

Southwest Toward Zero Deaths Regional Annual Report 2016-2017



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Executive Summary

BACKGROUND

The Southwest Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) program began in 2007. In 2016, there were 392 deaths on Minnesota roadways and 24 of those deaths occurred on southwest Minnesota roadways – an unacceptable number of lives lost. The Southwest Minnesota TZD Region includes partners from a 14 county area: Big Stone, Chippewa, Kandiyohi, Lac qui Parle, Lincoln, Lyon, McLeod, Meeker, Murray, Pipestone, Redwood, Renville, Swift and Yellow Medicine. The counties work together to create programs to reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries.

MISSION

To move southwest 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 to identify goals and objectives to accomplish the mission of zero deaths on southwest roadways. Baseline data was gathered in 2011 and compared to the most recent data to show progress in goal attainment. The strategic plan has been updated to reflect the most recent data.

LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Southwest Minnesota TZD co-chairs are Jon Huseby, District Engineer for MnDOT District 8, and Captain Casey Meagher, District Commander Minnesota State Patrol District 2300. The 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 Southwest Minnesota Regional TZD Steering Committee meet five times in 2016-2017 and consists of a core group of 28 members who represent all areas of TZD (education, enforcement, engineering and emergency medical and trauma services and members from local county coalitions.

SEAT BELT SURVEY

The TZD Regional Coordinator partnered with 14 county engineers, Public Health and Minnesota State Patrol to conduct observational seat belt checks at 2-3 intersection locations in the counties during the week of April 3-9, 2017. Every county was unable to complete the survey. The southwest Minnesota regional seat belt usage in 2017 was 83.6 percent. The 2017 rate is slightly up from the 2016 rate of 82.8 percent.

PARTNERSHIPS

The Southwest Minnesota TZD region continues to grow. Networking and relationship building is essential to the success of the region. The TZD Regional Coordinator's work is dedicated to educating key groups within the counties and the region to initiate and strengthen partnerships.

Redwood County Safe Roads coalitions have formed and are currently working to develop an action plan to address traffic safety to help make Minnesota roads safer.

NEW PARTNERS

New partners were contacted through various means. New partners to the TZD safe roads coalitions include:

In Redwood County the Sheriff's office, Redwood County attorney, Redwood Area Hospital Trauma manager, EMS, Redwood City Engineer, Redwood Falls Police Department and Lower Sioux Police Department.

In Murray County the Sheriff's office, Slayton Police Department, Fulda Police Department, Murray County Community School High School Principal, Southwest Regional Development Commission, Murray County Ambulance manager and Slayton Mayor.

Southwest Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths Strategic Plan (April 2017)

Mission

To move southwest 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 southwest Minnesota from the past **5-year average** (2012-2016) of 35 fatalities and 76 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 seatbelt use rates.

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

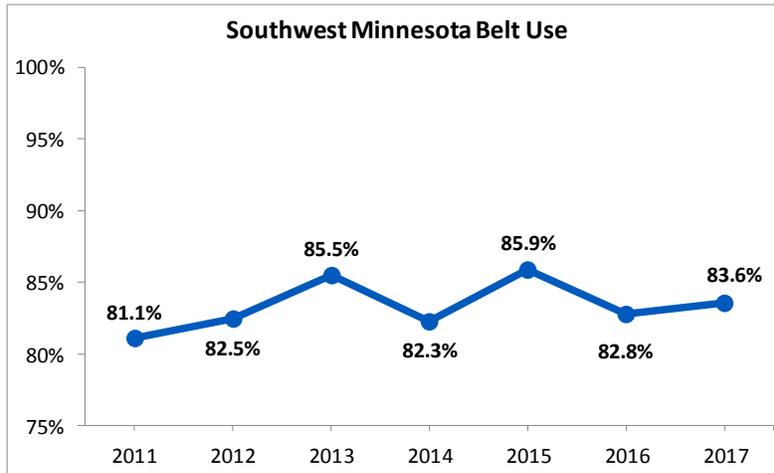
The preliminary regional seat belt rate **is 83.6 percent in April 2017.** This rate is slightly up from the 2016 rate of 82.8 percent.

Regional Activities – Southwest Minnesota TZD Region Belt Use Observation Survey (April, 2017)

The TZD regional coordinator partnered with 14 county engineers, Public Health and Minnesota State Patrol to conduct observational seat belt checks at 2-3 intersection locations in most of the counties during the week of April 3-9, 2017. The southwest Minnesota regional seat belt usage in 2017 is 83.6 percent. This rate is slightly up from the 2016 rate of 82.8 percent.

Southwest Minnesota Belt Use Observation Survey Conducted Annually

Year	Rate	Error Margin	Week of	Notes
2011	81.1%			
2012	82.5%	2.0%		
2013	85.5%	3.6%	September 16-22	
2014	82.3%	2.7%	September 15-21	
2015	85.9%	3.2%	April 6-12	
2016	82.8%		April 4-10	Missing Renville County
2017	83.6 %	.40	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 Southwest Region

Contributing Factors:

	Alcohol	Speed	Distraction**	Total
<i>Average Annual number of:</i> Fatalities	9	5	5	35
Fatal Crashes	8	5	5	31
Severe Injuries	17	16	15	76
Severe Injury Crashes	14	13	12	57

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

**2016 data are preliminary.*

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

Total Southwest Region (2016*)

	Fatalities	Fatal Crashes	Severe Injuries	Severe Injury Crashes
2016* Total	24	22	90	67
2012-2016* Total	176	157	381	286

**2016 data are preliminary.*

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

In conclusion, southwest region had 11 fewer fatalities in 2016, which is lower than the five year average. The region had 14 more severe injuries as compared to the five year average, which is a significant change. **But as noted above** 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 southwest 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))

- County Commissioners and State Legislatures were invited and attended the annual regional workshop.
- Local government presentation done in Lyon, Renville and Murray Counties.
- Attended and participated in the SMRTAC and SWRTAC meetings to network with area EMS and other trauma professionals.
- Provided education for Renville County Commissioners and employees.
- Presentation done at Western Community Action volunteer night. 90 people present to learn about TZD, traffic safety and help share the message across the southwest corner of my regions.

Regional Activity – 2015 Southwest Minnesota TZD workshop (April 21, 2017)

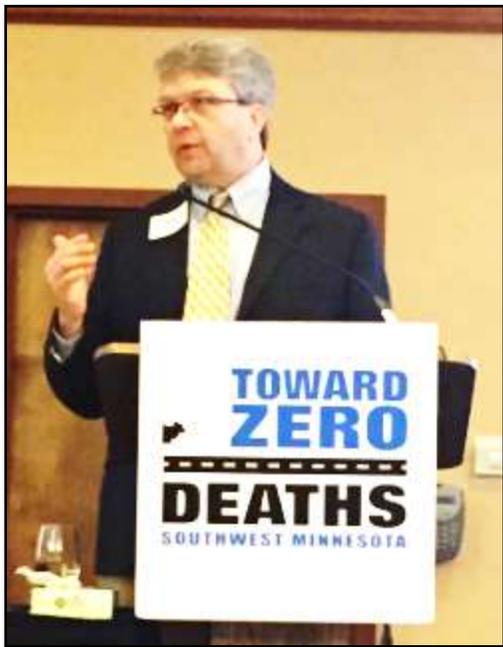
The Southwest Region Toward Zero Deaths Workshop was held April 21 in Redwood Falls with about 100 traffic advocates in attendance. The workshop highlighted the facts of traffic deaths and serious injuries occurring on area roadways. The data presented throughout the day gave attendees a

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.

