern Minnesota**

- Highway 22 Mapleton to Mankato – detour
- I-35 bridge replacements south of Owatonna – single lane in each direction
- Highway 42 between Plainview and Kellogg – bridge closure, detour
- Highway 52 between Zumbrota and Rosemount – lane closures
- Highway 15 in New Ulm – detour
- Highway 99 Minnesota River bridge in St. Peter – detour

For a complete list of road projects, including construction dates and traffic impacts, visit [www.mndot.gov/roadwork/current.html](http://www.mndot.gov/roadwork/current.html). Motorists may also sign up to receive email updates for major projects at [www.mndot.gov/emailupdates](http://www.mndot.gov/emailupdates).

MnDOT urges motorists to be attentive, drive with caution, slow down in [work zones](#) and never enter a road blocked with barriers or cones.

Motorists are also reminded to look for children walking and bicycling at intersections, crosswalks and along roads near schools and to stop for them as they cross the street. Motorists should also give bicyclists a 3-foot clearance and to yield when they are making a turn.

For safety tips driving around pedestrians and bicyclists go to [www.mndot.gov/bike/education/index.html](http://www.mndot.gov/bike/education/index.html) and [www.mndot.gov/peds/education/index.html](http://www.mndot.gov/peds/education/index.html).

###

### News Release

Sept. 13, 2017

**Contact:** Kevin Gutknecht

**Office:** 651-366-4266

[kevin.gutknecht@state.mn.us](mailto:kevin.gutknecht@state.mn.us)

### MnDOT asks motorists, farm equipment operators to safely share the road during harvest season

**ST. PAUL, Minn.** — Motorists traveling on Minnesota highways this fall need to be aware of large farm equipment transporting crops to markets, grain elevators and processing plants, according to the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

“Harvest season is getting in full swing across the state and farmers and their equipment are out on the highways,” said Jay Hietpas, state traffic engineer. “Motorists need to be prepared to encounter slow-moving farm vehicles, especially on rural, two-lane roads.”

Farm equipment is large and heavy, making it hard for operators to accelerate, slow down and stop. The equipment also makes wide turns and sometimes crosses over the center line. In addition, farm vehicles can create large blind spots, making it difficult for operators to see approaching vehicles. All of these factors can cause serious crashes.

From 2011 to 2015, there were 688 crashes involving farm vehicles that resulted in 23 fatalities and 348 injuries. Nearly half of the fatalities were an occupant of the farm vehicle.

“Twenty-two percent of all farm equipment crashes and 29 percent of the fatalities were distraction-related,” Hietpas said. “Other factors were speed-related and alcohol-related.”

Motorists should:

- Watch for debris dropped by trucks hauling sugar beets and other crops. It is safer to brake or slowly drive through debris than to veer into oncoming cars or off the road.
- When approaching farm equipment, slow down and use caution. Put additional space between your vehicle and the farm equipment ahead. Don’t assume the equipment operator can see you.
- Be patient and wait for a safe place to pass.

- Wear seatbelts.
- Drive with headlights on at all times.

Farm equipment operators should:

- Use lights and flashers to make equipment more visible.
- Use slow-moving vehicle emblems on equipment traveling less than 30 mph.
- Drive slow-moving vehicles in the right-hand lane as close to the edge of the roadway as possible.
- Consider using an escort vehicle when moving equipment, especially at night and if the equipment is large enough that it may extend across the center line.
- Avoid encouraging or signaling motorists to pass. Pull over when safe, and let traffic pass.
- Pick up any debris left on the highway by the equipment or contact MnDOT to remove it.
- Plan their routes so wide equipment will not hit or damage signs, guardrails, light poles and other roadway structures.

###

[www.mndot.gov](http://www.mndot.gov)

## Appendix:

### Toward Zero Deaths Held a Meeting on Monday Night

Monday

Posted at 7:58 AM

By Sam Peterson

On Monday night at the St. James fire hall there was a meeting for the Watonwan County Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) organization. The goal of this group is to decrease the amount of fatalities due to car accidents, with the ultimate goal being zero deaths.

There were members of the police force, ambulance squad, drivers ed instructors, and members of the community from both Madelia and St. James that were present at the meeting. All of the members of the discussed the problems that they have seen within their community, and what steps need to be taken in order to attempt to fix the problem.

According to [mndot.gov](http://mndot.gov) the two biggest causes of crashes in Watonwan county were lane departures, and at intersections.

From 2011 to 2015 Watonwan county was one of the lowest counties in regards to automobile fatalities reaching only four deaths in that four year span. In that same time frame Watonwan county tallied 17 serious injuries.

The three main problems that were brought up were seat belts, distracted driving, and the move over law.

With many emergency responders present at the meeting much of the room agreed that the move over law is a big problem. In Minnesota when there are flashing lights on the shoulder drivers on the roadway are required to move over a lane or slow down. The biggest problem is enforcing the law. Most of the time when there is a law enforcement vehicle on the shoulder they are preoccupied with the situation at hand. This means that if somebody were to break the move over law the officer can not pursue them. If there is more than one law enforcement vehicle at the location, then they are able to enforce the move over law.

The majority of the time on Monday was spent on discussing how to get more people to wear their seat belts. The group decided that they will perform a seat belt check at the local schools. There will be people checking students coming to school for their seat belts, if they were caught wearing their belt then they would receive some sort of prize.

They cited Martin County West who did this same thing and the students received coupons for local businesses as a reward for wearing their seat belts.

This seat belt checkpoint is meant to gather information so the group knows where they are at, after they get the results the coalition will be able to better assess what needs to be fixed, and how to go about fixing it.

Outside the St. James fire hall they just recently painted the words "Buckle-up!" on the asphalt. This message is to make sure that even in an emergency it is important to buckle up.

The next meeting will be held in November 28 at 6:30 p.m. at the Madelia Fire hall.

## Having the Conversation

It's the conversation no one wants to have. The best method is early intervention when a problem develops and you can see changes in the drivers behavior.

- Pick one person who the older driver communicates well with.
- Pick a quiet time and be gentle.
- Mention specific events.
- Don't go into lecture mode, instead try and find solutions together.



Nobles County Safe Roads Coalition

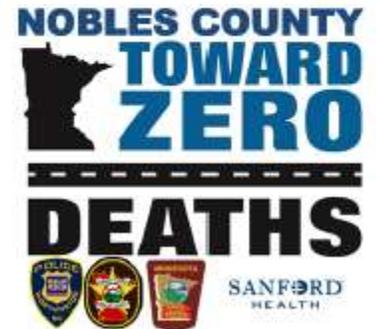
## Aging While Driving

Driving is both physical and mental and drivers need to **be healthy** to stay safe behind the wheel. Here are the most common changes affecting drivers.

- **Vision:** As we get older our eyes to work quite as well. Getting yearly eye exams and knowing your limitations will continue to keep you safe. Avoid driving at night, poor weather conditions and in unknown locations.
- **Physical Decline:** Previous injuries or arthritis causes sore muscles and joints, which can make it difficult for older drivers to turn their heads to check for blind spots or put on their seat belt.
- **Cognitive Decline:** Older people often experience a change in their reaction time. It can take longer to process information and react by steering or pressing the brake. Attention spans are shorter and it can be more difficult to do two things at once.

Nobles County Safe Roads Coalition

## A GUIDE FOR AGING DRIVERS AND THEIR FAMILIES





## Driving Later in Life

Asking an elderly parent or relative to stop driving is difficult, because driving provides individuals with the ability to remain independent. Yet, some elderly (65 years and older) drivers are a danger to themselves and others on the road. It's important that family and friends assist those in identifying potential driving problems and to request that the person stop any dangerous driving behavior.

For some individuals, this may be as simple as driving only on certain kinds of roads or driving only during daylight hours. For other, it is important that the individual stop driving altogether. Please see the attached checklist to assess any dangerous driving behavior.

*Nobles County Safe Roads Coalition*

## Driving Assessment Checklist

	Yes	No
You or your loved one has had close calls, violations or minor collisions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is difficult for you or loved one to look over your shoulder or turn their head while changing lanes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your loved one often becomes disoriented and/or lost while driving.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Making good decisions quickly is difficult while driving.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Seeing people, signs, lane lines or traffic lights is difficult.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You or your loved one backs into and over things such as curbs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You or your loved one has trouble with hand/foot coordination.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You or your loved one has mistaken the gas for the brake.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you answered "yes" to four (4) or more items, we suggest you should talk with your loved one about their driving behavior and look into alternative transportation options.

## WHAT are my options?

By filling out the driving assessment checklist you have started the process. Throughout the State of Minnesota older driver programs allow individuals to drive safe in their older age and you can get insurance discounts with proof of certificate.

MN Safety Council Defensive Driving  
(651) 291-9150

AARP  
1-(888) 227-7669

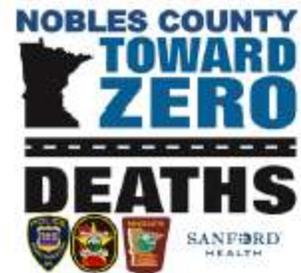
MN Highway Safety and Research Center  
(320) 529-1539

WCER Driving School—Willmar, MN  
(320) 231-8490

Senior Driving School—Ramville, MN  
(320) 329-3949

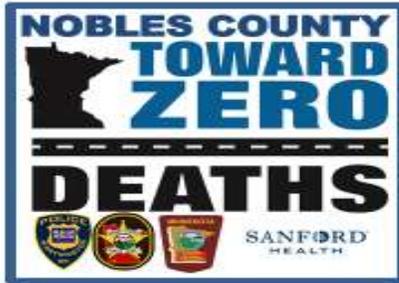
Pike Driving School—New Ulm, MN  
(507) 359-3133

Allina Health Driver Assessment and Training Service—  
New Ulm, MN  
(612)262-7855



*The Nobles County Safe Roads Coalition is dedicated to ZERO deaths on Minnesota roads.*

Nobles County Fatal Review release to the paper



10-28-16

For Immediate Release

### Fatal/Serious Crash Review Committee Emphasizes Roadway Safety

A Group of Professionals from several different safety-related disciplines meet in Nobles County to review the fatal and serious injury roadway crashes that have occurred in our county. This committee discusses possible contributing factors to crash outcomes in order to make recommendations in each of four areas: roadway engineering, emergency response, enforcement and education. At our recent meeting the committee asked that the people who drive on our area roads be reminded about several safety issues:

- **Drive smart.** Stay within the speed limit, and be aware that the posted speed limits are maximum speeds at ideal road, weather and traffic conditions. Remember to follow the posted traffic control devices such as yield and stop signs.
- **Buckle Up! Every vehicle. Every seat. Every time.** In a crash, odds are six-times greater for injury if a motorist is not buckled up. An unbelted motorist can crash into a windshield and slam into and injure other passengers. Often times, an unbelted motorist is ejected from the vehicle and killed.
- **Don't drive impaired.** If you are planning to have a few drinks make sure you have a safe ride home. If you are having a gathering of friends plan for safe way for friends and family to get home or allow them to stay the night on your sofa, you could save a life. Just don't drink and drive.

The Fatal/Serious Crash Review Committee would like to extend our sympathy to those who have lost a loved one to traffic crashes. We would also like to remind everyone to please drive safely as we work toward having zero deaths on our area roadways.

**Brett Wiltrout**  
**Worthington Police Department**

**Stephen Schnieder**  
**Noble County Highway Engineer**

**Dwayne Haffield**  
**Worthington Engineer**

**David McNab**  
**Worthington Ambulance**

**Kenny Willers**  
**Minnesota State Patrol**

**Annette Larson**  
**MnDOT South Central TZD Regional Coordinator**

Videos from the control drink held on November 22, 2017

<https://www.facebook.com/hot967/>



Above facebook post had 3.1 K views



This one had 822 views:



This one had 1.9 K views

Southern Minnesota News

<http://www.southernminnesotanews.com/avoid-jail-free-sober-rides-tonight-across-mankato-area/>



# Avoid Jail: Free Sober Rides Tonight Across Mankato Area

(Mankato, MN) – The night before Thanksgiving is traditionally one of the busier nights for people to go out on the town and enjoy adult beverages, but there is no excuse for drunk driving tonight.

Through the Joyride program, free rides will be available through Kato Independent Shuttle Service. The rides will be given between 7:00p and 1:00am and be available at establishments in Mankato, North Mankato, Madison Lake, Eagle Lake, St. Clair, Mapleton, Lake Crystal and Good Thunder.

Those needing a sober ride home can check with their hostess or bartender or call 507-388-5477.

In Minnesota, one-in-seven licensed drivers has a DUI on their record.

Now, tonight's free rides come as a crackdown on drunk driving begins today in Greater Mankato and across the state. The campaign will last through the end of the year, as Thanksgiving and Christmas are two of the deadliest holidays for drunk driving.

In the last five years, more than 460 people have been killed in alcohol-related car crashes in Minnesota.

## Z99 Facebook post:



Z99 shared a link  
November 22 at 6:45am

Z99's Brad & Sarah to Get Drunk to Save Lives  
SOUTHERNMINNESOTAHEAVEN.COM

Like Comment Share

3 Top Comments

Write a comment...

Nicole Cowell Long Island? Every 15 minutes for 2 hours? Oh lord help us...  
Like Reply 3 · November 22 at 8:04am  
View previous replies

Z99 Leah Schweim we should be fine Adam Blanson won't be there encouraging me! -Brad  
Like Reply 1 · November 22 at 8:51am  
View more replies

Lisa Freiberg Behsman I participated in this year's ago, fun time and really makes you think about how fast alcohol impairs you. And yes of course I had a DD when I was done 😊  
Like Reply 1 · November 22 at 7:19am

<https://www.facebook.com/Z99FM/videos/>



1:40

[Brad and Sarah drinking with cops](#)

7 Likes · 388 views



1:55 7 Likes · 232 views



<http://www.southernminnesotanews.com/mankato-radio-folks-get-drunk-save-lives/>



## Mankato Radio Folks Get Drunk to Save Lives

(Mankato, MN) – Several radio personalities from Mankato will be downing the drinks Tuesday afternoon in an effort to help keep the roads safe.