Kathy Abram, lead trainer, Metro CISM presented on Critical incident stress debrief and the emotional and sometimes physical response that most people experience in a traumatic event, such as a fatality or severe injury. She talked about how to deal with incidents now and long term.

Gina Calistro was the personal impact speaker at this year's workshop. She shared the tragic story of Michael Calistro, her father as a result of complications after the crash by a drunk driver. Gina courageously shared her story of how driver decisions have impacted not only her own life, but also the entire community. Toward Zero Deaths is the goal and every life is worth saving.

The southwest Minnesota TZD program aims to reduce traffic deaths and sever injuries. As part of these efforts, an annual workshop is held. Workshop attendance is listed below.



Pictured above is the SW TZD Co-chair Jon Huseby.

Workshop Attendance:

- 2011: 121 participants
- 2012: 140 participants (joint workshop with SC Region)
- 2013: 94 participants
- 2014: 95 participants
- 2015: 89 participants
- 2016: 100 participants
- 2017: 89 participants

The presentation slides can be found at:
<http://www.minnesotatzd.org/initiatives/regions/southwest/workshop/2017/index.html>



**Southwest Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths
9th Annual Regional Workshop Agenda
Redwood Area Community Center
901 East Cook St., Redwood Falls**

April 21, 2017

8 a.m. **Registration & Continental Breakfast, View Exhibits & Southwest Regional**

TZD Accomplishments

8:30 a.m. **Welcome** – *Jon Huseby, District engineer, MnDOT District 8*

9 a.m. **Regional TZD Crash Facts Overview** – *Sgt. Troy Christianson, Minnesota State Patrol*

9:15 a.m. **Social Media!** – *Kristin Loobeek, Social Media coordinator, MnDOT Communications*

Follow us... Like us... What's this mean? How can we do that? With all the social networking happening, 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 & Southwest 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 Southwest TZD region. Representatives from Minnesota Safety Council, MADD, Southwest Minnesota EMS, as well as local coalition coordinators and communication experts will share their expertise.
Room: Civic Arena
- **Navigating the DWI eCharging & eWarrants Process** – *Mike Asleson, DWI deployment coordinator, Bureau of Criminal Apprehension and Kent Therkelsen, product manager, DPS.* 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 DWI's, along with severe injuries and fatal crashes, so law enforcement can see where they should focus their resources.

Room: Room 1 & 2

- **Engineering 201: Not just for Engineers** – Back by popular demand!
Sulmaan Khan, PE, state aid program support engineer, MnDOT will share resources and explain the basic tips, latest tools and best practices for improving roadway safety from an engineer’s perspective. Then, learn about the new roundabout coming to the area and its safety features.

Room: Room 3 A & B

11:15 a.m. **Critical Incident Stress Debrief** – *Ann Jenson, executive director, Southwest Minnesota EMS Corporation and Kathy Abram, lead trainer, Metro CISM*

"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 & Southwest Regional TZD Accomplishments**

1 p.m. **Powerful Dreams Inspire Powerful Actions** – *Annette Larson, Southwest 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** – *Jarad Ripperger, RPSGT, RST, CCSH, Director, Sleep Center of Willmar*

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. **Personal Impact** – *Gina Calistro, daughter of Michael Calistro, shares the tragic story of the loss of her father as a result of complications after the crash caused by a drunk driver.*

3 p.m. **Wrap up & Adjourn** – *Jon Huseby, District engineer, MnDOT District 8;*
Capt. Casey Meagher, Minnesota State Patrol

Back by popular demand Dilly Bars!

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

4/21/17 SOUTHWEST TZD REGIONAL WORKSHOP EVALUATION SUMMARY

Number Registered: 91

Number Registered + Walk-ins: 98

Total number of attendees (includes pre-registered + walk-ins - no-shows): 89

Total number of evaluations: 39

Number of paper evaluations: 28

Number of electronic evaluations: 11

General Sessions	Average Rating (out of 4.0)
Welcome	3.4
Regional TZD Crash Facts Overview	3.4
Social Media!	3.8
Critical Incident Stress Debrief	3.7
Powerful Dreams Inspire Powerful Actions	3.1
The Challenges of Drowsy Driving	3.2
Personal Impact	3.6
Wrap Up and Adjourn	3.4

Comments:

- Excellent sessions with great and interesting information. (x4)
- Loved Social Media session! (x2)
 - Kristin Loobek is a great speaker
- Loved the Critical Incident Stress Debrief session! (x5)
 - Very informational and interesting (x2)
 - Kathy Abram was a dynamic speaker!
 - Less swearing by the Critical Incident speaker would have been preferred.
- I liked the videos during the TZD crash facts overview.
- Good variety with the sleep specialist!
- The personal impact statement was very powerful.
- The personal impact session seemed very rushed. I felt like the sessions that I enjoyed most were the ones that taught me something I don't already know.

- It would be great to have a little better description of the breakout sessions and who the target audience may be.
- Love the Dilly Bars and the venue.
- I saw on the big screen that there are new coalitions starting up, but it would be great to get a little more detail on the work that is being done around the region and how they are paying for it. There is so little funding, I would love to hear any new ideas.

Breakout Session: TZD 101

Number of evaluations received: 11

	Average Rating (out of 4.0)
Format and length	3.0
Topics covered were timely and useful	3.1
Content was appropriate and helpful	2.7
Facilitator was knowledgeable and managed the group well	3.0

Comments:

- Great interaction!
- It wasn't immediately clear who was there and the format. I found what I needed, though!
- Would have liked a few local coalitions speak and talk about how they got started.
- There wasn't any discussion about what was supposed to happen during this session, so most just stood around.

Breakout Session: Navigating the DWI eCharging & eWarrants Process

Number of evaluations received: 8

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

Comments:

- Was not a good session for my job, but it was informational.
- Only had about 18-20 participants, which is a fraction of what was expected. It was a long drive for the 1-hour presentation for the speaker, only to reach a dozen law enforcement officers.

Breakout Session: Engineering 201: Not just for Engineers

Number of evaluations received: 18

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

Comments:

- Very good information. There was a lot of information and it would have been nice to leave more time for questions.
- Add other solutions to solve systems.
- The last presenter didn't have much time so she went over.

Arrangements	Average Rating (out of 4.0)
Convenience of the registration process	3.8
Location of venue	3.7
Facilities were comfortable and appropriate	3.6
Food served for meals and breaks was satisfying	3.2
Participant materials were helpful and useful	3.4
Mounted regional crash maps	3.5

Comments on arrangements:

- Rooms were cold (x5)
- Lunch was a miss (x3)
 - Lunch was inedible/burgers at lunch were undercooked. (x2)
- The lunch caterer's attitude was problematic and didn't seem to provide good customer service. She did not use gloves when handling food.
- Great location (x2)
- Good breakfast food.

- Nice venue! Also appreciated it was smoke-free.
- Would have liked CISM PowerPoint beforehand to take notes.
- Projectors were a little hard to view from back of room.
- I could be wrong, but I believe the original date of the workshop was April 27 and I wasn't notified if it changed after I registered. I could be mistaken, though.

Suggestions for topics at future workshops:

- Bike and pedestrian related topics and data (x2)
- More training for new coalitions and Joyride
- Additional funding opportunities
- Campaign or activity ideas
- How to engage youth in this work?
- Distracted driving and potential solutions to reduce the prevalence
- Highlight what some of the coalitions are doing, have them report back.
- What's going on with ignition interlock?
- Autonomous or connected vehicles
- Full group presentation on HSIP or other engineering tools being used to enhance safety.

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

- Funding opportunities! (x2)
 - It's almost impossible for SW region to get TZD funding with current data (we aren't over state numbers). Just because our numbers are low, doesn't mean work does not need to be funded.
- Get out and involved with community. Draw in each age range to help address gaps in ages.
- Promoting this conference – invite schools?
- Set up meetings with all of the coalitions to meet in person once a year to exchange ideas and coordinate activities.
- Lean on our advocates to engage their communities and increase partnerships wherever possible
- Public Service Announcements in local newspapers
- Have Co-Chairs visit County Boards and talk about TZD efforts. A joint presentation of DOT/State Patrol would be effective and get good press coverage.

Any other comments:

- Thank you to the planning committee! (x2)
- I felt there was not enough time for the breakouts by region to establish goals. I think it would've been better to dedicate more time to them so we could have more meaningful discussion or just scrap that part completely.
- Consider every other year event since content is pretty similar each year.
- Fridays are not a good choice for conference dates for active traffic LEO's as they tend to work Friday and Saturday nights. So those law enforcement officers who come on Fridays, often attend on their own time.
- Would like to see more vendors



MINNESOTA TOWARD ZERO DEATHS

Southwest Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths

Media Advisory

April 19, 2017

Contact: Annette Larson
Southwest Minnesota TZD Regional Coordinator
507.720.2101; annette.larson@state.mn.us

For Immediate Release

Southwest Minnesota's Toward Zero Deaths workshop convenes to address traffic deaths

Daughter shares tragic story of father's death caused by an impaired driver

What: *Is one death acceptable on Minnesota highways? Southwest Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths partners will discuss crash facts and determine best practices to reduce traffic deaths and serious injuries on southwestern Minnesota roadways.*

When: Friday, April 21, 8:30 a.m.-3:15 p.m.

Where: Redwood Area Community Center, 901 Cook St., Redwood Falls, MN

Why: Since TZD's inception in 2003, traffic-related deaths have declined by 40 percent. During the last 10 years (2006-2015), motor vehicle crashes were the leading cause of unintentional injury deaths for Minnesotans, ages five through 24.

Who: Nearly 100 regional traffic safety stakeholders will attend the Southwest Minnesota Regional TZD workshop, representing law enforcement, engineering, education, emergency medical and trauma services as well as local leaders. Hosted by Minnesota Departments of Public Safety, Health and Transportation.

Highlights:

9 a.m. – TZD Regional Efforts - Jon Huseby, district engineer, Minnesota Department of Transportation and Sgt. Troy Christianson, Minnesota State Patrol

11:15 a.m. – Critical Incident Stress Debrief - Ann Janson, executive director, Southwest Minnesota EMS Corporation, and Kathy Abram, lead trainer, Metro CISM. 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 - Jarad Ripberger, director, Sleep Center of Willmar. 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.

2:30 p.m. – Personal Impact Statement - Gina Calistro shares the tragic story of the loss of her father as a result of complications from a crash caused by an impaired driver.

###



Media Coverage at southwest workshop included the West Central Tribune, see appendix for story.

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:

- Numerous meetings with the Minnesota State Patrol Captain, Minnesota State Patrol Public Information Officer, MnDOT District Engineer, Public Affairs Coordinator, State Aid Engineer and Traffic Engineer to work on several initiatives
- Attended and participated in the SWRTAC meetings and networked with area EMS and medical professionals
- Keeps current the contact list of more than 100 traffic safety partners
- Provided education to Renville County employees and commissioners
- Local government presentations done in Lyon, Murray and Renville Counties

STEERING COMMITTEE

The Southwest Minnesota Regional TZD Steering Committee has a core group of 28 members, with all 4Es represented. Representatives from all active local traffic safety coalitions are also active members of the committee or serve on the subcommittee.

Five TZD Regional Steering Committee meetings were held on the following dates:

2016: November 8

2017: March 14, May 9, July 11 and September 12

This year the steering committee continued with the two subcommittees; workshop subcommittee and the coalition support subcommittee. The workshop subcommittees meet five times to plan and organize the 2016 workshop. The coalition support subcommittee meets four times a year. Coalition coordinators gather to talk about what's working well, what's not working, to share resources and plans for the upcoming quarter.

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)

- Development of the TZD 101 Toolkit
- Updated and distributed southwest one-page overview
- Updated and distributed the strategic plan
- Updated and presented southwest Minnesota informational PowerPoint presentation

Regional Activities – News Conferences (2016-2017)

TZD Regional Coordinator worked with the local coalitions and traffic safety partners on educational efforts during the enforcement waves.

- Seatbelt wave May 2017

Regional Activities – Seatbelt Mobilization (May 26, 2017)

Once again South Dakota and Minnesota troopers planned a joint Interstate 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 I-90. As travelers stop along their travels before leaving the parking lot they are seeing the seat belt reminder. Photos on the following page.



Please see appendix for news coverage.

Regional Activities –Kandiyohi Safe Communities Coalition (2016-2017)

Distracted Driving (April 2017)

This past April, Kandiyohi County coalition collaborated with other agencies in the county to combat distracted driving.

First, they worked with pioneer radio to do a story on Distracted Driving. See the appendix for coverage. Next, the coalition worked with the local clinic in the county to do some distracted driving education with teen check-ups using the probability wheel. The Department of Public safety did a blog covering the wheel. See the blog below.

[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.

The full blog story in the appendix.

Finally, the coalition attended Ridgewater College student health fair. Education on distracted driving was the primary focus. The coalition used the distracted driving simulator, distract a match game and the wheel of distraction to show students the dangers related to this behavior.



See coverage in the appendix.

Seat Belt Wave (May 2017)

On May 9, 2017 the coalition went on the Open Mike Seatbelt Safety show. Willmar Ambulance Manger Brad Hanson helped share the seat belt message. Below is the link to the recorded show.
http://www.willmarradio.com/kwlm/on_demand/open_mic/



Additional activities in May included a new project called Buckle Up for a Buck. The coalition worked with a few local business to talk with people about seat belts. Insurance agents donated dollars to support the project. Enforcement and EMS stood in drive thru's and awarded those that had belts on with a buck.



For those drivers without belts they received the informational Slim-Jim handout that you see below.

Buckle Up Every Trip!

Did You Know?

- Crashing without a seatbelt at 25mph is equal to falling from a 2-story building; at 40pmh it's equal to a 6-story fall and at 60mph—the force is equal to a 12-story fall. Buckle up!
- Lap/shoulder belts reduce the risk of death by 45% and the risk of injury by 50%?
- Minnesota's seat belt law is a primary law, allowing law enforcement officers to stop a driver solely for an occupant restraint violation?
- All drivers and passengers must wear a properly adjusted and fastened seat belt? Drivers can be cited for anyone in the vehicle that is not buckled up?
- 87% of unbelted deaths happen in rural Minnesota?
- Children under the age of 8, between 40 and 57 inches tall need to be properly secured in a child booster seat? Children 40 inches in height or less shall be in a properly secured child restraint system?