[Brad and Sarah from Z99](#) and [Spence from 95.7 The Rock Station](#) will be taking part in an experiment at the Mankato MnDOT facility to show how drinking impacts one's ability to drive.

They'll be having an alcoholic drink every 15 minutes over 2 hours, while being monitored by law enforcement and performing field sobriety tests, to show the effects of alcohol and to help promote responsible holiday celebrations.

You can listen live on-air or online, as both [z99](#) and [95.7](#) The Rock Station will be broadcasting live during the event.

Spence will be drinking screwdrivers. Brad will be having Long Island ice tea and Sarah's drink of choice is vodka cranberry.

Tuesday's event comes on the eve of a statewide crackdown on drunk driving that will run from November 23rd through December 30th.

In the last five years, there were 462 drunk driving-related traffic deaths in Minnesota.

KEYC TV Facebook post 11/22/16



AAA estimates 50 million Americans will travel 50 miles or more for Thanksgiving.



### Travelers Depart As Law Enforcement Focuses On DWIs

Many people are eagerly waiting to sit down for their Thanksgiving Day meal, meaning an exodus of travelers as the State Patrol plans for enhanced DWI enforcement.

KEYC.COM | BY SHAWN LOGING

KEYC TV

<http://www.keyc.com/story/33776119/travelers-depart-as-law-enforcement-focuses-on-dwis>

### Travelers Depart As Law Enforcement Focuses On DWIs

Posted: Tuesday, November 22, 2016

By Shawn Loging, Reporter



MANKATO, Minn. -

Many people are eagerly waiting to sit down for their Thanksgiving Day meal, meaning an exodus of travelers as the State Patrol plans for enhanced DWI enforcement.

AAA estimates almost 50 million people will be traveling 50 miles or more, whether it's on the road or in the air.

And that activity is keeping businesses like [Land to Air Express](#) busy.

Land to Air Express General Manager Ron Decker said, "Today and Wednesday will be real busy with people traveling out of town and then Saturday and particularly Sunday will be real busy as they return."

The service is quickly filling up with about 450 people using the shuttles, especially college students.

Decker said, "We are running multiple shuttles on our runs. We do six trips every day to the Minneapolis airport. For example, this morning we sent three shuttles out and we'll have three shuttles running for each departure all day today and tomorrow."

Those getting to their destination behind the wheel are benefiting from the second-cheapest gas prices in a decade.

All that adds up to extra time on the roads for law enforcement.

Minnesota State Patrol Sgt. Troy Christensen said, "With the weather, we'll expect a busier weekend. It's going to be busy holiday travel; it always is this time of the year."

As people sit down with family and begin the holiday season, the State Patrol and about 300 law enforcement agencies will have enhanced DWI enforcement, starting November 22.

Sgt. Christensen said, "What we're looking for is just impaired drivers. So, we want to take as many impaired drivers off the roadway as possible just to make sure we can keep the roads as safe as possible."

The State Patrol also hosted a controlled drink experiment to show just how little it takes to lose sobriety.

Area law enforcement even ran through field sobriety tests.

Minnesota State Patrol Lt. Don Marose said, "Specific set of clues that we look for, for the walk and turn we're looking if they missed their heel to toe, if they raise their arm, if they stumble through their turn, if they step off the line, things like that."

Extra enforcement runs through December 31.

Below MN TZD Facebook post:

KATO independent Shuttle service posted this

Annette Larson shared MN Toward Zero Deaths's photo  
November 23 at 11:33am



**MN Toward Zero Deaths**  
November 23 at 9:03am

South Central MN TZD held a "controlled drink" impaired education event yesterday at the MnDOT District 7 office in Mankato. Local radio station DJs participated while the event was broadcast live on several stations. (KEYC TV covered the event, too: <http://www.keyc.com/...travelers-depart-as-law-enforcement-f...>) Besides getting the message out about how alcohol affects driving, the event promoted free JOYRIDE service today (Nov. 23) from 7 p.m.–1 a.m. and announced a DWI extra-enforcement wave.

Thanks, SC TZD, for your efforts in keeping impaired drivers off MN roads this holiday season!

November 23 at 11:40am



**KISS Kato Independent Shuttle Service**  
November 22 at 6:19pm

Hey, come and ride the kiss bus tomorrow night and get a free ride home from the bars you must you must get a ticket from the bartenders Kato independent shuttle service will give you a ride home call us at 507-388-5477 or call us at 507-388 kiss thank you

The Free Press

11/28/16

OUR VIEW: SAFETY

## Witty road messages a worthwhile tactic

The new messages are a sign of the times.

In a world of clever texts and tweets, the Minnesota Department of Transportation is trying to catch drivers' attention with safety messages by lightening things up. On Mondays, MnDOT will use 280 electronic message boards statewide to broadcast the new messages. They will be displayed between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. in the metro area and noon to midnight in other locations.

The digital message signs are already in place, so this is not a grand experiment at taxpayers' expense. This is switching things up a bit from the traditional public service-type of announcements (Buckle up) to something zingier that might resonate more with people, such as this message from an Iowa sign: "Get your head out of your apps. Drive safely."

Similar to a successful attention-grabbing campaign in Iowa, MnDOT's slogans will use references from movies, TV shows, music and other slices of pop culture for its safety messages, like this Iowa favorite: "May the 4th be with you. Text I will not." Of course, saying it in your best Yoda voice makes it even more effective. And this one is certainly timely for deer hunting season: "Whole lotta ruttin' going on. Watch for deer."

Measuring how much impact a digital sign's message has on drivers and their behavior is obviously a bit tricky.

But at least one study by the Federal Highway Administration showed 73 percent of travelers said the direct messages are the best way to communicate with drivers, and 23 percent said they changed their driving as a result of seeing the signs and more than half did at a later time.

Sounds like it's worth a try in Minnesota. One of the targets of safety officials is young adult males, who are often the victims in traffic crashes and who don't pay as much attention to traditional media.

And every state can personalize the messages. In Massachusetts one of the signs read, "Use yah blinkah." Maybe in the spirit of the season and the start of Kiwanis Holiday Lights, a message over a Mankato area highway could say: "Make sure the red lights in your rearview mirror are from Sibley Park."

**November 27, 2016**

**Mankato Free Press**

## Travelers face few accidents, increased law enforcement over holiday weekend

Thanksgiving travelers found few obstacles in their way to a safe holiday weekend, as weather and road conditions didn't play a factor in south-central Minnesota, though the same didn't hold true throughout the rest of the state.

Blue Earth County Sheriff's deputies reported a handful of accidents between Thursday and Sunday, with none of them involving alcohol.Â

"It's been pretty quiet," Deputy Luanne Anderson said Sunday afternoon.

No fatalities were reported as well, though several accidents took place throughout the region.Â

The Minnesota State Patrol reported four people suffered non-life threatening injuries after a rear-end collision took place on Thursday west of Elysian on Highway 60. And one person suffered similar injuries south of New Ulm Sunday morning after her car went into the ditch near Highway 15 and County Road 25 in Brown County.

Elsewhere, dense fog rolled through central and northern Minnesota throughout the day Sunday, and numerous crashes were reported throughout the Twin Cities area. While the State Patrol reported no traffic fatalities throughout the state as of Sunday afternoon, at least eight accidents resulting in injuries were reported on Saturday, and two on Sunday.

There were more state patrol and other law enforcement out on the roads over the weekend as part of the state's Toward Zero Deaths campaign against drunk driving. Extra DWI patrols are scheduled along roadways through Wednesday.

The Minnesota Department of Public Safety reports holiday enforcement efforts like the one over Thanksgiving weekend resulted in fewer DWI arrests during the holidays last year. November and December 2015 were the months with the lowest number of DWIs reported in 2015, with 1,921 reported in Minnesota in November and 1,876 reported in December.

An estimated 43.5 million people traveled by road over Thanksgiving weekend, according to the AAA. In addition, almost 49 million were expected to travel 50 miles or more for the holiday.

## Free Press

December 27, 2016

### Shuttle company offers free rides on New Year's Eve

By Trey Mewes

[tmewes@mankatofreepress.com](mailto:tmewes@mankatofreepress.com)

**MANKATO** — Dan Hennegar has a plan for New Year's Eve.

The owner of Kato Independent Shuttle Service is going to have several of his 14-seat shuttles around town to pick up revelers and drop them off safely at home — for free.

“We will charge to bring them down to the bars, but we will give free rides to bring them home,” he said.

This is the second year KISS has offered free sober rides home on New Year's Eve, and it represents something of a mission for Hennegar. He did a free sober ride once when he owned Kato Cab more than 20 years ago, but he didn't get the opportunity to do it again until he opened KISS last year.

“I want to be the one to bring it back,” he said. “I don't want to see the drunks get a DWI or end up killing somebody. I want to make sure they get home safely.”

To that end, he decided to partner with area bars, local businesses and other sponsors to ensure people have a safe ride home on a traditionally busy party night. Hennegar has given free ride tickets to area bars and restaurants, which bartenders and other staff will pass on to customers looking for transportation.

“The KISS shuttle program works really well for us,” said Bryan Weinhagen, general manager of Tav on the Ave. “It's going to be cold out that night also, so the safer we can get people from one place to another, if it's home or another bar, we don't want anybody to get hurt.”

Hennegar ran a sober ride last New Year's Eve, and another during Thanksgiving this year. Area bars say they've been pleased with Hennegar's approach thus far.

“It's just basically kind of an appreciation to our customers, to make sure they get home safe,” said Scott Sandvig, a bartender at South Street Saloon.

Residents will be able to get a free ride home within a 10-mile radius of Mankato and North Mankato on New Year's Eve by calling 507-388-5477.

Follow Trey Mewes on Twitter at @ MFPTreyMewes.



Kato Independent Shuttle Service owner Dan Hennegar is offering free sober rides for greater Mankato residents this New Year's Eve.

*St. James Plaindealer*

<http://www.stjamesnews.com/news/20170130/tzd-working-to-create-safer-roads>

## TZD Working to Create Safer Roads

Posted Jan 30, 2017 at 8:29 AM

Stories From Chatter Network

By Sam Peterson

On the night of January 23rd, the Watonwan County Toward Zero Deaths program met to discuss future events and ways to educate the public on safe driving. One of the actions that will be taken by the group is to offering to paint "buckle up" with stencils to any business that would like it at the exit of their parking lot.

They also plan to use these stencils at all of the schools in the county (St. James, Madelia, and Butterfield-Odin). Due to the construction at the St. James school, painting the road would have to be delayed until construction is finished in September, but for the other two schools are expected to be done by the end of the school year. The group has access to the stencils, so the only expense for the group would be paint.

For this stenciling project there is a need for volunteers. The options of using the National Honor Society, Boy Scouts and 4-H were discussed as a possible volunteer pool.

Samantha Runge brought up the idea of pairing with the Farm Bureau for their breakfast at the farm event. This is the fifth year of the event and they are planning to have the event at the Watonwan County fair to also celebrate 100 years of 4-H in Watonwan county. Farm Bureau is all about safety, so this is a perfect opportunity to educate the public. The idea of holding a mock crash at the fair was also mentioned.

Another concern the group has on the roads was the Move Over Law. This law states that if there is an emergency vehicle with its lights on the shoulder, people must move over or slow down for the safety of the officers and members of the public on the side of the road. One of the possible solutions was to use a message board to remind motorists to be aware and to give emergency response vehicles room to operate on the highway.

In order to get funding, the group is going to apply for the AAA grant. They will know if they have received the grant in the first week of February.

The next Watonwan County TZD meeting will be held on February 27th at 6:30 p.m. at the Madelia Fire Hall. Every meeting is an open meeting and the committee encourages anybody to attend.

*For more information please see the January 26 print edition of the St. James Plaindealer.*

## **ALCOHOL SERVER AWARENESS TRAINING**

With this **FREE** training sponsored by the Le Sueur County Toward Zero Deaths Safe Roads Coalition we can work together to keep our community safe from alcohol related injuries and deaths.

**Monday, February 27, 2017**  
**6:30 p.m.**

**Le Sueur County EOC/Le Center Ambulance Hall**  
**136 S Cordova Ave, Le Center**

**Contact Ann Traxler to register for this free training opportunity:**

**[atraxler@co.le-sueur.mn.us](mailto:atraxler@co.le-sueur.mn.us) or 507-380-0048**



Increase your knowledge regarding:

- MN Laws and Penalties For Impaired Driving
- Signs of Intoxication
- Server and Business Protections
- Underage Sales and Service
- Checking IDs

February 14, 2017

TO: Le Sueur County Area Liquor License Holders  
FROM: Le Sueur County Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) Coalition  
RE: Upcoming Responsible Beverage Server Training

The Le Sueur County Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) Coalition is pleased to offer Responsible Beverage Server Training (RBST) courses locally. This training will include information on acceptable I.D.'s, fake I.D. recognition, signs of intoxication and effective serving practices. Certificates of completion will be given to all those attending the course. Please contact your insurance agency as this certificate may decrease your insurance rates.

The Le Sueur County RBST course will be held:

***Monday, February 27, 2017***

***6:30 p.m.***

***Le Sueur County EOC/Le Center Ambulance Hall***

***136 S Cordova Ave***

***Le Center, MN 56057***

Registration is preferred to allow for preparation of training materials. **Please register by email, [atraxler@co.le-sueur.mn.us](mailto:atraxler@co.le-sueur.mn.us), or by phone (507) 380-0048** and how many will be attending. If you have any questions please contact Ann Traxler- Director of Le Sueur County Emergency Management at the address or phone number listed above.

The Le Sueur County TZD Safe Roads Coalition is part of the Minnesota TZD traffic safety initiative that employs an interdisciplinary approach to lowering the number of traffic crashes, injuries, and deaths occurring on Minnesota roads. The program's vision is to ultimately reduce those fatalities and serious injuries to zero.