Myths and Facts About Seat Belt Use

- **Myth** - "If I'm only driving a short distance, I don't need to buckle up."
- ✓ **Fact** - The majority of fatal crashes occur within a 25 mile radius from home at speeds less than 40 mph. Buckle up on every trip!
- **Myth** - "Wearing a seat belt is a personal decision that doesn't affect anyone else."
- ✓ **Fact** - Not wearing a seat belt can cause you to collide with other passengers in the vehicle, and can affect other motorists since wearing a seat belt can help you avoid losing control of your vehicle in a crash.
- **Myth** - "It is better to be thrown clear in a crash."
- ✓ **Fact** - A person is four times more likely to be killed when thrown from the vehicle instead of protected inside of the vehicle.
- **Myth** - "I could get trapped if my car catches on fire or is submerged in water."
- ✓ **Fact** - Seat belts can keep you from being knocked unconscious, improving your chances of escaping the vehicle. Fire or submersion occurs in less than 1% of all crashes – the greatest danger is with the impact that comes before the fire or submersion in water.
- **Myth** - "I have an air bag to protect me, that's good enough."
- ✓ **Fact** - Seat belts keep you in the proper position and work in conjunction with an air bag. If you are not wearing a seat belt, you can be thrown into the air bag or ejected from the vehicle causing serious injuries or death.

Find the news release on the next few pages.
Coverage of event in the appendix.

For the success of this project, do not release before 2pm Tuesday, October 25

Contact: Stephanie Felt, KCSCC Coordinator 320-444-3878

Teams will rotate through participating restaurants from 11-1.

**BUCKLE UP FOR A BUCK
CLICK IT OR TICKET EXTRA ENFORCEMENT:**

Kandiyohi County, Minn. – Local law enforcement and emergency medical service staff are paying people to buckle up!

In an awareness campaign to remind motorists that seat belts save lives, local responders are handing out dollar bills to people arriving at local drive through restaurants who are wearing their seatbelts. The Kandiyohi County Safe Community Coalition is coordinating the “Buckle Up for a Buck” event and received a donation from State Farm Insurance Agent Teresa Holwerda to fund it.

“The key message is here is that seat belts save lives,” said Stephanie Felt, KCSCC Coordinator, “every trip, every time.”

Willmar Police, Kandiyohi County Sheriff’s Office and Willmar Ambulance Service staff are using this positive interaction to help spread the safety message by handing out seatbelt information in addition to the one dollar bills. Local participating restaurants include Arby’s, Burger King (both Willmar locations) Culvers, Hardee’s and Taco Bell in Willmar as well as A&W Country Stop in New London. Many gave additional coupons for the responders to hand out.

According to the Minnesota Office of Traffic Safety, if you have a collision at 25 mph, and you aren’t wearing your seatbelt, it’s like falling from a 2-story building. At 40 mph it’s like falling from a 6-story building and at 60 mph, it’s like falling from a 12-story building.

More than 300 law enforcement agencies across the state are participating in a statewide Click It or Ticket campaign in late October. Locally, agencies participating in the extra enforcement effort include; Willmar Police Department, Kandiyohi County Sheriff’s Office, Atwater Police Department, Benson Police Department and Swift County Sheriff’s Office. The Buckle Up for a Buck project helps support that enforcement message.

-MORE-

“Whether it’s unbuckling to reach down for something or not buckling because you are just a few blocks away from your destination, it only takes one time for tragedy to strike,” said Kandiyohi County Sheriff Dan Hartog. “You significantly increase your chances of surviving a crash if you buckle up every time you get in the vehicle.”

“Hopefully getting a dollar and having a good interaction with law enforcement and EMS will spark conversation with friends and family,” stated Felt. “Driving is the most dangerous thing most of us do in a day and buckling up is the easiest way to keep safe!”

Not Buckling Up is a Dangerous Decision

Good people make bad choices on the road every day and not wearing a seat belt can prove tragic.

- In 2015, 91 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.
- In 2015, 77 percent of vehicle occupants who were ejected or partially ejected and died were not wearing a seat belt.
- In Minnesota in 2015, seat belts saved an estimated 227 people ages 5 and older. (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration)

Join the Crowd

Most Minnesotans are buckling up and their choices are life-saving and helping decrease life-changing consequences. The 2016 Minnesota Observational Seat Belt Survey results show:

*A 93 percent compliance for front seat occupants. Males continue to buckle up at a lower rate (90 percent) compared with females (96.5 percent).

*Pickup drivers have the lowest seat belt use.

*Passenger vehicle: 95.2 percent

*SUV: 95.2 percent

*Van/Minivan: 92.8 percent

*Pickup truck 83.6 percent

Statewide seat belt use by percent

2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009
93.2	94	94.7	94.8	93.6	92.7	92.3	90.2

-MORE-

Speak Up about Buckling Up

Drivers should not start the engine until every passenger in the car is belted. If a passenger sees the driver unbelted, they should speak up and make sure the driver's seat belt is secure.

Every Seat, Every Time

Minnesota law requires all motorists to buckle up or be 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 or thighs, and shoulder straps should never be tucked under an arm or behind the back.

The Kandiyohi County Safe Community Coalition is a partner of the state's Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) traffic safety 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.

###

JOYRIDE (2016 - 2017)

The Joyride program has been a very successful program for the community. The sober ride home covers Willmar area, Spicer, and the six mile radius. The program runs during the months of June, July and August. There were 301 sober rides given on Friday and Saturday nights through Labor Day. This year the coalition offered an additional night of coverage on October 29, 2016 at no cost due to a generous sponsor. They saw a 28% increase in ridership from the past year.



Number of JOYRIDE bus riders:

2014: 248 Riders

2015: 272 Riders

2016: 235 Riders

2017: 301 Riders

Central Communities Transit is pictured here with Sheriff Hartog and Kandiyohi County TZD safe communities' coordinator, Stephanie Felt.



In the photo on the left is one of three banners posted during the street dance to remind people of the JOYRIDE program.

Pictured below on the right are two of the buses getting ready to depart the dance.

Pictured below on the right are the volunteers who staff the street dance to help sell tickets. Pictured below at 1:30am outside Zorbaz the Assistant County Attorney Aaron Welch, CCT Manager Tiffany Collins and two of the bus drivers.



Other Impaired Driving Education (2016-2017)

In addition to the JOYRIDE program, the coalition delivered sticker shock stickers to all the liquor stores in area and Office of Traffic Safety coasters to area bars with a DWI messaging.

The coalition sent out a news release for the holiday impaired enforcement wave.

Drowsy Driving (2017)

The coalition spent some time working with the sleep center in Willmar to do some drowsy driving education and with a radio station interview as well. Below is the link to this interview.

<http://www.k-musicradio.com/community%20round%20table.html>

Speed Enforcement Safety Selfie Contest (July 2017)

Something new that the coalition worked on during the speed enforcement wave was the safety selfie contest. It was held from June 30 to August 4. The Speeding Safety Selfie Contest had around 20 entries each week. Locations included the Green Lake Mall, Cashwise Foods, Robbin's Island, Kandi Entertainment Center, and Walt's. Each location had the car at their business for one week.



Community members could take a picture with a crashed car and post to the radio station, The Loon Facebook page. Each week there was a social media message to include. The following is one sample.

Social Media Post (updated weekly):

Did you know speeding causes almost a quarter of the fatal crashes in Minnesota each year? This family took a selfie at the Kandiyohi County Traffic Education & Safety Team's crashed vehicle display to show they will obey the speed limit and stay safe this summer.



People who submitted a Safety Selfie with the car also had a chance to win a prize. The coalition worked with the Minnesota Department of Transportation to bring in the movable message boards with the following message.

Screen 1: Slow Down Your

Screen 2: Family will wait 4 U

Regional Activities – McLeod County Safe Communities Coalition (2016-2017)

Fatal and Serious Injury Review

McLeod County Safe Communities coalition focused on development of the committee structure. The coalition developed a fatal and serious injury review committee and held two fatal and serious injury reviews this past year. The group plans to use what they learned to support their education efforts.

We Care About Kids Event (April 2017)

The coalition attended the We Care About Kids event in April. Coalition members provided education on the importance of seat belt use and distracted driving during the day through the use of the rollover simulator and pedal kart.

Buckle Up Stencil Project (August 2017)

The coalition worked with area schools to paint the buckle up stencil in the parking lots. They received some coverage in the papers and on Facebook as a result of their efforts. Pictured below are members from the coalition that assisted with the project.



McLeod County Safe Roads coalition painting the Buckle up stencil Aug 31, 2017.



LPHT High School posts pictures on social media.

See appendix for coverage.

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

JOYRIDE Program (2016-2017)



The Meeker County Safe Roads Coalition JOYRIDE program grew from 1 event to many events in 2016-2017. The coalition has been working to expand the program to the county. They offered the program at five events over the past year; Wednesday before Thanksgiving, St Patrick's Day in Litchfield, Watercade Festival in Litchfield, Eden Valley mid-summer blast and Thrivent event. This year in addition to offering the program at additional events the group changed it from a free ride to a \$5 ride in hopes to assist with the funding of the program. The coalition feels that this increase may have cut down on the number of riders using the service over Watercade.

The coalition used radio, newspaper, posters, table tents, parade and Facebook posts and events to get the message out about the program. Following pages will have additional information.

The JOYRIDE program had 228 riders over the summer! The coalition plans on offering JOYRIDE in 2017-2018.

In August the coalition held a thank you event for JOYRIDE sponsors. Proud supporter certificates created and distributed at the event. On the following pages you will find the media advisory and release that the coalition sent out. Below you will find a photo of the event.





MINNESOTA TOWARD ZERO DEATHS

Media Advisory

August 15, 2017

Contact: Jesse Hudec
Meeker County Toward Zero Deaths Coordinator
CONTACT INFO: Phone # 763-670-5939
Email: jesse.hudec@state.mn.us

JOYRIDE: ASSURES SAFE RIDE HOME EVERY TIME

Minnesota law enforcement agencies and Toward Zero Deaths traffic safety stakeholders join forces to thank sponsors of the JOYRIDE program in Meeker County.

WHAT: To save lives on our roads, Meeker County Toward Zero Deaths Safe Roads Coalition, Meeker County Sheriff's Office, Minnesota State Patrol, regional traffic safety stakeholders, MnDOT and the Department of Public Safety are coming together to thank JOYRIDE program sponsors for helping the safe roads coalition decrease impaired driving and get people home safe.

WHERE: Meeker County Courthouse, 325 Sibley Avenue N., Litchfield.

WHEN: 12:00 p.m., August 15, 2017

WHO: Jesse Hudec, Engineering Technician - Minnesota Department of Transportation, Meeker County TZD Safe Road's Coalition coordinator, First Responder
Catherine Birr, PHN Community Connector-Family Health, Meeker County Public Health
Sheriff Brian Cruze, Meeker County Sheriff's Office
Ronald Mortensen, P.E. County Engineer, Meeker County Highway Department

WHY: Meeker County Toward Zero Deaths Coalition officially introduce JOYRIDE to the citizens of Meeker County in 2015. We will share the results of our efforts and thank past and current sponsors for their assistance with bringing this program to the county. Coalition members will also discuss plans to expand the program across the county and announce the TZD Safe Roads Grant.

- Meeker County falls in the Top 25 Dangerous Drunk Driving Counties.
- Nearly one out of every four deaths on Minnesota roads is drunk driving-related.
- In the last five years (2010 – 2014), there were 479 drunk driving-related traffic deaths in Minnesota and 88 people were killed in drunk driving-related crashes in 2014 alone.
- Each year in Minnesota, approximately 28,000 drivers (2010 – 2014) are arrested for DWI.

The Southwest 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 the region. The Southwest 14-county area encompasses: Big Stone, Chippewa, Kandiyohi, Lac Qui Parle, Lincoln, Lyon, McLeod, Meeker, Murray, Pipestone, Redwood, Renville, Swift and Yellow Medicine counties.



Other Impaired Driving Activities

The coalition worked with MnDOT to bring the moveable message board to the Eden Valley music festival in August. The message read:

SCREEN One: U booze U Cruise U Lose **SCREEN Two:** Don't Drink N Drive

Members of the coalition also took Office of Traffic Safety coasters, posters and window clings to local bars during the extra enforcement waves.

Traffic Safety at County Fair (August 2017)

The Meeker County Safe Roads coalition provides traffic safety education at the county fair. The 4H food booth and beer garden also displayed the following table tents with messages related to seatbelt and distraction.



The coalition also used the pedal karts to educate people on distracted driving and impaired driving. Pictured above, one fair goer partaking in the education.

Traffic Safety Day at Litchfield & Atwater Cosmos Grove City High School (May 2017 and October 2016)

The Meeker County coalition holds a day long educational event on traffic safety. The group brings the rollover simulator, distracted driving, impaired driving and work zone safety to high school students. The students recently lost a classmate to a traffic crash so social workers and teachers very willing to be there for support for the students.

Minnesota Trucking Association partnered with the coalition on the share the road program. The share the road event was held at Atwater Cosmos Grove City High School to teach the students about the “No Zones” around a truck. Pictures show just a few of the stations. Each student had an opportunity to sit in a truck to see what drivers can see.



In October the coalition provided education to the high school students. Part of the education efforts are getting students to speak up if they are riding with someone who is driving distracted, unbelted, or impaired.

Fatal and Serious Injury Review (August 2017)

This past year the coalition developed a fatal and serious injury review committee. They have held two reviews and will use the information gained to assist with educational efforts as well as engineering fixes to roads ways.

Senior Health Fair (October 2016)

Coalition members participated in a senior health fair. They had the AAA RX program there so people could check prescription drugs to determine if they impair driving. Also provided seat belt and distraction information at the event.



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

Buckle Up Stencil Project (October 2016)

The coalition worked with area businesses to paint the buckle up stencil in the parking lots. The stencil serves as a reminder to buckle up. They received some coverage in the paper as a result of their efforts. Pictured below are members from the coalition that assisted with the project.



See appendix at end of the report for coverage.

Traffic Safety Day (October 2016 & May 2017)

In May the Renville County Safe Roads coalition put on a traffic safety education day at BOLD and BHL high school. See the end of the report about the other schools in 2016. Students learned about distracted and impaired driving along with the importance of seat belt use. Below are a few photos from the day.



Distracted Driving (2017)

The coalition worked with the local schools on a distracted driving survey. They ask eight grade students one question: In the last three months, when you have been riding in a car, have you seen your parent or guardian send or read a text message, snap chat, Instagram or otherwise access the internet while they were driving?

The coalition gathered the results of the survey which showed 60% replied yes to the question. The coalition worked with the county to publish an article in the Renville County Messenger which goes out county wide. You will find the article on the following pages.



Renville
COUNTY MESSENGER
CONNECTING YOU WITH YOUR COUNTY GOVERNMENT
Volume 16
Summer 2017 Issue 2

Everyone has a role in Distracted Driving

Many Distracted Driving surveys have been conducted nationally, by state organizations, and now right here in Renville County by the County's Toward Zero Deaths Safe Roads Coalition. The study was conducted this past spring with 258 8th and 9th grade students participating from the county's four school districts. The students were asked, *"In the last 3 months, when you have been riding in a car, have you seen your parents or guardian send or read a text message, snap chat or Instagram or otherwise access the internet while they were driving?"*

60% of the local students replied "yes" and 40% stated "no". The number of yes responses is quite alarming when compared to a 2015 survey conducted by the Minnesota State's organization Towards Zero Deaths, which found the overall state rate to be 29.13%.