Through the integrated application of education, engineering, enforcement, and emergency medical and trauma services – known as the "4 Es," Minnesota TZD works to create a culture for which traffic fatalities and serious injuries are no longer acceptable.

## KEYC TV

<http://www.keyc.com/story/34847646/st-patricks-day-patrols>

### Expect Beefed Up Patrols This St. Patrick's Day Friday

Posted: Mar 14, 2017 5:22 PM CDT

By Tom Clements, Weekend Meteorologist



MANKATO, MINN. -

It won't be long until everybody is seeing green, as we get closer to Saint Patrick's day this Friday, but local law enforcement wants to make sure that you're not also seeing the inside of a jail cell.

Blue Earth County Sheriff's Department, along with Minnesota State Patrol and Mankato Public Safety will be stepping up patrols this Friday night and throughout the weekend.

The fact that St. Patrick's Day falls on a Friday this year has officers planning to be extra vigilant.

From 2011 to 2016, 11 people died and 31 were seriously injured on Minnesota roads during St. Patrick's Day.

Many local businesses will be working with officers and free ride services to make sure everyone gets home safe.

"We're gonna try to have as many free rides as possible on a program called 'joyride' we have going on in the County," said Blue Earth County Sheriff Deputy Tom Coulter. "Talk to your bartenders, or your waitress, or your host and ask them about joyride. They can provide you tickets to get on the bus and gets you a free ride home."

Last year during St. Patrick's Day, law enforcement arrested 189 drivers on Minnesota roads for DWIs.

St. Patrick's Day sees the second most holiday arrests right after Labor Day.

KEYC TV

<http://www.keyc.com/clip/13180763/stay-safe-on-roads-during-st-patricks-day>

## Stay Safe On Roads During St. Patrick's Day

Posted: Mar 16, 2017 5:44 PM CDT By Elizabeth Bateson, Reporter



MANKATO, Minn. -

If you plan on celebrating St. Patrick's Day at local bars, make sure you have a safe plan to get home. That's the message law enforcement agencies are sending out ahead of the holiday weekend.

"There is an increased presence out there due to the nature of the holiday and the nature of people wanting to have fun," said Cpt. Jeremy Geiger with MN State Patrol.

Law enforcement agencies say they will be focusing on impaired driving and occupant restraint.

"They'll probably be around 200 DWI arrests in the state of Minnesota on St. Patrick's Day itself. They'll be many more over the weekend obviously because it lands on a Friday this week. We certainly don't want people to be a part of that number at all," said Geiger.

Officials say in the last five years, 43 people have been seriously injured or killed on St. Patrick's Day.

"We're talking about one day throughout 365 days. We don't want anyone to be a part of that statistic," said Geiger.

If you're beginning to think about your weekend plans, the Blue Earth County TZD coalition is offering safe ways to get home through Joyride.

"It's trying to keep drivers off the road who may have drunken too much. It makes it safer for all of us. We all know that one loss of life or one severe accident has a ripple effect that affects the entire community," said BEC Commissioner Drew Campbell.

All you have to do is ask any bartender in Mankato for a ticket, which has a phone number that you can call for a free ride home from Kato Independent Shuttle.

"With this, there's no reason not to call. If you can't drive or you think you can't drive, absolutely take advantage of this," said South Central Minnesota EMS Executive Director Mark Griffith.

Rides will be offered within a 10 mile radius of Mankato from 10pm to 2:30 am Friday night.

-- KEYC News 12

# JOYRIDE

GOOD TIMES DELIVERED

LET JOYRIDE  
GET YOU HOME  
TONIGHT.

*JOYRIDE* is a sober ride home shuttle service.

**AVAILABLE Saturday, March 11, 2017.**

See your hostess or bartender for a sober ride home ticket!

Call 507-388-5477 for pick up

***Free BUS ride home 8 p.m. - 2 a.m.***

*City of Le Center and 10 mile radius  
around Le Center*

Thank you to our sponsor:

**First National Bank Of Le Center**

for supporting this program!



# JOYRIDE

GOOD TIMES DELIVERED

LET JOYRIDE  
GET YOU HOME  
TONIGHT.

*JOYRIDE* is a sober ride home shuttle service.

**AVAILABLE Friday, March 17, 2017.**

See your hostess or bartender for a sober ride home ticket!

Call Kato Independent Shuttle Service at 507-388-5477 for pick up

***Free BUS ride home 10 p.m. - 2:30 a.m.***

*10 mile radius around the Cities of Mankato, North Mankato, Eagle Lake, Lake Crystal, St Clair and Madison Lake.*

Thank you to our sponsors for supporting this program:

Blue Earth County Attorneys Office, Blue Earth County Human Services, Tow Distributing, Business on Belgrade Assoc. (BoB), and Jon Pluto in memory of Lisa Pluto



Blue Earth County SO Tweet for Tom Coulter!



KEYC TV Move over event in Watonwan County March 25

<http://www.keyc.com/story/34997675/tzd-working-to-create-safer-roads>

### TZD Working To Create Safer Roads

Posted: Mar 25, 2017 6:01 PM

By Elizabeth Bateson, Reporter



ST. JAMES, Minn. -

The Watonwan County Toward Zero Deaths Coalition is working to enforce the states move over law, after officials say drivers continually ignore it.

"I've been on two or three accident sites where we've had other accidents occur while we were working the original accident. People get distracted when they see lights and then, 'bam,' they're right in our scene," said South Central Minnesota EMS Executive Director Mark Griffith.

St. James Fire Chief Jason Monnens added, "Just a few months ago a driver just missed our firetruck by a couple feet because they didn't move over. Luckily no one was standing out there."

Minnesota established the Ted Foss Move Over law after a state patrol officer was hit and killed by a passing vehicle in 2000. The law requires drivers to merge a lane away from law enforcement and interstate workers.

"If you can't move over, you need to slow down. We realize you can't always move over, but at least slow down so you're not coming by the people at full speed," said Monnens.

When drivers fail to follow the law, they're putting those who work to protect us at risk.

"These people will respond to a call for help regardless of the time of day or what's going on in their lives. They drop everything to help someone they don't know. The least that people can do is make sure these folks can go back home to their families," said Griffith.

Officials say since TZD started, there has been a 37% reduction in traffic fatalities. Watonwan County is working to make sure the number of deaths continue to decline.

Monnens said, "We're going to put billboards up so people will know of the law because there are people who don't understand it. We're trying to come together as a county and get everybody informed to move over for people when they see flashing lights."

The county also plans to host seatbelt safety and distracted driving events this summer.

--KEYC News 12

Photo of set up of news conference:

Seven Fire Departments

Three EMS rigs

Three law enforcement agencies

Two local towing companies

City of St James, county Highway Department and MnDOT



**St James Plaindealer**

# Slow Down and Move Over

Thursday

Posted Mar 23, 2017 at 10:29 AM

By Sam Peterson

*Watonwan County Toward Zero Deaths Safe Roads Coalition, local law enforcement, EMS and first responders, county fire departments, towing companies and Minnesota Department of Transportation join forces to remind motorists to move over with the arrival of spring weather, increasing travel and road construction.*

**What:** Flashing lights mean slow down and move over. By ignoring the Ted Foss Move Over law Minnesotans endanger the lives of law enforcement, emergency workers and road crews assisting the public and improving the roads.

To educate motorists about the importance of moving over, south central Minnesota regional law enforcement officers, emergency medical service providers, county fire departments. Watonwan County Toward Zero Deaths Safe Roads Coalition, towing companies and the Minnesota Department of Transportation will hold a news conference.

Minnesota established the Ted Foss Move Over law in honor of Corporal Foss, a 15 year veteran of the State Patrol, who was hit and killed by a passing vehicle in August of 2000 during a traffic stop on the shoulder of interstate 90 in Winona.

The law not only keeps emergency workers safe, it also keeps motorists from crashing into stopped vehicles.

**When:** 9 a.m., Saturday, March 25

**Where:** MnDOT Truck Station

1513 7th Avenue S.

St James, MN

**Speakers:**

- Fire Chief Jason Monnens, St. James Fire Department.
- Mark Griffith, Executive Director, South Central Minnesota EMS Regional System.
- Hear stories from first responders/law enforcement on close calls with motorists who failed to move over.

**Why:** The Ted Foss Move Over law is designed to keep those working on the side of the road and motorists safe. On the roadway with two or more lanes, motorists must keep a full lane away when passing a stopped ambulance, fire truck, tow truck, road repair or law enforcement vehicle.

All citizens are asked to make a personal pledge to always move over and slow down to make Minnesota roadways safer for everyone.

The South Central Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths program brings area law enforcement, public health educators, engineers and emergency medical and trauma services together to reduce the number of traffic fatalities and severe injuries to zero in south central Minnesota. The 13-county area encompasses: Blue Earth, Brown, Cottonwood, Faribault, Jackson, Le Sueur, Martin, Nicollet, Nobles, Rock, Sibley, Waseca and Watonwan counties

Poster from the move over campaign in Watonwan County:



**Le Sueur County Girl Remembers Grandpa as Distracted Driving Crackdown Begins**

By Southern Minnesota News

Apr 10, 6:25 AM

<http://www.southernminnesotanews.com/le-sueur-county-girl-remembers-grandpa-distracted-driving-crackdown-begins/>



(Mankato, MN) – A two-week crackdown on distracted driving begins today in Mankato and statewide.

One focus of the campaign will be on those who are texting while behind the wheel.

In 2015, distracted driving in Minnesota contributed to 7,666 injuries and 74 deaths.

Among those deaths was 79-year-old bus driver Joe Tikalsky of New Prague.

Tikalsky was killed when he was getting his newspaper and was hit by a car driven by a woman, who told first responders that she was reading a text before the crash and preparing to send one. Susan Ann Russo was sentenced to community service, probation and four days in jail.

Tikalsky's 17-year-old Sylvie is among those urging folks to put the phone down while behind the wheel.

"I'm living my life without my grandpa, and it's not right when I think about what happened," said Tikalsky. "I miss him so much, and it's really hard to deal with every day. That's why my family and I will do what we can to stop distracted driving."

Sylvie and the Tikalsky family will be handing out 500 [CELLslips](#) to high school drivers and others with a message: "Hands on the Wheel, Eyes on the Road: In memory of Joe Tikalsky 10-28-15."

The goal is for drivers to place their phones inside the CELLslip, which blocks the cell phone signal.

In Minnesota, it is illegal for drivers to read, compose or send texts and emails, and access the web while the vehicle is in motion or a part of traffic. This includes sitting at a stoplight or stop sign or stopped in traffic.

In 2016, nearly 6,000 texting and driving citations were issued statewide.

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## **Waseca County News**

[http://www.southernminn.com/waseca\\_county\\_news/community/article\\_8c1f4dc4-2710-5f3f-906b-0c063b0a6829.html](http://www.southernminn.com/waseca_county_news/community/article_8c1f4dc4-2710-5f3f-906b-0c063b0a6829.html)

### **Extra enforcement seeks turnaround in deadly distracted driving choices**

[Suzy Rook](#)

Apr 6, 2017

The tragedy of Joe Tikalsky's death from a distracted driver in 2015 stretches beyond family and friends. He was a school bus driver from New Prague, and the generations of kids who rode his bus are now left with only memories of how he touched their lives.

Law enforcement agencies across Minnesota will be conducting extra distracted driving enforcement April 10 to 23 to help prevent more senseless deaths like Tikalsky's. As distracted driving incidents and citations continue to increase, Minnesota law enforcement is extending the extra enforcement period to two weeks to specifically focus on this deadly behavior.

For 17-year-old Sylvie Tikalsky and her family, her grandfather's death is a call to action to get Minnesotans to realize that driving requires your full attention. "I'm living my life without my grandpa, and it's not right when I think

about what happened,” said Tikalsky. “I miss him so much, and it’s really hard to deal with every day. That’s why my family and I will do what we can to stop distracted driving.”

Sylvie and the Tikalsky family will hand out 500 CELLslips to high school drivers and others with a message: “Hands on the Wheel, Eyes on the Road: In memory of Joe Tikalsky 10-28-15.” The goal is for drivers to place their phones inside the CELLslip, which blocks the cell phone signal.

### **Extra enforcement**

Deputies, police officers and troopers from more than 300 agencies participate in the extra distracted driving enforcement campaign coordinated by the Minnesota Department of Public Safety Office of Traffic Safety. They use overtime funding provided by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to keep Minnesotans safe from the dangers of distraction.

“I wish I could say distracted driving may be a big problem in the rest of the country but not in Minnesota. I can’t say that because of stories like Joe and the dozens of lives that are lost each year from drivers who aren’t paying attention,” said Donna Berger, Office of Traffic Safety director. “We live such hectic lives with appointments, activities and stress from job, school and family demands. Because of all the pressures, the right choice behind the wheel isn’t always the easiest choice, but it’s a life-saving choice. Please pay attention.”

### **Disturbing numbers**

Minnesotans need to commit to keeping their eyes on the road to reduce distractions and the heartache that can result:

- Texting and driving citations continue to climb statewide.

2012 — 1,707

2013 — 2,177

2014 — 3,498

2015 — 4,115

2016 — 5,988

- In 2015, distracted driving contributed to 7,666 injuries and 74 deaths.
- When a crash occurs in Minnesota, the driver behavior that law enforcement agencies cite most often as a contributing factor is attention or distraction.

### **“No Texting” Law**

In Minnesota, it is illegal for drivers to read, compose or send texts and emails, and access the web while the vehicle is in motion or a part of traffic. This includes sitting at a stoplight or stop sign or stopped in traffic. It also is illegal for drivers with a permit or provisional driver’s license to use a cell phone while driving, except for emergencies to call 911.

Under Minnesota law, drivers face a \$50 fine, plus court fees, for a first offense. They’ll pay an additional \$225 fine (for a total of \$275), plus court fees, for second and subsequent violations of the texting-while-driving law.