It is believed that Distracted Driving is more dangerous than Drunk Driving. The impairments associated with drunk driving and texting while driving are similar, according to the National Highway and Transportation Administration. Both cause distraction and impaired driving that can result in following too closely, not being able to brake on time or weaving into oncoming traffic. Drivers who are texting while behind the wheel have a 23% higher chance of causing a crash. It is believed that distracted driving is equivalent to downing 4 beers and then getting behind the wheel!

According to national statistics, state laws lowering the threshold of illegal driving to .08 blood alcohol content, has resulted in a 25% decrease in drunk driving fatalities. While this type of fatality has been decreasing, deadly accidents due to distracted driving are on the rise.

Survey Results by School

BOLD School 96 Students
Yes = 72% No = 28%
BLHS School 69 Students
Yes = 57% No = 43%
Cedar Mountain School 75 Students
Yes = 48% No = 52%
RCW School 55 Students
Yes = 58% No = 42%

CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE

Everyone has a role in Distracted Driving

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

In 2002, the number of fatal accidents due to distracted driving was 2,600 and in 2014 it was 3,179 lives lost. 1 of every 4 car accidents in the U.S. are caused by texting while driving, it is considered to be the leading cause of distracted driving. 8th and 9th grade students will soon be future drivers on our streets and roads.

What can we do to assist them as the generation of NON-Distracted Drivers?

***Give your young drivers simple**, clear instructions not to use their wireless devices while driving. Before new drivers get their licenses, discuss first the fact that taking their eyes off the road – even for a few seconds – could cost someone an injury or even death.

***No one should text and drive**. Be an example for others and if you need to text or talk on the phone, pull over to a safe place. Set rules for yourself and your household regarding distracted driving.

***Tell family, friends, and organizations** that you belong to, about the importance of driving without distractions.

***Remember, it is illegal in Minnesota for drivers** to read, compose or send texts and e-mails, or go online while the vehicle is in motion or a part of traffic. This includes sitting at a stoplight, stop sign or while stopped in traffic. It also is illegal for drivers with a permit or provisional driver's license to use a cellphone while driving, except for emergencies to call 911. Violators get a \$50 fine, plus court fees, for the first offense. They'll pay an additional \$225 fine (for a total of \$275), plus court fees, for second and subsequent violations.

.....
If you would like to know more or be a part of the *Renville County Safe Roads Coalition* contact *Jill Bruns (Public Health)* at (320) 523-3723 or *Jeff Marlowe (Public Works)* at (320) 523-3591.

Local Government (September 2017)

The coalition held an event in September to provide education to county commissioners and to the county employees. They provided education on the importance of seat belt use, impaired and distracted driving by using the rollover sim, pedal kart and fatal vision glasses.



Following the demonstration the TZD regional coordinator, Minnesota State Patrol, Renville County Sheriff's office and new safe roads coordinator addressed the county commissioners to educate them on TZD efforts and the new opportunity for a safe roads grant. County Commissioners voted in favor of the grant funding.



Pictured to the left is one of the Renville County Commissioners that participated with the events

Driver Education (2016-2017)

TZD regional coordinator partners with driver education instructor to provide hands on education to current students on impaired and distracted driving.

Photos below of the students completing the distracted & impaired driving with the pedal kart.



Driver instructor also teaches a 55 alive class and has been showing the Room to Live as part of her classes, which is making an impact with these students, getting them to change their thoughts about seat belt use and their willingness to share this with people that they know.

Fatal and Serious injury review

Renville County did not hold a fatal and serious injury crash review this past year. The next crash review will be in October of 2017. They will be determining trends from the past year in order to develop work plan.

Regional Activities – Southwest Central Safe Communities Coalition (2016-2017)

Seat belt (November 2016)



In November the coalition pulled together a “Saved by the Belt” Award. The bus company trains all of its drivers on child passenger safety. Drivers make sure the students are buckled and in car seats. When the crash occurred the driver and 13 passengers had seat belts on.





MINNESOTA

TOWARD ZERO DEATHS

Southwest Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths

Media Advisory

November 7, 2016

Contact: Annette Larson, South Central Minnesota
Toward Zero Deaths Regional Coordinator
507.304.6110, annette.l.larson@state.mn.us

2151 Bassett Drive
Mankato, MN 56001

Saved by the Belt

Southwest Central Safe Communities Coalition, Minnesota State Patrol, Chippewa County Sheriffs office, Yellow Medicine County Sheriffs office, Granite Falls Police Department, Granite Falls Hospital and Emergency Medical Services, Montevideo Hospital and Emergency Medical Services partners join forces to award a "Saved by the Belt".

What: On July 13, 2015, the Tri-Valley Opportunity Council school bus was traveling eastbound on Highway 212 when another vehicle traveling west crossed over the centerline and hit the bus. The bus occupants survived this crash with almost no injuries because they were wearing their seat belts and properly buckled into child safety seats.

Sheriff Bill Flaten, Yellow Medicine Sheriffs office, Lt Bruce Erickson, Minnesota State Patrol, will be honoring 13 individuals with *Saved by the Belt* awards.

When: Wednesday, November 9, 1 p.m.

Speakers:

Sheriff Bill Flaten, Yellow Medicine Sheriffs office
Lt. Bruce Erickson, Minnesota State Patrol

Where: Yellow Medicine County Law Enforcement Center
415 9th Avenue
Granite Falls, MN

Why:

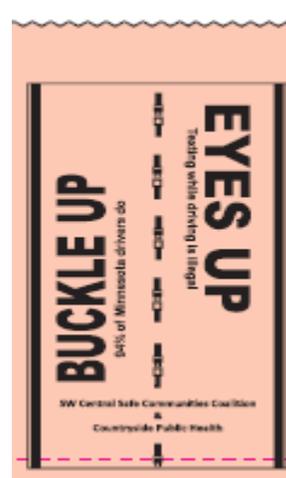
- In 2015, 91 unbelted motorists died on Minnesota roads.
- In the last five years (2011 – 2015), 527 unbelted motorists lost their lives and 1,035 people suffered life-changing injuries.
- Of the 1,379 motorists who lost their lives in the last five years (2011 – 2015), only 51 percent of them were known to be belted.
- In 2015, 77 percent of vehicle occupants who were ejected, or partially ejected, and died were not wearing a seat belt.

The Southwest 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 the region. The Southwest 14-county area encompasses: Big Stone, Chippewa, Kandiyohi, Lac Qui Parle, Lincoln, Lyon, McLeod, Meeker, Murray, Pipestone, Redwood, Renville, Swift and Yellow Medicine counties.



See the appendix for coverage.

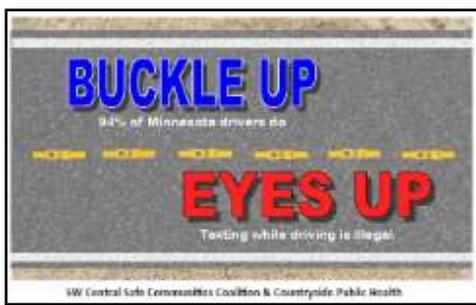
Popcorn Bag Project (2016-2017)



The coalition had developed the educational message to be printed on the sporting event popcorn bags. This project continues in the five county area with nine locations using the bags to share an importance of traffic safety to students and spectators. These bags have traffic safety messages focused on the behaviors they are working to change. A sample of the popcorn bag pictured above.

Gas pump message (2016-2017)

The group was able to get a traffic safety message to display on gas pump video screens. Currently they have one gas station that is willing to run them and they are working to get others on board. Below you will see the two that they developed. The coalition also has one gas station outside of the five county area that is running them.



Distracted Driving Educational (April and May 2017)

Coalition members attended after prom parties and had participants play the distract-a-match game. After students completed the game they made the pledge to never text and drive. Signed pledge cards were placed on the wall. Southwest Central Safe Communities Coalition provided the Office of Traffic Safety window clings during the month of April.

Impaired Driving (2016-2017)

Responsible Server training:

Public Health will be overseeing these trainings. They have offered trainings in each county over the past year. They have offered training in Monte the night before the JOYRIDE event in November of 2016.

The group also provided impaired driving coasters and window clings throughout the area to local establishments along with the Jottings from the John. Here is one of the posters that was developed.



JOYRIDE (2016)

The coalition offered the JOYRIDE program, a safe ride home the night before Thanksgiving. A total of 90 free rides given and zero DWIs that night. The group plans to offer again in 2017.

Sticker Shock (Fall 2017)

Currently the group is in the development stage of a sticker shock label called the party check list. It would be placed on label that liquor stores in the five county area could be place on all the bags and packages sold to encourage people to plan ahead this upcoming holiday season for a designated driver.

Traffic Safety County Fair (Summer 2017)

The five county coalition held events at four of the county fairs. They provided education on the importance of seat belts, not driving distracted or impaired. The coalition worked with Southwest EMS to bring in the rollover simulator and pedal karts at the county fairs. Below are pictures of the fair educational events.



Members of city and county law enforcement, as well Local EMS and other coalition members assist with Safe Driving event at the county fair.



Young driver navigates through the impaired driving course while other youth look on.



Young driver attempts the pedal kart driving course while being “distracted” by sending a text.



Kids and their parents learn about impaired driving from coalition volunteers.

Regional Activities – Engineering the County Safety Projects (2017)

Federal HSIP Projects for the local State Aid system for 2017

Description	Programed Cost
Lincoln County: Countywide Installation of Chevrons & Pavement Markings	\$388,889
Lyon County: Chevron Installation on various county roads and installation of Durable Paving Markings on various County State Aid Highways	\$423,333
Murray County: Installation of Ground in Wet Reflective Striping on various County State Aid Highways	\$314,444
McLeod County: Installation of 6" Edgelines Countywide	\$75,556
Renville County: Installation of 6" Edgelines on various County State Aid Highways	\$92,222
Yellow Medicine County: Installation of 6" Edgelines Epoxy & Latex on various County State Aid Highways	\$38,889
Total	\$1,333,333

See appendix for engineering stories.

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

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 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. Motorists may also sign up to receive email updates for major projects at 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 and www.mndot.gov/peds/education/index.html.

###

Regional Activity – Traffic crashes involving farm equipment (September, 2017)

News Release

Sept. 13, 2017

Contact: Kevin Gutknecht

Office: 651-366-4266

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



Renville County Register October 13, 2016

Dangers of distracted driving

By Ashley Alam
Staff Writer

Tenagers, and many adults, often think they are invincible and believe they are in control of a situation when they may actually be putting themselves and others in danger. To show high school students the dangers of distracted driving and other bad habits of the road, the Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) program teamed up with other local organizations Sept. 21 and Oct. 5 at Renville County West and BOLD high schools, respectively. The group plans to visit other schools along the Highway 212 corridor throughout the school year.

At several stations, students were able to try tasks while impaired with drunk goggles. Some tried to walk a straight line as directed by a keypad, others drove a pedal car through a path while National Guard members used bright red balls to simulate pedestrians stepping into the street in front of them.

Another activity seemed simple — a game of bean bag toss. But wearing the drunk goggles made it obvious to the students they could not always trust what they were seeing. Getting a bag to hit a board was tough, but catching the bag as they were tossed back was even more difficult.

The Southwest EMS rollover simulator was on hand to demonstrate what happens when seatbelts are not worn in the event of a rollover. As the car started spinning, the unbelted crash dummy was tossed around like a rag doll. It slammed into the dash, both doors, windshield and what would have been other passengers before getting ejected from the vehicle and crushed beneath it.

Seatbelt use was emphasized at the event. The use of seatbelts declined in the southwest region of the state last year and contributed to more fatalities and serious injuries. Buckling the belt is fast and easy and can save

your life.

The last station students took part in was a distracted driving simulator. Students drove through a virtual town while trying to text, follow the audio direction of a passenger and obey all the traffic laws. Each session ended poorly either as an accident,

pulled over for disobeying a traffic law or getting hopelessly lost. No matter how good the students thought they were at multi-tasking, this simulator showed them it was impossible to pay attention to everything, and that distraction could cost them.



Annette Larson, South Central and Southwest TZD Coordinator, puts students through a distracted driving simulator. (l-r) RCW's Morgan Haen, Meghan Beckendorf and Taylor Wertish watch as Erika Hoff tries to text and drive at the same time.



RCW high school students were able to see the dangers of not wearing a seatbelt first hand as the crash dummy was ejected from the rollover simulator.



BOLD's Emily Gass gets a push in the right direction from classmate Kayla Ochs as she attempts to steer while wearing drunk goggles.



BOLD photos by Scott Tedrick

TZD Coordinator Annette Larson guides BOLD students through the distracted driving simulator. (l-r) Morten Riepenhusen, Thomas Meyers, Kayla Ochs, Abby Riley, Jack Ryan, Lillian Hansen, Emily Gass, Mason Magee and seated is Dallas Coons.



RCW photos by Ashley Alam

Sebastian Olvera, Juan Barrera and Jorge Ramirez watch as Juan Olivas walks the line while wearing drunk goggles. It seemed easy until it was their turn.

Thursday, October 20, 2016 Page A10



Submitted photos

Boy Scouts use a little paint for a big reminder

Local boyscouts worked with the Renville County Sheriff's Office to paint "Buckle-up!" reminders located throughout Olivia. In front (l-r): Dominique Claseman, Ty Herdina, Avery Herdina Middle: Tom McDonnell, Nick Serbus, Luke McDonnell, Blaine Schmoll, Mark Jurgensen Back: Robert Serbus, Jeff Nelson, Renville County Sheriff's Office



Law enforcement, EMS hand out \$1 to people who buckle up



Submitted photo

Kandiyohi County Chief Deputy Greg Stehn gives \$1 to Norman and Lorraine Johnson at the Country Stop A&W. Stehn was handing out dollar bills Tuesday at NL-5 High School and at A&W as a part of the "Buckle Up for a Buck" seat belt awareness campaign. A seat belt enforcement wave is happening now.

From the Kandiyohi County Safe Community Coalition

Thirty New London Splice High School students and 20 Country Stop A&W customers received a dollar each from Kandiyohi County Chief Deputy Greg Stehn Tuesday morning.

Stehn was handing out money at the New London locations as a part of the "Buckle Up for a Buck" seat belt awareness campaign, sponsored locally by the Kandiyohi County Safe Community Coalition (KCSCC).

Local law enforcement and EMS staff also were paying people in Willmar to buckle up Tuesday as a part of the campaign. To remind motorists that seat belts save lives, emergency responders were handing out dollar bills to people arriving at local drive-through restaurants while wearing their seat belts.

"The key message is that seat belts save lives," Stephanie Felt, KCSCC coordinator said. "Every trip, every time."