### **Make the safe choice**

- Cell phones — Put the phone down, turn it off or place it out of reach.
- Music and other controls — Pre-program radio stations and arrange music in an easy-to-access spot. Adjust mirrors and ventilation before traveling.
- Navigation — Map out the destination and enter the GPS route in advance.
- Eating and drinking — Avoid messy foods and secure drinks.
- Children — Teach children the importance of good behavior in a vehicle and model proper driving behavior.
- Passengers — Speak up to stop drivers from distracted driving behavior and offer to help with anything that takes the driver's attention off the road.

**KTOE**

<http://www.ktoe.com/2017/04/14/distracted-driving-enforcement-continues-over-holiday-weekend/>

## Distracted driving enforcement continues over holiday weekend

Written by [Minnesota News Network](#) on April 14, 2017

Extra law enforcement officers from all across Minnesota will be out again this Easter weekend targeting distracted drivers.



In 2015, distracted driving contributed to over 7,600 crashes and 74 deaths and Le Sueur County Sheriff Dave Tietz said the message is simple, “Put your phones away, don’t eat and drink while driving, don’t read the newspaper and I could go on-and-on. Please don’t do that.”

Minnesota State Trooper Lt. Robert Zak said, “Troopers, deputies and officers will continue to work as hard as we can to educate the public on the dangers of distracted driving but we cannot enforce our way out of this problem. We need every motorist to take responsibility for their actions and put the distractions away.”

The statewide distracted driving enforcement campaign runs through April 23rd.

**KTOE**

<http://www.ktoe.com/2017/04/17/state-patrol-still-cracking-down-on-distracted-driving-before-summer-begins-6/>

## State Patrol still cracking down on distracted driving before summer begins

Written by [Brandon Lewis](#) on April 17, 2017

The State Patrol is reminding motorists about the dangers of distracted driving as extra enforcement continues through Sunday on Minnesota roadways.

Minnesota State Patrol Captain, Jeremy Geiger says they are putting more officers on the road.

“In order to combat this as we head into the season of proms, graduations and the summer season and trying to get to the cabin to kind of let everybody know that it’s time to be safe. It’s time to refocus and time to just do the right thing out there.”



Texting and driving citations have continued to climb statewide, with nearly 6-thousand citations handed out last year, up from just over 17-hundred in 2012.

“We’ve already got enough going on, going down the road. We are already multi-tasking with taking in all the stuff that is around us, focusing on what’s going on inside the vehicle. We add another element to that, we do not see what’s going on and bad things happen.”

A first offense is 50-dollars plus fees. Subsequent violations for texting and driving climb to 275-dollars plus fees.

In 2015, distracted driving contributed to over 76-hundred injuries and 74 deaths.



## Grieving Family Pushes To Stop Distracted Driving

Posted: Apr 06, 2017 5:59 PM

By Shawn Loging, Reporter

<http://www.keyc.com/story/35091754/pushing-to-stop-distracted-driving>



NEW PRAGUE, Minn. -

In 2015, distracted driving caused almost 75 deaths and more than 7,650 injuries in Minnesota.

One of those deaths was a New Prague man who died just outside his home.

Joe Tikalsky's son Greg Tikalsky said, "I can remember my dad under a blanket lying in the ditch, or I can honor his memory by trying to make changes, and one option seems a lot better than the other."

The family of Joe Tikalsky has dedicated themselves to fighting distracted driving after a driver texting on her phone took his life just steps away from his home in October 2015.

"Walking along the shoulder of the road to get his newspaper and he was struck and killed before he reached his mailbox," said Greg Tikalsky.

Even though any fatal accident is difficult for law enforcement, for Le Sueur County Sheriff Dave Tietz, this had a harder sting.

Le Sueur County Sheriff Dave Tietz said, "It's really difficult when the deceased individual is a friend, and a neighbor like Joe was to me."

It's an easy temptation while you're driving, to reach down to check for the latest call, text or status, but just those few seconds away from the road can have devastating impacts, and starting next week, law enforcement's going to be cracking down on distracted driving.

Minnesota DPS Office Of Traffic Safety Director Donna Berger said, "More than 300 law enforcement agencies from around the state that are going to be working overtime hours to focus on stopping this behavior."

Joe's granddaughter, Sylvie Tikalsky, is taking that message to her high school classmates, who sometimes need it the most.

Sylvie Tikalsky said, "It just seems like that's just the norm. That's what everybody does, and we just need to break that habit from people because I don't want another family member of a different family to lose their life."

One of her tactics is sleeves called CELLslips that when driving smartphones are placed inside, blocking incoming calls and texts and removing that temptation.

The two week distracted driving campaign starts April 10. It runs through April 23.

--KEYC News 12

April 6, 2017

Pushing To Stop Distracted Driving

<http://www.keyc.com/clip/13230769/pushing-to-stop-distracted-driving>

## Extra Distracted Driving Enforcement On Minnesota Roads April 10-23

Posted: Apr 10, 2017 4:22 PM CDT

By Brittany Kemmerer

<http://www.keyc.com/story/35115482/extra-distracted-driving-enforcement-on-minnesota-roads>



MANKATO , MINN. -

After losing a loved one to someone texting behind the wheel, The Tikalsky family from New Prague teamed up with area law enforcement and state officials to work toward bringing attention to distracted driving.

State Trooper Dan Anderson was part of today's increased enforcement, in one of the unmarked cars.

Everyone knows about these accidents,

Yet it's hard for many to just put the phone down and wait until they've reached their destination.

"I think people think they're very good at multitasking and if you think about driving it's the many completely different decisions your making unconsciously after you're driving for a while and now you're going to add into that a whole separate task which is texting and putting your mind on something different," Minnesota State Patrol, Trooper Dan Anderson said.

In Minnesota, it's illegal for drivers to read, compose or send texts and emails, and access the web while the vehicle is in motion or a part of traffic.

The first offense costs \$50 plus court fees, the second jumps up to \$275.

This includes sitting at a stoplight, stop sign or stopped in traffic.

According to state statistics, distracted driving contributed to 7,666 injuries and 74 deaths.

"The problem is once the event happens and once that terrible crash happens. I'm sure every driver wishes they could go back and do something different or wish they wouldn't have done it but after the fact it's a little late to go back and say boy I wish I hadn't done that. You have to make it a habit from the start rather than try to figure it out afterward," Anderson said.

--KEYC News 12

## Extra Enforcement April 10-23 To Combat Distracted Driving

<http://www.keyc.com/story/35111293/extra-enforcement-april-10-23-to-combat-distracted-driving>

Posted: Apr 10, 2017 9:41 AM CDT

By Kelsey Barchenger



Area law enforcement are reminding you to leave the phone alone, as they crack down on distracted driving beginning today.

Extra enforcement has been extended for the first time, beginning today through April 23rd.

In 2015, distracted drivers caused over 7,500 injuries and 74 deaths across the state.

Most common distractions seen by police include posting on Facebook, checking a sports score, or googling information. Small moves that could cost you big.

Under Minnesota's No Texting Law it's illegal for drivers to read, send texts and emails or access the web while driving, that includes while sitting at a stop sign. The first offense costs \$50 plus court fees, the second jumps up to \$275.

If you injure or kill someone because of texting and driving, you could face a felony charge of criminal vehicular operation or homicide

In addition to the above stories, radio interviews done at 8 stations in Mankato and North Mankato.

[Department of Public Safety Blog](#)

## Before they get behind that wheel, show them this one.

April 20, 2017



**Photo: The distracted driving probability wheel shows that if a teen drives at night with three passengers while reaching for an object and texting, their risk of getting into a crash increases 2,382 percent.**

Imagine your teen driving alone during the day without any distractions. Safe, right? Now imagine your teen picks up a friend. Doesn't seem like a big deal, but your teen's risk of a crash just increased by 139 percent. Now let's say night has now fallen and your teen has picked up two more passengers, is texting, and makes a grab for something that fell on the floor. The probability of a crash skyrockets 2,382 percent.

That's how a new program in Kandiyohi County is helping teen drivers and their parents learn not to drive distracted: by using a probability wheel. By lining up various factors such as day/night, number of passengers, adjusting hair or makeup, and talking on the phone, teens can see how the decisions they make can affect their chances of getting in a crash.

But the best part is where they're seeing these probability wheels: at the doctor's office. When a teen goes for a sports physical or well-child checkup at the Family Practice Medical Center in Willmar, there's a probability wheel on the desk in the exam room. Clinic Manager Stacey Zondervan says teens and their parents often pick it up and play with it while they're waiting for the doctor to come in — and then when the doctor arrives, they can all have a discussion about safe driving practices. "Teens don't appreciate those lengthy lectures about the bad things they're doing, but the wheel gives them an opportunity for self-discovery," says Zondervan.

Why doctors? Gordy Pehrson, Safe Roads Coordinator for the [Minnesota Office of Traffic Safety](#), explains: "Traffic crashes are the second leading cause of death for Minnesota teens, so doctors have a vested interest in helping teens to be safer drivers and passengers." Stephanie Felt, coordinator of the Kandiyohi County Traffic Education and Safety Team, says the result is consistent messaging about distracted driving from trusted sources: law enforcement, schools, and now doctors.

Felt, who discovered the probability wheel at a conference last year, was the one to give them to healthcare providers to use. "The messaging coming from medical providers is important,

because people trust their doctors, and doctors don't have a lot of time to waste on things that aren't important."

Another key factor is having a parent in the room for the discussion. "Parents are the ones who hold the keys to their teen drivers and play a vital role in their safety," says Pehrson.

The hope is that this multi-pronged approach, combined with the tangible example of the dangers involved, will help teens practice safe driving. "It's one thing to say 'don't drive distracted,'" says Felt. "It's another to ask about specific risk factors and show teens on the wheel how dangerous it is.

### **Nobles County distracted driving education at Prom in Worthington**



**Worthington Police Department** added 9 new photos. Public  
 April 30 at 4:02pm · 🌐

The Worthington Police Department and Minnesota State Patrol attended Worthington High School's prom and brought along a driving simulator to show the dangers of driving distracted and impaired. Students wore drunk goggles "Fatal Vision" and attempted to drive around error free. Thanks to all the participants and we hope you learned a life long lesson that driving distracted or impaired will end in disaster.




Like Comment Share

You and 92 others Top Comments

**Worthington Police Department**  
 April 11 at 9:44pm · 🌐

The Worthington Police Department has once again teamed up with the State of Minnesota and the Toward Zero Death campaign for extra enforcement on distracted driving. Texting and driving could cost you around \$200.00 with a possible court date. So please, put your phone down and keep your eyes on the road.

**It Can Wait**

**No text is worth dying for.**



A reminder from the  
**Worthington Police Department**

Like Comment Share

photos/1515718918495768/65 Top Comments

## The Journal

# Dangers of distracted driving hammered home

May 5, 2017

Connor Cummiskey



Staff photo by Connor Cummiskey Greg Tikalsky spoke on his father's death after being struck by a driver distracted by a cell phone. Tikalsky wears the same jacket his father was wearing when he was struck. It is a jacket given to New Prague school bus drivers. The victim was a school bus driver.

NEW ULM — Two people shared their experience with the consequences of distracted driving Thursday.

Father and daughter Greg and Sylvie Tikalsky presented *"Hands on the Wheel, Eyes on the Road: In Memory of Joe Tikalsky"* at the South Central Minnesota Toward Zero Death (TZD) workshop.

Their speeches described what happened to them when Greg's father was killed by a driver who was texting.

*"This crash has changed me, because at first I was extremely angry with what had happened,"* Sylvie said. *"It made me angry to think that a text killed my grandpa. So I changed my anger into action."*

On Oct. 28, 2015, Joe went to collect his mail, but was struck and killed by a woman texting while driving.

Sylvie learned of it while she was in school. Her father arrived with police officers to take her to her grandparents' house.

Her grandmother had not been awake, thus had missed seeing Joe's death. Sylvie and Greg informed her.

*"The irony of the tragedy is that dad worked nearly fifty years as a school-bus driver whose job it was to get about 100 children to and from school safely every day,"* Greg said.

The Tikalskys became advocates of safer driving practices. Sylvie promised herself when she got her license she would never use her phone while driving.

In an effort to raise awareness, she worked with some students to set up a table about the dangers of texting and driving.

*"I was really proud of the amount of classmates that came up and were willing to sign the pledge to not text and drive,"* Sylvie said.

Phone use while driving has become a ubiquitous threat to drivers. Road safety experts have taken to referring to it as an epidemic, Greg said.

*"If we had a medical concern deemed an epidemic resources would be allocated to eradicate it, or at the very least prevent the epidemic from spreading,"* Greg said. *"I am not seeing that with texting and driving. I am seeing an unchecked epidemic."*

Recently the two advocates have been speaking at committee hearings in St. Paul. They are pushing for House File 1180, which would ban any hands-on interface with phones while driving.

The bill would make Minnesota the 15 state to enact such a ban.

Incongruities in the law were another point of Greg's. They include a federal ban on truck drivers from using cell phones.

*"Unfortunately, I can tell you it does not take a big truck to kill a pedestrian; a mid-sized SUV can do the job,"* Greg said.

The family also advocated for stricter punishments. The woman who killed Joe received four days in jail, 40 hours of community service and the maximum \$3,000 fine.

*"We would like to see, along with other families of victims, this charge go to a felony,"* Greg said.

They are not the only ones. Greg referenced a Star Tribune poll that indicated 78 percent of Minnesotans would like to see distracted driving treated similarly to drunk driving.

*"Please, I do not beg for anything, but I beg for you not to text and drive,"* Sylvie said.

## Nurse describes drowsy driving challenges

May 5, 2017

**Fritz Busch**

**Staff Writer**

[fbusch@nujournal.com](mailto:fbusch@nujournal.com)

NEW ULM — A Mayo Clinic Health System registered nurse described the challenges of drowsy driving in no uncertain terms at a Toward Zero Deaths workshop at the Best Western Convention Center Thursday.

Julie Hatleli of the Mayo Regional Sleep Disorder Center said most drivers have found themselves tired or falling asleep while driving.

*“Drowsy driving is not just falling asleep at the wheel. It’s a profound impairment that mimics alcohol-impaired driving in many ways,”* Hatleli said, *“Sleep is vital to survive and maintain good mental health. Adults that sleep seven to nine hours a night will live longer. Your brain and body need that. Pre-teens need nine to 11 hours of sleep a night and teens need eight to ten hours.”*

Three to seven percent of men have sleep disorders A slightly smaller percentage of women has sleep disorders, but Hatleli said the illness is underdiagnosed and causes obesity.

*“Obstructive sleep apnea increases your chances of having dementia, heart attacks, strokes, inflammation, sudden death, depression and make just getting through the day and your life a struggle,”* Hatleli said.

She urged people with sleeping problems to get diagnosed by a doctor and use CPAP machines to overcome the illness or face dire, even deadly challenges.

*“Drowsy driving is the second-leading cause of traffic fatalities. It’s second only to drunken driving, but can be very much like drunk driving,”* Hatleli said. *“An Australian study showed that working 18 consecutive hours and then driving is like have a blood alcohol content of about .10, and it’s probably underestimated.”*

For better sleeping habits, she urged people to avoid caffeine, alcohol and nicotine especially at bedtime.

*“Keep a regular sleep schedule. Exercise regularly and do something relaxing before going to bed. But if you do go to bed, do so only to sleep,”* Hatleli said. *“Avoid sleep medication, naps and online habits at night. Many people leave their iPhones on all night or when they sleep, which disrupts sleep. Turn it off at night and get a good night’s sleep.”*

Earlier in the day, New Ulm native Mike Asleson, DWI Deployment Coordinator for the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension and a Minnesota Department of Public Safety product manager, described what's new with DWI eCharging, electronic search warrants and the DWI dashboard.

eWarrants allow an officer to do electronic warrants in less time. Law enforcement uses the DWI electronic dashboard to map DWIs, severe injury and fatal crashes so they can see where they should focus resources.

Fritz Busch can be emailed at [fbusch@nujournal.com](mailto:fbusch@nujournal.com).

## Free Press

May 5, 2017

### A text, a death, a warning

Family campaigns against distracted driving

By Deanna B. Narveson

[dbnarveson@mankatofreepress.com](mailto:dbnarveson@mankatofreepress.com)

**NEW ULM** — Sylvie Tikalsky's grandfather was hit and killed by a distracted driver while picking up his mail on October 28, 2015. There were no skid marks on the cement and an eyewitness told the family she didn't see the driver's brake lights.

"It's difficult for anyone to lose a loved one, but in this way it's absolutely horrible and I don't want anyone else to go through what our family went through. Unfortunately it seems like lots of families have had to already," Tikalsky, 17, said Thursday. "You don't want to be the driver that takes away a loved one's life, and take away all the memories that they made. And you don't want to be the family

Please see TEXT, Page A6



Greg Tikalsky and Lisa Kons of the Minnesota Safety Council review a driver instructional booklet at the Towards Zero Deaths workshop held in New Ulm on Thursday. Tikalsky's father Joe was struck and killed by a driver who was texting while driving.

Photo by Jackson Forderer

“It’s difficult for anyone to lose a loved one, but in this way it’s absolutely horrible and I don’t want anyone else to go through what our family went through.”

SYLVIE TIKALSKY

## TEXT: Family campaigns against distracted driving

Continued from Page A1

that has to deal with this. It’s been one-and-a-half years already, but it does not get easier.

“Really, there were two life sentences that day, our family and the driver,” she said.

Tikalsky and her father Greg Tikalsky spoke at the South Central Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths workshop how their father and grandfather Joe Tikalsky, a well-loved public school bus driver in New Prague, lost his life when he was hit by a car.

TZD is the state’s traffic safety program. It works with engineers, first responders, police and educators to prevent traffic related deaths in Minnesota by changing public attitudes about safety, such as getting people to wear their seatbelts and avoid driving buzzed.

TZD holds workshops and conferences throughout the year, said Program Coordinator Kristine Hernandez. Traffic-related deaths have dropped from 600 to around 400 a year in the program’s 14 years, but has plateaued in recent years.

Hernandez said the next goal is to have less than 300 traffic fatalities by 2020. Reducing the number of distracted, cellphone- using-drivers behind the wheel will be a critical step.

“This crash has changed me because at first I was extremely angry with what happened. It made me angry to think that a text killed my grandpa, so I decided to turn my anger into action.” Sylvie Tikalsky said.

When she got her license last year, Sylvie Tikalsky made a promise to never use her cell phone while driving. She said she knows she’s addicted to using her smartphone, like so many of her peers. Before losing her grandpa, she thought texting and driving was no big deal.

She spoke to her classmates at New Prague High School and more than 60 students have signed the pledge. To help with temptations, she gives away small red bags for drivers to put their phones in while they’re driving. The bag blocks electromagnetic fields from reaching the phone like a pocket-sized Faraday cage. Instant “airplane mode.”

Greg Tikalsky and the rest of their family have testified at the Minnesota Legislature in favor of legislation that makes it illegal to use a handheld device in any way while driving and raises the ticket penalties for cell-phone related distracted or careless driving.

“We have a deadly problem on the roads,” Greg Tikalsky said. He asked why, if it was illegal for freight truck drivers to use handheld devices, car drivers were still allowed to. “It doesn’t take a semi to kill a person. It doesn’t even take a small SUV.”

Three months after her grandfather's death, Sylvie

"We have a deadly problem on the roads.

It doesn't take a semi to kill a person.

It doesn't even take a small SUV."

GREG TIKALSKY

Tikalsky was diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumor.

"I mention that because that was not preventable, things happen like that and unfortunately, that's just life." she said. "However, my grandpa's death could have been prevented. April is distracted driving awareness month, and although April is over we can still work together to make the change."

The event in New Ulm went from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Speakers led discussions with educators, engineers and law enforcement officers and emergency medical personnel about how to change driving culture to make it safer out on the highways.

They talked about the effects of drowsy driving, how to promote safety habits on social media in the region and how to navigate new changes in the arrest process for drivers pulled over for driving while intoxicated.

Mark Griffith, executive director of the South Central Minnesota EMS Corporation, and Scott McConkey, a police liaison with the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, talked about how law enforcement and emergency medical professionals can deal with the stress and trauma that come with their jobs.

Post-traumatic stress disorder happens when the psychological effects of traumatic experiences begin to interfere with daily life, Griffith said. Nearly 20 percent of public service workers suffer from it, compared to about 2 percent in the general population.

The key to healing is debriefing the workers after traumatic experiences, Griffith said. This helps them find closure about what happened so that they can better grapple with some of the horrifying events or sights they might see on the job.

McConkey said it's important for public service personnel to remember that what they are experiencing is normal, that it's OK for something to hurt and also for it not to affect them.

He served in law enforcement for decades, and recognizes how much public service members need to care for themselves so they can continue to do their jobs.

"Nobody is a responder without scars," McConkey said.

## Mankato Free press

[http://www.mankatofreepress.com/news/local\\_news/boy-scout-helps-authorities-remind-commuters-to-buckle-up/article\\_6454b47a-3f2c-11e7-9fd6-87bba946f81a.html](http://www.mankatofreepress.com/news/local_news/boy-scout-helps-authorities-remind-commuters-to-buckle-up/article_6454b47a-3f2c-11e7-9fd6-87bba946f81a.html)

May 22, 2017

### BUCKLE UP

Scout helps in safety campaign Message spray-painted on parking lots

By Kristine Goodrich

[kgoodrich@mankatofreepress.com](mailto:kgoodrich@mankatofreepress.com)

Observing cars arriving at and leaving area secondary schools, Boy Scout Lucas Kruse found more than 90 percent of occupants were wearing their seat belts.

The St. Clair High School students' count paralleled a 2016 statewide survey showing 93 percent of Minnesotans wear a seat belt. That's higher than the national average of 89 percent.

Local public safety leaders still aren't satisfied, however. Law enforcement and emergency medical services representatives gathered outside Kruse's school Monday

Please see SCOUT, Page A6



Boy Scout Lucas Kruse looks Monday at the sign he painted in the St. Clair Secondary School parking lot as part of his Eagle Scout project.

Photos by Pat Christman



Blue Earth County Sheriff's deputy Tom Coulter talks with Boy Scout Lucas Kruse and his father and Scout leader, Dave Kruse, on Monday. Coulter helped Kruse with his Eagle Scout project.

## SCOUT: 'Buckle up' message painted on parking lots

Continued from Page A1

morning to urge commuters to buckle up.

State Patrol Capt. Jeremy Geiger noted that the odds of being injured or killed in a crash are six times greater when not wearing a seat belt.

"Failing to put a seat belt even one time can mean the difference between life and death," he said.

South Central EMS Executive Director Mark Griffith noted a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention study finding that when a driver buckles up, passengers also will fasten their belts 75 percent of the time.

"Today we ask you to set the example. Save your life and save someone else's," he said.

The South Central Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths coalition gave a "saved by the belt" award to Chad Swehla, a Minnesota Department of Transportation snowplow driver. Swehla was plowing on Interstate 90 in February when he was rear-ended by a semi. Swehla was wearing a seat belt and was not injured.

Monday was the launch of a two-week statewide Click It or Ticket education and enforcement campaign. Extra officers are on patrol looking for vehicle occupants who aren't wearing their seat belts as required by state law.

Kruse is helping with the educational part of the campaign. He's painting reminders to buckle up in parking lots across Blue Earth County.

His school has the first sign spray-painted on the asphalt. He plans to paint at least 16 more lots at schools, businesses, parks and churches in the coming week.

Business and organization leaders in Blue Earth County who would like Kruse to add a buckle up sign to their parking lot can email a request to [lucas.kruse@actek.com](mailto:lucas.kruse@actek.com).

Kruse will return to a few of the sites in coming weeks to conduct new counts of the number of seat-belt wearers, hoping to find that his signs have boosted the percentage of people buckling up.

Kruse's Eagle Scout project was proposed by Blue Earth Sheriff deputy and St. Clair school resource officer Tom Coulter. Buckle up signs have been on the Sheriff's Office's to-do list for awhile and they're happy to have a Scout to make them happen, Coulter said.

"In 2017 we have lost 25 unbelted motorists in Minnesota crashes. That is too many lives lost," he said.

## KEYC TV

May 22, 2017

Buckle Up Stencil Campaign Teams Up With Statewide Seat Belt Enforcement

*Posted: May 22, 2017 3:52 PM*

By Brittany Kemmerer



ST. CLAIR, MN -

Award Recipient, Chad Swehla says, "It could've been worse if I was not buckled up." Chad Swehla was driving a snowplow when he was rear ended by a semi on interstate 90. And today, he is being awarded by law enforcement for making the right choice when getting in his plow.

Blue Earth County Sheriff, Tom Coulter says, "It's just to reinforce the importance being buckled up inside the vehicle and why it's the first and most important thing you can do once inside. You just never know when a crash like this is going to happen."

Swehla says, "A little extra incentive, didn't know anything about it until today that there was an award for it."

With seatbelt enforcement effort being a focus right now, one local Boy Scout Troop teamed up with law enforcement and the Toward Zero Deaths program.

Boy Scout Troop 130, Lucas Kruse says, "I was looking for an Eagle Scout project to do for my boy scout and I needed a really good project so I started asking around."

That's when the Buckle Up Stencil Campaign arose.

And now Boy Scouts are spray painting across Blue Earth County...

Working with local organizations to allow boys to paint the message in parking lots.

Kruse says, "I've really gotten more attached to this project over the past couple months I've been doing it and planning it out and it's just such good thing to do to put these around and it keeps everyone safe on the road."

From 2011-2015 38 percent of the 1,379 people killed while riding in motor vehicles were not

wearing seat belts.

Coulter says, "It's been slowly increasing but it's kind of gotten to that point where it's gotten stagnant so we really need to reach out and get the people that aren't putting on their seat belts."

Boy Scout Troops will be finishing up their spray painting this weekend.

If you'd like your organization to be a part of the Buckle Up Stencil campaign, there's still time. You can do so by emailing Lucas at: [lucas.kruze@actek.com](mailto:lucas.kruze@actek.com)

--KEYC News 12



**KSFY News**

<http://www.ksfy.com/content/news/South-Dakota-Minnesota-troopers-plan-joint-I-90-safety-operation-ahead-of-Memorial-Day-424359073.html>

## South Dakota, Minnesota troopers plan joint I-90 safety operation ahead of Memorial Day



Posted: Thu 11:20 AM, May 25, 2017



**PIERRE, S.D.** – South Dakota Highway Patrol troopers and Minnesota State Patrol troopers will join together to conduct a 23-hour traffic safety operation starting Friday morning.

The Minnesota State Patrol, South Dakota Highway Patrol and other law enforcement agencies are participating in the annual I-90 Safety Operation taking place from 5 a.m. (CDT) Friday, May 26, to 4 a.m. (CDT) Saturday, May 27.

South Dakota troopers will patrol Interstate 90 from Wyoming to Minnesota while the Minnesota State Patrol covers between South Dakota and Wisconsin. Officials from both states say the goal of the campaign is to help ensure that motorists stay safe.

"Holiday and vacation travel across the Upper Midwest gets in full-swing this weekend," Col. Matt Langer, Chief of the Minnesota State Patrol, said. "As we drive into the summer months, commit yourself to driving the speed limit, putting the distractions away, buckling up and always lining up a sober ride if you decide to drink."

Troopers will promote highway safety through enforcement, with an emphasis on speed, hazardous moving violations, seatbelt use and impaired driving. The operation includes use of patrol aircraft, personnel with police service dogs, drug recognition experts and motor carrier personnel.

Traffic is expected to be heavy because it is the Memorial Day weekend and the start of the summer travel season. Officials say this is a good time for such a joint operation.

"People are excited to take trips during the summer and sometimes they might forget to be safe drivers," says Col. Craig Price, superintendent of the South Dakota Highway Patrol. "The goal of this operation is for our officers to be visible and help all motorists arrive safely at their destination. We are glad to be partnering with Minnesota on this important effort."

While I-90 is the focus, troopers also will monitor other state and county roads, especially those that might be used to avoid the state-line ports of entry.

The South Dakota Highway Patrol is part of the South Dakota Department of Public Safety.

KEYC TV

## **Police Chief Saved By Seat Belt Four Times**

*Posted: May 31, 2017 4:49 PM*

By Angela Rogers, Reporter



Madelia, MN -

Extra seat belt patrol is in full force around the state, but for one officer the message really hits home.

Chief of Police Rob Prescher knows how important the 5-seconds it takes to put the belt on really are.

"Basically, I was just at a four-way stop sign, and you know, like anybody, waiting for traffic to cross, and a car came up behind me and hit me," Prescher said.

Chief of Police Rob Prescher was leaving a meeting when all of a sudden, the squad car jolted forward.

"Quite frankly, I don't think I'm different than anyone else. It can happen to anybody," Prescher said.

Chief Prescher says thanks to the belt, he still has all his teeth and no bruises on his face, and he gives all the credit to the seat belt.

"And in those particular cases when you're struck from behind you don't have time to brace, you don't have time for anything. All of a sudden you're being thrown forward and you don't know why," Prescher said.

This is the third time Chief Prescher has been rear ended, but the first while he was in a marked squad car. But every single time, he's had the belt on and can't stress enough the importance of having it on, every time you get into a car.

"It doesn't matter if you're driving 1,000 miles or 100 yards. This accident occurred within a few blocks of where I left. And the individual that struck me had traveled about 100 yards. So it doesn't matter how far you are, an accident can happen within a second of backing out of your driveway," Prescher said.

Chief Prescher says you always have to drive defensively because you never know when something might run out in front of you, or when another car might swerve.

And even if you don't want to, do it for those in the car with you.

"And if nothing else put that seat belt on not for yourself, put it on for your kids and your grand-kids. Those are the people that are looking up to you and realize that wearing the seat belt is important. And if you're not wearing that seat belt, they're going to see that, and have the same mindset," Prescher said.

--KEYC News 12.

## **Mankato Free Press**

### **Our View: Scout led important seat belt safety drive**

May 26, 2017

[http://www.mankatofreepress.com/opinion/editorials/our-view-scout-led-important-seat-belt-safety-drive/article\\_ed041368-3a69-58a8-a468-a39bfcaa53f5.html](http://www.mankatofreepress.com/opinion/editorials/our-view-scout-led-important-seat-belt-safety-drive/article_ed041368-3a69-58a8-a468-a39bfcaa53f5.html)

Thumbs up to Boy Scout Lucas Kruse for his Eagle Scout project focusing on public safety.

Kruse is helping law enforcement officials spread the message about the sensible and lawful choice of wearing seat belts. He's painting reminders to buckle up in parking lots across Blue Earth County.

The teen counted seat belt wearers coming to and leaving area schools and found that most people, 90 percent, follow the law and buckle up. The aim, however, is to make that number 100 percent.

Extra officers are on patrol this time of year looking for vehicle occupants, ready to ticket them for not wearing seat belts.

Every state trooper, deputy and police officer in the region can attest to the reasons for wearing a seat belt. Responding to injury crashes that could have been minor or fatal collisions that could have been survivable are convincing evidence. Blue Earth County Sheriff's deputy Tom Coulter noted that 25 unbelted motorists have died in Minnesota crashes so far this year. "That is too many lives lost," he said.

Let's hope that with Kruse's help, the message is clear that taking time to buckle up is well worth the effort.

# Buckle-Up!

The life you save could be your own



Photo courtesy of Sarah VanHale

SHAWITTE PHOTO

Those who helped paint the town with safety messages include, L-R, Sarah VanHale, Dustin VanHale, Travis Bottelsohn, Willie Cooling, Michael McLaughlin, Jon McLaughlin and Mark McLaughlin.

**SUBMITTED BY SARAH VANHALE**  
MEMBER OF MADELIA COUNTY  
TOWARD ZERO DEATHS GROUP

The vision of the Toward Zero Deaths group is to "reduce fatalities and serious injuries on Minnesota's roads to zero."

The mission is "to move Minnesota toward zero deaths on our roads using education, enforcement, engineering, emergency medical and trauma services."

The law requires all drivers and all passengers to be buckled up. Law enforcement can stop and ticket unbelted drivers and passengers. More than 300 law enforce-

ment agencies participate in "Click it or ticket it" campaigns across Minnesota, including Madelia.

Lack of seatbelt use is a contributing factor in about 40 percent of all Minnesota fatalities. Wearing your seatbelt will help keep you from: crashing into the windshield, slamming into and injuring other passengers and being ejected from the vehicle. Even if you think you are a good driver, seatbelts protect you from unsafe drivers and road hazards.

We recently painted 13 different "Buckle Up" stencils throughout Madelia to bring awareness to the community and serve as a remind-

er to wear seatbelts. You can find these painted reminders located at Roger's Amoco, Madelia Community Hospital, Madelia Elementary School, Madelia High School, Watana Park, Madelia Swimming Pool and the Luther Memorial Home. We would like to thank those businesses and the City of Madelia for allowing us to use these locations to help spread our message. We would like to extend a special thank you to Willie Cooling for helping to paint.

Please help us spread our message by wearing your seatbelt and encouraging all family members and friends to do the same!

## Jackson County Pilot

July 7, 2017

### Local seat belt use falls short

Seat belt use in Jackson County and across south-central Minnesota is less prevalent than across the state as a whole. Not surprisingly, say officials with the Minnesota State Patrol and the state's Toward Zero Deaths program, lack of seat belt use ranks among the leading causes of traffic-related deaths and severe injuries across the region. A recent regional seat belt usage survey of south-central Minnesota drivers including those in Jackson County revealed 86.9 percent of drivers were properly buckled. That's down from 87.6 percent a year ago.

Though the slide is not statistically significant, what is significant and alarming, said local MSP Capt. Casey Meagher is the 86.9 percent figure is well below the statewide statistic of 95 percent. Couple relatively low seat belt usage in this part of the state with the pesky persistence of speed and impairment, and an increase in the number of distracted drivers on the road, and it's a recipe for disaster, Meagher said. Those are our four big areas of focus at present impairment, distraction, seat belt use and speed, Meagher said. Meagher said the best way the patrol has found to address areas of focus over the last several years is focused enforcement.

By doing some of this focused enforcement, it has actually drastically reduced the number of serious and fatal crashes, he said. And that's the whole aim of the Toward Zero Deaths initiative, said Annette Larson, program coordinator for Jackson County and the whole of south-central Minnesota.

Using the four E's enforcement, engineering, education and emergency medical and trauma services from 2003 to 2016, we've seen a 40 percent reduction in deaths statewide, she said. But in recent years, Meagher said, those numbers have begun to flatten out. The number of fatalities has leveled off after years of steady decline, he said. That's why program officials are refocusing and re-engaging, Larson said. We want to add a fifth E everyone else to our efforts, she said, adding she would like to establish the vision of the Toward Zero Deaths effort as a priority for all regional, county and city government agencies. This includes engaging local government involvement in the Toward Zero Deaths steering committee and workshops, educating and promoting traffic safety awareness of city and county officials and promoting city and county employee education and policies that facilitate the Toward Zero Deaths vision. With all these partners in place, we should keep moving forward, Larson said.

Meagher and Larson were in Jackson County last month to speak with county commissioners about the new partnership goal. She would like to start a coalition in Jackson and Cottonwood counties, Larson said like the commissioners to sit at the table. Commissioners indicated a willingness to help however they could. In the meantime, Larson said, commissioners could begin to make a difference with friends, family and coworkers who are hesitant to buckle up. You can help just by speaking up, she said. Help change their values and beliefs and get them to adopt the behaviors we desire.

## **Mankato police officer recognized for drunk driving enforcement efforts**

Written by [Annette Weston](#) on July 19, 2017

The Minnesota Department of Public Safety Office of Traffic Safety (DPS-OTS) is recognizing 43 law enforcement officers, troopers, deputies and prosecutors during the Minnesota Twins pregame activities at Target Field Wednesday, for their efforts to get drunk drivers off the road.



Mankato Department of Public Safety Director Todd Miller said a local officer is among them. “Jake Green is an officer that is very interested in the TZD, or Toward Zero Deaths, program,” he explained, “Getting drunk drivers off the road, dealing with distracted drivers, seat belts. Those sorts of things that are a focus of Toward Zero Deaths on Minnesota Highways.”

Green has been named on of Greater Minnesota’s All Star DWI Enforcers.

# Le Sueur County TZD Coalition thanks sponsors at county meeting

Jay Schneider  
LIFE/Enterprise

**LE CENTER**—The Le Sueur County Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) Coalition recognized JOYRIDE as a sponsor of Le Sueur County this year.

The JOYRIDE program is a safety ride home program, which has been used three times this summer.

The community events included St. Patrick's Day in Le Center, the 5th of July Fireman's Dance in Elyman, and Kentucky Days in Montgomery.

"We are proud to say we have provided 319 free, safe rides home after these celebrations," Ann Traxler, coordinator of the TZD program in Le Sueur County, said during the Tuesday, August 15, Le Sueur County Commissioners meeting.

Minnesota law enforcement agencies and the TZD traffic safety stakeholders joined forces Tuesday morn-

ing to thank sponsors of the JOYRIDE program.

The commissioners also signed a resolution declaring Le Sueur County's support of the Toward Zero Deaths program and establishing traffic safety as a priority of the county.

Traxler led the program in Le Center for St. Patrick's Day and First National Bank of Le Center helped fund the ride home.

Tammy Mewig was in charge of the Elyman 4th of July Fireman's Dance program with the help of donors American Legion Post 311, Elyman Bank, Elyman Fire Department, Fracker's Center Bar, Barrens, Pt Stop, Thirty Beaver, and No Barrens.

Missy Everett was in charge of the Kentucky Days event in Montgomery. She was aided by donors New Hope of Insurance Agency, Montgomery Area Community Club, Wayside Lodge, Happy Hour Bar,

White Front Saloon, and the Montgomery Police Department.

"The Le Sueur County TZD Safe Rides coalition wouldn't have been able to provide this service without the generous donations from the communities," Traxler said. "Thank you for your help in getting people home safely and we look forward to future events."

Alcohol is a leading cause of fatalities on Minnesota roads and Le Sueur County falls in the top 25 dangerous drunk driving counties list.

"Crashes are violent and remind us of the importance of education and enforcement," Traxler added. "Combining these efforts along with empowering the public to speak up about seeing a safety ride will help us stop drunk driving related crashes before they take place."

The South Central Minnesota Toward Zero

Deaths program brings law enforcement, public health educators, engineers and emergency medical services together to reduce the number of traffic fatalities and serious injuries to zero in south central Minnesota.

The 12-county area encompasses Blue Earth, Brown, Crow Wing, Faribault, Jackson, Le Sueur, Martin, Nicollet, Nobles, Rock, Sibley, Wadena, and Waukegan counties.

"The coalition hopes to continue to grow this program for other community events in the future," Traxler said. "Currently our coalition is developing a partnership with Scott County to bring JOYRIDE to New Prague."

Each year in Minnesota, approximately 28,000 drivers are arrested for DWI and approximately 80 individuals were killed in drunk driving related crashes.



Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) Safe Rides Coalition recognized individuals Tuesday, Aug. 15 at the Le Sueur County Commissioners meeting in Le Center who have helped this summer with the Le Sueur County JOYRIDE Program, which provide rides for impaired people during these events. Left to right: State Patrol T.E. Kevin Killian, Le Sueur County Chief Deputy Nick Greening, Le Sueur County Sheriff Brett Mason, Le Sueur County TZD Coordinator Ann Traxler, Matt Walkskog representing Le Center 1st National Bank, Elton Sigua representing Happy Hour Bar, Stanley Stocker representing Le Center Ambulance, Hayley Haast representing Home of Insurance Agency, Tammy Mewig representing Le Sueur County Emergency Management, Missy Everett representing Montgomery Police Department, Jon Newton of the State Patrol, and Tyler Lundquist of the State Patrol.

# JOYRIDE

GOOD TIMES DELIVERED

LET JOYRIDE  
GET YOU HOME  
TONIGHT.

**FREE**

*JOYRIDE* is a sober ride home shuttle service.

**AVAILABLE Friday, July 28 & Saturday, July 29**

**Pick up at the Montgomery Library, 104 Oak Ave SE**

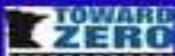
If shuttle service is not at Library call 507-420-3121 or 507-388-5477

***Free BUS ride home 9 p.m. - 2 a.m.***

***City of Montgomery and 10 mile radius***

**Thank you to our sponsors for supporting this program!**

House of Insurance Agency, Montgomery Area Community Club,  
Wayside Liquor, Happy Hour Bar, White Front Saloon &  
Montgomery Police Dept.



Le Sueur County Emergency Management

July 17 at 2:20pm · 🌐

Planning on going to Montgomery for Kolacky Day's on Friday, July 28th and/or Saturday, July 29th?

Remember you booze, you cruise, you lose! Arrive alive, plan ahead for your safe ride home.

JOYRIDE!! It's a sober ride home program running both Friday and Saturday evenings of Kolacky Day's. Tickets are a great deal... FREE... a DWI costs \$20,000! The project is a partnership with Le Sueur County TZD Safe Roads Coalition.

Rides will cover the city Montgomery and a 10 mile radius.

 **Le Sueur County Emergency Management** updated their cover photo. August 29 at 2:44pm · 🌐

Le Sueur County JoyRide sponsor recognition...  
300+ safe rides home!



Like Comment Share

You and 59 others Top Comments ▾

## Extra DWI Patrol Through Labor Day Weekend

Posted: Aug 21, 2017 6:52 PM

<http://www.keyc.com/story/36183788/extra-dwi-patrol-through-labor-day-weekend>



SAINT PETER, Minn. -

Increased traffic enforcement begins today as we head towards Labor Day weekend.

"Speak up, buckle up and help us drive Minnesota to zero deaths," Blue Earth County commissioner Drew Campbell says.

The Toward Zero Deaths coalition gathered today with law enforcement, public safety officials and the Minnesota Department of Transportation to announce the beginning of enhanced enforcement Aug. 21 through Sept. 3.

"It's a dangerous period of time on the road and we just want to make sure people aren't doing anything wrong. That they see us out there and that they know we're protecting them and trying to keep them and their families safe," Deputy Chris Welle says.

According to South Central Law Enforcement 4.6 drivers are arrested every hour during Labor Day weekend—more than any other major holiday.

State Patrol Captain Jeremy Geiger reminds us that these numbers are more than a statistic.

"These are real people who have loved ones hoping they will walk through the door at any moment," Geiger says.

The number of DWI arrests in Minnesota have decreased since 2015. Those teaming up with TZD are hoping to see that trend continue.

If you do have plans for the upcoming holiday, law enforcement say it's never too early to plan ahead.

## Regional law enforcement steps up drunken driving enforcement

By [NANCY MADSEN nmadsen@stpeterherald.com](mailto:nmadsen@stpeterherald.com)

Aug 21, 2017

[http://www.southernminn.com/st\\_peter\\_herald/news/local/article\\_8a55ddef-5c8a-51a3-aa8f-0d139110d6b5.html](http://www.southernminn.com/st_peter_herald/news/local/article_8a55ddef-5c8a-51a3-aa8f-0d139110d6b5.html)



Nicollet County Attorney Michelle Zehnder Fischer calls on passengers to hold their drivers accountable and not let them drive after drinking during a news conference outside River's Edge Hospital and Clinic on Monday. (Nancy Madsen/St. Peter Herald)



Minnesota State Patrol Cpt. Jeremy Geiger says Labor Day weekend has the highest rate of DWI arrests during a news conference outside River's Edge Hospital and Clinic. (Nancy Madsen/St. Peter Herald)

Labor Day is No. 1, but not for a good reason.

The Labor Day holiday weekend has the highest rate of drunken driving arrests, 4.6 per hour, State Patrol Cpt. Jeremy Geiger said on Monday. Minnesota State Patrol and local law enforcement agencies are running increased drunken driving enforcement, which began Friday and goes through Sept. 3.

“Alcohol is the leading contributing factor in crashes,” Geiger said. The 73 people who died in drunken driving-related crashes last year aren’t just statistics. “These are real people who have loved ones hoping they will walk through the door.”

Locally, Nicollet, Le Sueur and Blue Earth counties sheriffs’ offices, along with city police in St. Peter, Le Sueur and Janesville and other cities, are adding nighttime and weekend patrols through the Toward Zero Deaths enforcement grant program. The funds for the overtime hours come through a National Highway Traffic Safety Administration program. Across the state, more than 300 law enforcement agencies participate.

“These are the periods when people have a high propensity to drive drunk,” Geiger said. “We target impaired drivers.”

The 73 deaths in 2016 was a decrease from 2015, when there were 95 drunken driving-related fatalities. But Mark Griffith, South Central EMS director, said there’s still work to be done.

“Everyone plays a role in public safety,” he said. “If you’re drinking, make sure you have a plan for a sober ride home.”

The local Safe Roads Coalition will leave thank-you notes on cars left overnight near bars and restaurants during the extra enforcement period to reinforce the decision to not drive while drunk. The coalition has sponsored more than 450 sober rides home in Nicollet, Blue Earth and Le Sueur counties, said Drew Campbell, Blue Earth County commissioner and coalition member.

“These people have gotten home safely and countless other lives were saved because they didn’t drive home,” he said.

Nicollet County Attorney Michelle Zehnder Fischer called on passengers to hold drivers accountable.

“If your driver has been drinking, do not get into the car with that driver,” she said. “Please don’t drink and drive.”

Thank you notes give out over the Labor Day DWI wave:



**{THANK YOU FOR BEING A SAFE DRIVER}  
\$5.00 Gift Card at Pub 500**

Please present this card when ordering.

No cash value.

Valid on orders \$5 or greater.

Not valid with any other coupons or offers.

Limit one per customer, per visit.

Offer expires 10/15/17



500 South Front Street, Mankato, MN 56001  
507-625-6500 [www.pub500.com](http://www.pub500.com)

## Minnesota News Network

<https://minnesotanewsnetwork.com/mankato-officials-leaving-thank-notes-drivers-make-right-choice/>

### Mankato officials leaving “thank you” notes for drivers who make right choice

AUGUST 26, 2017 BY **BILL WERNER**

Law enforcement and employees of local establishments in Mankato are putting “thank you” notes on vehicles left at bars and restaurants in the early morning when they believe drivers who had too much to drink chose another way to get home. State Patrol Lieutenant Troy Christianson says, “Anything that just can help somebody make a better decision in the evening or late hours if they’ve had too much to drink; anything we can do to try and keep Minnesota roadways safe.” He says the “thank you note” program is a “different way of reinforcing the positive benefits of making people aware of the dangers of drinking and driving.”

Christianson reminds motorists across Minnesota there’s stepped-up D-W-I enforcement now through the Labor Day weekend.

# Mankato Times

## MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICE – *DRIVE SOBER OR GET PULLED OVER*

Extra DWI Patrols Aug. 18 – Sept. 3

[Joe Steck](#)

Aug 21, 2017

<http://mankatotimes.com/2017/08/21/make-the-right-choice-drive-sober-or-get-pulled-over/>

ST PETER, Minn. – Whether it’s having fun on the boat or playing beach volleyball, it’s easy for a person to lose track of how much alcohol they’re drinking while out celebrating the final days of summer. It’s easy to forget that driving home with a buzz is drunk driving.

As summer winds down, officers, deputies and troopers from more than 300 agencies statewide will be working overtime with funding provided by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The Minnesota Department of Public Safety Office of Traffic Safety (DPS-OTS) coordinates the extra enforcement and education effort, which runs Aug. 18–Sept. 3.

As law enforcement kicks off the extra enforcement period, Mark Griffith, South Central EMS director, is speaking out as a reminder to make good choices when celebrating the upcoming Labor Day holiday.

“Everyone plays a role in public safety, especially on our roads. When you get behind the wheel, make sure you are not putting yourself or anyone else at risk — and if you have been drinking, make sure you have a plan for a sober ride home,” said Griffith. “Don’t be afraid to speak up. Take the keys away from a friend or loved one, and find them a sober ride home. It could save a life, even yours.”

According to Blue Earth County Commissioner Drew Campbell, “The focus of the local safe roads coalitions in Blue Earth, Nicollet and Le Sueur counties has been on getting impaired drivers off our roads.”

The local coalition members have partnered with local bars and law enforcement to place thank you notes on vehicles left in the parking lots of these establishments. “These individuals made the right choice to call a cab, friend or family member, to pick them up,” said Campbell.

### **Drivers Heeding the Warnings:**

Preliminary numbers show there were 73 drunk driving-related fatalities last year compared with 95 in 2015, a 22 percent decrease.

“We have confidence that people will make the right choice during the upcoming Labor Day holiday and beyond by planning ahead for a sober ride,” said Cpt. Jeremy Geiger, Minnesota State Patrol. “But if you choose to drive impaired, Troopers will be out on the roads, focusing on getting drunk drivers off the road before they hurt or kill themselves or others that are sharing the road. To help make the summer travel season safe and enjoyable for everyone, motorists need to drive sober, pay attention, slow down and buckle up.”

### **DWI Consequences:**

- Loss of license for up to a year, thousands of dollars in costs and possible jail time.
- Repeat DWI offenders, as well as first-time offenders arrested at 0.16 and above alcohol-concentration level, must use ignition interlock in order to regain legal driving privileges or face at least one year without a driver’s license.
- Offenders with three or more offenses are required to use interlock for three to six years, or they will never regain driving privileges.

### **Commit to a Sober Ride:**

- Plan for a safe ride — designate a sober driver, use a cab/public transportation, or stay at the location of the celebration.
- Speak up – Offer to be a designated driver or be available to pick up a loved one anytime, anywhere. If you see an impaired person about to get behind the wheel, get them a safe ride home.
- Buckle up — the best defense against a drunk driver.
- Report drunk driving — call 911 when witnessing impaired driving behavior. Be prepared to provide location, license plate number and observed dangerous behavior.

The enhanced DWI enforcement campaign is a component of the state’s [Toward Zero Deaths \(TZD\)](#) program. A primary vision of the TZD program is to create a safe driving culture in Minnesota in which motorists support a goal of zero road fatalities by practicing and promoting safe and smart driving behavior. TZD focuses on the application of four strategic areas to reduce crashes – education, enforcement, engineering, and emergency medical and trauma response.

# St James Plaindealer

## Get ready for the Roundabout Rodeo

By Alex Malm

Thursday

Posted Aug 24, 2017 at 10:28 AM

[http://www.stjamesnews.com/news/20170824/get-ready-for-roundabout-rodeo?utm\\_source=SFMC&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=GHM\\_Thursday\\_Newsletter&utm\\_content=NOMX\\_SJN](http://www.stjamesnews.com/news/20170824/get-ready-for-roundabout-rodeo?utm_source=SFMC&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=GHM_Thursday_Newsletter&utm_content=NOMX_SJN)

St. James will be bringing in visitors from all over on Thursday, August 31st for the opening of the new mini roundabouts in St. James.

During the event, different organizations and businesses will be participating, especially those businesses affected most by the road construction. Some stores will be offering in store specials, while others will simply be open extended hours to thank customers for being patient during the road construction. Many businesses downtown have been affected by the road construction for a number of reasons. The Roundabout Rodeo is an event that the St. James Chamber of Commerce hopes will help businesses downtown attract customers again. During the event someone will also be the winner of \$250 in Chamber Bucks. During the event businesses will also be giving out door prizes.

Some of the educational events that will take place during the event include a seatbelt demonstration by Watonwan TZD, and a pedestrian safety station which will teach people how to cross the street properly with the new traffic signals. People will also be allowed to learn how to use the mini roundabouts by driving on a golf cart with a MNDOT employee. During this time the employees will explain the different rules about driving in a mini roundabout and answer any questions anyone may have. People will also have the opportunity to try back-in parking with the golf cart and a MNDOT employee.

*For the full story see the 8-24 print edition of the Plaindealer.*

### KEYC TV

#### St. James Invited Residents To Experience Newly Installed Roundabouts

<http://www.keyc.com/story/36266639/st-james-invited-residents-to-experience-newly-installed-roundabouts>

Posted: Aug 31, 2017 6:32 PM CDT

By Tyler Seggerman, Reporter



SAINT JAMES, Minn. -

In St. James, residents got an up close look at what will soon be the newest addition in town.

MnDot and the city put together a Roundabout Rodeo, to better prepare residents for the newest roads.

The two mini roundabouts are located on First Avenue on the corners of Armstrong Boulevard and Seventh Street in downtown St. James.

During the event, citizens got to test their knowledge through trivia, while others were learning about them for the first time.

MnDot Project Manager Zachary Tess said "The primary goal is to educate the public and give them an opportunity to have a hands-on experience. We've got some golf carts here, we're driving people through the intersections. Talking through best practices for how to drive through them and be aware. So that, we know they're new and we want people to get used to them before they run into them right away."

Weather permitting, drivers will test out the new roundabouts for real within the next two weeks.

- KEYC 12

## Mankato Free Press - About Roundabouts



Top: Employees with the Minnesota Department of Transportation give rides to residents of St. James through one of two new roundabouts in the downtown district on Thursday. Zachary Tess, project manager with MnDOT, said the new roads and roundabouts were funded by the state, the Federal Highway Administration and the city. Above left: Pete Christensen and Grace Strenge stroll through the new roundabout at 1st Avenue and Armstrong Boulevard in St. James on Thursday. For some St. James residents, this will be the first roundabout they have encountered. Employees from the Minnesota Department of Transportation were on hand to educate the public about the new roundabouts. Above right: Kelley Runge (right), 10, plays with Natalia Hernandez, 2, in a bounce house that was set up for the Roundabout Rodeo in St. James on Thursday. The street was closed off for the public to see the new roundabouts in the downtown district. Zachary Tess, project manager

with the Minnesota Department of Transportation said that local traffic will be able to use the new roundabouts in two to three weeks, weather permitting.

Photos by Jackson Forderer

# St James Plaindealer

By Alex Malm

Posted Sep 3, 2017 at 2:36 PM

The Watonwan County Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths held their monthly meeting on Monday, August 28th at the Madelia Fire Hall.

With the upcoming Roundabout Rodeo in St. James, one of the first things that was discussed was what TZD would do for the event. Some of the different things that TZD will be doing during the Roundabout Rodeo is teaching people how to cross the road with the new roundabouts, giving out pamphlets about distracted driving, and letting people use a distracted driving probability wheel. The wheel will show you the different probability percentages of you getting into a car accident based on the number of distractions in your car at the time. TZD members faces were in disbelief as they saw the large percentages of probability for crashes based on distractions. The TZD hopes that this will be a tool during the Roundabout Rodeo that will help get their message out there.

One of the main things that was discussed during the meeting was the painting of seat belt murals in parking lots in St. James. These murals are slated to be painted in the parking lots of Tony Downs Foods, All Washed Up Car Wash, St. James Liquor Store, Pioneer Bank, and CCF Bank.

*Be sure to check out the 8-31 print edition of the Plaindealer for the full story.*

## KEYC TV

### Importance of Car Seat Safety

Posted: Sep 19, 2017 7:51 PM

By Erika Brooks, Reporter

<http://www.keyc.com/story/36406708/importance-of-car-seat-safety>



LE CENTER, Minn. -

A vehicle is the most dangerous place a child can be - traffic crashes are the leading killer of youth. Making car seat safety that much more important.

Children rely on adults to properly secure them in the right car seat. But authorities say three out of every four child restraints are used incorrectly. From 2011-2015, 18 children, ages infant to seven years old, were killed in motor vehicle accidents, 44 percent of which were known to be properly secured.

"We want to make sure that when we tightened up the harness on the child's body that literally it's contacting all five points on the child's body, that being both hips both shoulders and the crotch," Child Passenger Safety Consultant Tracy Brown said.

You shouldn't be able to pinch any of the webbing at the top of the child's shoulders.

"The retainer clip is often too low. The purpose of the retainer clip the plastic piece is to keep the harness on the child shoulders is to hold the harness on the child's shoulders so it's imperative that we make sure it's always positioned at armpit level," added Brown.

State law requires children to be in a child restraint or booster seat until age 8 or they reach a height of 4 feet 9 inches tall. It's recommended to keep a child in a booster based on their height rather than age. Not only is it safe, it avoids hefty fines.

"You can easily buy a very nice car seat for about what half the price a citation is going to cost. If you look up the law it states the fine is \$50 but that's just the fine portion of the citation, there's fees and surcharges added to that citation,"

This Saturday is Car Seat Check Day, car seat checkups will be sponsored throughout the community. Visit this website to learn more, <https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/ots/child-passenger-safety/Pages/car-seat-checks.aspx>

--KEYC News 12



Jay Schneider Photo

Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) Safe Roads Coalition recognized individuals Tuesday, Aug. 15 at the Le Sueur County Commissioners meeting in Le Center who have helped this summer with the Le Sueur County JOYRIDE Program, which provide rides for impaired people during three events. Left to right: State Patrol LT. Kevin Killian, Le Sueur County Chief Deputy Nick Greenig, Le Sueur County Sheriff Brett Mason, Le Sueur County TZD Coordinator Ann Traxler, Matt Wallskog representing Le Center 1st National Bank, Eileen Segna representing Happy Hour Bar, Stanley Stocker representing Le Center Ambulance, Hayley Hunt representing House of Insurance Agency, Tammy Stewig representing Le Sueur County Emergency Management, Missy Eisert representing Montgomery Police Department, Jon Newton of the State Patrol, and Tyler Lusigan of the State Patrol.

## Toward Zero Deaths Coalition honors people for helping with JOYRIDE

Jay Schneider  
LIFE/Enterprise

The Le Sueur County Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) Coalition introduced JOYRIDE to citizens of Le Sueur County this year.

The JOYRIDE program is a sober ride home program, which has been used three times this summer.

The community events included St. Patrick's Day in Le Center, the 4th of July Fireman's Dance in Elysian, and Kolacky Days in Montgomery.

"We are proud to say we have provided 319 free, safe rides home after these celebrations," Ann Traxler, coordinator of the TZD program in Le Sueur County, said during the Tuesday, August 15 Le Sueur County Commissioners meeting.

Minnesota law enforcement agencies and the TZD traffic safety stakeholders joined forces Tuesday morn-

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The commissioners also signed a resolution declaring Le Sueur County's support of the Toward Zero Deaths program and establishing traffic safety as a priority of the county.

Traxler led the program in Le Center for St. Patrick's Day and First National Bank of Le Center helped fund the rides home.

Tammy Stewig was in charge of the Elysian 4th of July Fireman's Dance program with the help of donors American Legion Post 311, Elysian Bank, Elysian Fire Department, Fischer's Corner Bar, Horizons, Pit Stop, Thirsty Beaver, and Nu Horizons.

Missy Eisert was in charge of the Kolacky Days event in Montgomery. She was aided by donations from House of Insurance Agency, Montgomery Area Community Club, Wayside Liquor,

Front Saloon, and the Montgomery Police Department.

"The Le Sueur County TZD Safe Roads coalition wouldn't have been able to provide this service without the generous donations from the communities," Traxler said. "Thank you for your help in getting people home safely and we look forward to future events."

Alcohol is a leading contributing factor in crashes on Minnesota roads and Le Sueur County falls in the top 25 dangerous drunk driving counties list.

"Crashes are violent and remind us of the importance of education and enforcement," Traxler added. "Combining these efforts along with empowering the public to speak up about lining up a sober ride will help us stop drunk driving-related crashes before they take place."

The South Central Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths

coalition, public health educators, engineers and emergency medical trauma services together to reduce the number of traffic fatalities and severe injuries to zero in south central Minnesota.

The 13-county area encompasses Blue Earth, Brown, Cottonwood, Faribault, Jackson, Le Sueur, Martin, Nicollet, Nobles, Rock, Sibley, Waseca, and Watonwan counties.

"The coalition hopes to continue to grow this program for other community events in the future," Traxler said. "Currently our coalition is developing a partnership with Scott County to bring JOYRIDE to New Prague."

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By Jeff Miller/Photo

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The South Central Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths program brings law enforce-

ment, public health educators, engineers and emergency medical trauma services together to reduce the number of traffic fatalities and severe injuries to zero in south central Minnesota.

The 15 county area encompasses Blue Earth, Brown, Cottonwood, Faribault, Jackson, Le Sueur, Martin, Nicollet, Nobles, Rock, Sibley, Wabasha, and Watonwan counties.

"The coalition hopes to continue to grow this program for other community events in the future," Traxler said. "Currently our coalition is developing a partnership with Scott County to bring JOYRIDE to New Prague."

Each year in Minnesota, approximately 28,000 drivers are arrested for DWI and approximately 45 individuals were killed in drunk driving-related crashes.

## South Central 2017 Action Planning

County	Time Frame	Strategic Goal	Behavior	Tasks	Time Frame	Responsible Parties	Resources	Results	
Faribault	3-6 months	Reduce lane departures		6" shoulder stripes	2/3 CR's. End summer 2017	County PW			
	9-12 months				100% CR's				
	3 months		Seat belts	Buckle up stencil Bang your head here stickers	BEAHS SCHS	County donated paint. HS to paint exits. AAA grant to buy stickers			
County	Time Frame	Strategic Goal	Behavior	Tasks	Time Frame	Responsible Parties	Resources	Results	
Watonwan	3 months	Share the road event at county high schools. Roundabout education	Trucks	Share the Road	June 1, 2017	Scott & Sam	Trucks/Cars	Feedback	
			Intersections	Roundabout education	July 2017	Jason, Sam	Roundabout display, Video		
	6-9 months	"Buckle Up" paintings	Seatbelts		Sept. 2017	TZD Coalition	Stencils and paint		
County	Time Frame	Strategic Goal	Behavior	Tasks	Time Frame	Responsible Parties	Resources	Results	
Martin	3 months	Safe Roads Coalition		Need to identify problem areas, community engagement, departments of stakeholders		Members of coalition	Statistics, other agencies, other stakeholders, community members.	Goals acknowledged	
	6-9 months			Add 3 members to committee		Core members	Data and networking	7-8 total members	
	9-12 months			Identify at least one activity to address for improvement					
County	Time Frame	Strategic Goal	Behavior	Tasks	Time Frame	Responsible Parties	Resources	Results	
Brown	3 months	Reach out and establish TZD Coalition. Coordinate with Annette. Find stakeholders. Schedule meeting; agenda, set goals, plan events, stats review, attend another coalition meeting with SCD				Scouts, faith, commerce clubs, Park/Rec, City/CO Council, media, ??, LE, ??, Fire, Heart of NU, Schells, OTS			
	6-9 months								Coordinate with Annette. Refine previous goals; hold initial event – <u>baseline?</u> events; attend one SCD coalition meeting
	9-12 months								Establish social media presence; coordinate with Annette; attend SCD meeting
County	Time Frame	Strategic Goal	Behavior	Tasks	Time Frame	Responsible Parties	Resources	Results	
Blue Earth County	3 months	To raise awareness of TZD goals through the four "E"s	Distracted Impaired Seatbelts Community education	New conference	Ongoing				
			Improve road surfaces. Painted lines	Talk with county engineer ?? Engineer	3-6 months 3 months	Drew Campbell TZD Steering Committee too	Follow up report		
			Energy saving lighting/Intersection lighting (i.e. 83/90)	Talk with engineers					
			Increase committee members	Invite	3 months	BE/NIC – Safe Roads			
			?? at 6 inches instead of 4 inches (good one)						
	6-9 months		Road safety traffic issues	Build new road from 17 – 83	6 months	BE County & City	Funding – ½ cents sales tax	Safer traffic volumes	
	9-12 months		All	School traffic safety. TZD educating	9 months	BE/NIC. County Safe Roads	Volunteers, MnDOT, ?, Peddle Cars, etc.		
			Continue doing what seems to work	Don't quit doing some identified every year efforts					
		More mock crashes							

## Mission

To create a culture in which traffic fatalities and serious injuries are no longer acceptable through the integrated application of education, engineering, enforcement and emergency medical and trauma services. These efforts will be driven by data, best practices and research.

## Values

- ❖ Continuous improvements
- ❖ Engage partners
- ❖ Evidence-based approaches



The South Central Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) program began in 2011. The counties involved include: Blue Earth, Brown, Cottonwood, Faribault, Jackson, Le Sueur, Martin, Nicollet, Nobles, Rock, Sibley, Waseca and Watonwan.

The South Central Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths program is led by a Steering Committee comprised of the "4 Es:"

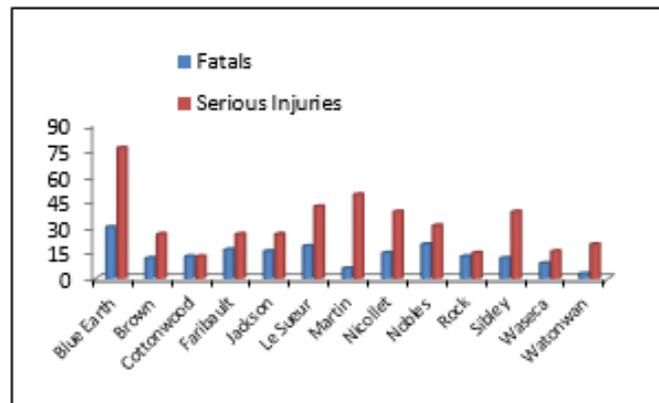
- ❖ Enforcement
- ❖ Engineering
- ❖ Education
- ❖ EMS / Emergency Medical & Trauma Services

## South Central Traffic Information

The leading cause of deaths and severe injuries in south central Minnesota include:

- ❖ **Lack of Seatbelt Use**  
*2017 South Central Minnesota regional seat belt usage survey results: **86.91** percent—the 2016 seat belts rate was 87.6, this slight drop is not statistically significant.*
- ❖ **Impaired Driving**
- ❖ **Speed and Aggressive Driving**
- ❖ **Inattentive Driving**

**South Central Minnesota Fatalities and Serious Injuries  
by County (2012-2016\*)**



The leading type of crash resulting in deaths and severe injuries include:

- ❖ **Run-off-Road**
- ❖ **Intersection-Related**

## South Central Minnesota TZD Leadership Contacts

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\*2016 data are preliminary.



## South Central Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths Regional Strategic Plan

### Mission

To move south central Minnesota toward zero deaths on our roads, using education, enforcement, engineering and emergency medical and trauma services.

### Goal 1 – Reduce TZD Fatality and Serious Injuries

To continuously decrease traffic related fatalities and serious injuries in south central Minnesota from the past 5-year average (2012-2016\*) of 37 fatalities and 84 serious injuries. Note: New injury definitions were introduced in 2016 and may have contributed to a higher reported number of serious injuries.

### Objectives

- A. To continuously increase regional seat belt use rates.

The statewide average was 93 percent in 2016.

The regional seat belt rate was 86.9 percent in April 2017. The 2016 rate was 87.6 percent, this slight drop is not statistically significant.

- B. To examine the characteristics of the unbelted fatalities and serious injuries.

Calculation of seat belt use in fatal and serious crashes is possible with existing data.

- C. To continuously decrease the following:

5-year average (2012-2016\*) in South Central Region

*Contributing Factors:*

Average Annual number of:		Alcohol	Speed	Distraction**	Total
	Fatalities	9	9	9	37
	Fatal Crashes	8	8	9	32
	Severe Injuries	18	21	16	84
	Severe Injury Crashes	14	15	10	64

*Note: a crash may have more than one of the above listed or additional contributing factor*

### Total South Central Region (2016\*)

	Fatalities	Fatal Crashes	Severe Injuries	Severe Injury Crashes
2016* Total	25	22	107	88
2012-2016* Total	185	162	418	320

\*2016 data are preliminary.

\*\*Distraction data for 2016 are not available. The average for 2011-2015 has been provided.



## South Central Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths Regional Strategic Plan

### **Region Goal 2- TZD Partnership Goals**

To continuously increase TZD awareness and partnerships across south central Minnesota for both the general public and traffic safety professionals

1. Establish the vision of TZD as a priority for all region, county, city (government agencies)
  - A. Engage local government involvement in TZD steering committee and workshops
  - B. Educate/promote traffic safety awareness of city/county officials
  - C. Promote city/county employee education/policies that facilitate the TZD vision

(Activities: Recruitment of city and county to attend TZD event, giving TZD presentations to boards/councils, mailings/connections to Network of Employers for Traffic Safety (NETS))

2. Create and strengthen partnerships in the region
  - A. Engage stakeholders
  - B. Develop networking relationships
  - C. Recruit membership of the TZD partnership

(Activities: EMS Conference booth/presentation, regional workshop, web, calendar, statistics, workshop, orientation)

3. Promote and implement effective traffic safety initiatives in the region
  - A. Develop and distribute resource materials
  - B. Provide enforcement wave support in community
  - C. Promote evidence based countermeasures
  - D. Collect data and statistics within region
  - E. Implement best practices within region

(Activities: web, brochure, one-pagers, presentations, news advisories, workshop, seatbelt observational survey and omnibus survey, media messaging and media events, news releases re: activities woven into existing messages, worksite education and policy development, parent component to drivers education, sober cab development, youth enforcement and education activities)