Willmar Police, Kandiyohi County Sheriff's Office and

Willmar Ambulance Service staff used this positive interaction to help spread the safety message by handing out seat belt information in addition to the one dollar bill.

Local participating restaurants included Arby's, Burger King, Culvers, Hardee's and Taco Bell in Willmar as well as Country Stop A&W in New London. Many gave additional coupons for the responders to hand out.

According to the Minnesota Office of Traffic Safety, if motorists have a collision at 25 mph, and they aren't wearing their seat belts, it's like falling from a two-story building. At 40 mph it's like falling from a six-story building and at 60 mph, it's like falling from a 12-story building.

More than 300 law enforcement agencies across the state are participating in a statewide "Click It or Ticket" campaign in late October. Locally, agencies participating in the extra enforcement effort include: Willmar Police Department, Kandiyohi County Sheriff's Office, Atwater Po-

lice Department, Benson Police Department and Swift County Sheriff's Office. The "Buckle Up for a Buck" project helps support that enforcement message.

"Whether it's unbuckling to catch down for something or not buckling because you are just a few blocks away from your destination, it only takes one time for tragedy to strike," said Kandiyohi County Sheriff Dan Hartog. "You significantly increase your chances of surviving a crash if you buckle up every time you get in the vehicle."

"Hopefully getting a dollar and having a good interaction with law enforcement and EMS will spark conversation with friends and family," Felt said. "Driving is the most dangerous thing most of us do in a day and buckling up is the easiest way to keep safe."

The "Buckle Up for a Buck" event in Kandiyohi County was funded in part by a donation from State Farm Insurance Agent Teresa Hoivoda.

Worker after b

From the Kandiyohi County Sheriff's Office

A 29-year-old hurt when a concrete boom truck struck him. The accident occurred about 3 p.m. Wednesday on the 730 159th Street North (northeast side of Lake

The man received burns to both of his legs and was transported to the County Memorial Hospital

Kinder

get to know the Principal Randy Jud

He hopes to hire additional paraprofessionals right away. Jud is currently at elementary school's 6 given teachers - Borgstrom, Sue Jaurette Nienaber, E

ington and Pam Riedel led the meeting. "I had my crew because they want know how important

This year's kindergarten enrollment is 118 while the school district anticipated 108 kindergartners as it was preparing for the 2016-2017 school year

With kindergarten enrollment at 118 students district will receive a state aid in the general support the additional professionals due to increased enrollment.

Kindergarten classrooms with 24 each and one class of 22 students because



LIVE-MUSIC

Oct. 29 - 9-Mid Radio Acoust

Oct. 30 - 3-6j



MARY SAWATZKY AND MIN DEMOCRATS ARE WORKING TO
CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR US ALL

LEARN MORE

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paid for by Alliance for
a Better Minnesota
Action Fund.



Safety coalition rewards drivers for buckling up

By [Gretchen Brown](#) on Oct 25, 2016 at 11:50 p.m.



2 / 6



WILLMAR — Kandiyohi County Sheriff's Corporal Jason Keith has responded to many fatal crashes. Often, he said, the dead had not been wearing seatbelts.

So on Tuesday, standing at the drive-thru outside of the Willmar Hardee's restaurant, Keith was happy to reward belted drivers for a change.

"Lots of laughs," he said. "The positive stuff is always fun."

He and paramedic Lyle Loge were among multiple officers from the region stationed at restaurant drive-thrus in Willmar and New London, giving belted drivers a dollar and a fact sheet about seatbelts. Some restaurants offered extra coupons. At Burger King, they handed out vouchers for free ice cream.

ADVERTISING



Replay

6

Unbelted drivers weren't so lucky, driving away with just the seatbelt fact sheet (but no ticket). They were far and few in between; Loge and Keith estimated nearly 99 percent of drivers they came in contact with Tuesday were wearing a seatbelt.

From 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Keith and Loge rotated between the Willmar Arby's, Hardee's, and the First Street Burger King.

At Burger King, driver Deb Floren looked surprised to be handed a dollar for wearing a seatbelt while ordering lunch.

"It was kind of fun," Floren said. "A good reminder."

During the same time period, Willmar Police Officer Sam Neubauer and emergency medical technician James Kroona visited Willmar's Culver's, Taco Bell, and the Highway 12 Burger King.

Kandiyohi County Chief Deputy Greg Stehn was also stationed at the New London A & W.

The initiative, called "Buckle up for a Buck," was organized by the Kandiyohi County Safe Community Coalition. It was part of a statewide extra enforcement seatbelt campaign by nearly 300 law enforcement agencies in October.

Community Coalition coordinator Stephanie Felt said Kandiyohi County may have been one of the first in the state to organize an initiative like "Buckle up for a Buck."

There's a sense of urgency about the issue, she said, because Kandiyohi County and the surrounding region still lag behind the state when it comes to seat belt use.

"What I'm trying to figure out is, why would we be one of the lowest regions?" Felt said.

Within Kandiyohi County's 14-county region, over 13 percent of vehicle passengers injured or killed in 2015 had not been wearing seatbelts. That's the highest regional percentage of non-usage statewide, according to the Minnesota Department of Public Safety.

The southwest region includes Chippewa, Kandiyohi, Lac qui Parle, Lyon, Meeker, Redwood, Renville, Swift and Yellow Medicine counties, among others.

The state average is 5.8 percent unbelted passengers in fatal or injury crashes. Meanwhile, seatbelt compliance as a whole in the state has climbed to 93 percent.

Felt said she hopes Tuesday's project will be part of a social movement toward change in the region. It was funded by a \$300 donation from State Farm Insurance agent Teresa Holwerda.

Ticketing a driver is one way to tell them about wearing a seatbelt. But Tuesday's enforcement was a more positive way to do it, Felt said.

After one drive-thru interaction Tuesday, Loge walked away from the vehicle with a smile on his face.

"Everybody is just so surprised, like, 'Oh my gosh!'" he said.

SPONSORED CONTENT

'Saved by the Belt' given after bus crash

By Caitlyn Mahlum
News Editor

Thanks to a simple device located in all modern day vehicles, a group of local children were able to walk away from a frightful crash with minimal injuries.

On July 13, 2015 a Tri-Valley Opportunity Council school bus was traveling eastbound on Highway 212 when another vehicle struck the bus. Anthony Blue, 33, of Granite Falls, was driving the 2014 Kia westbound on U.S. 212 around 7 a.m. near the scenic lookout

wayside stop when he crossed the centerline and struck the eastbound, 2010 IC school bus driven by Michelle Groen, 52, of Danube. The school bus was operated by the Tri-Valley Opportunity Council, which operates a Migrant Head Start school in Danube.

The occupants survived the crash with almost no injuries, which is accredited due to the fact that the occupants were wearing their seat belts and

Saved by the Belt
Continues on page 19

Seat belt award given to occupants from Hwy. 212 bus crash

Saved by the Belt

Continues from page 1

were properly buckled into child safety seats.

Because of this, Yellow Medicine County Sheriff Bill Flaten alongside Lt. Bruce Erickson of the Minnesota patrol presented 13 individuals with the 'Saved by the Belt Award' on Wednesday, November 9.

The Saved by the Belt Award is given to honor those who utilized the life-saving device. The Minnesota Department of Public Safety describes the award as the following, "The Saved by the Belt program has helped create strong relationships between law enforcement agencies and communities since 1999. Honoring traffic crash survivors who were buckled up is a positive method for agencies to show their communities that seat belt use is important, and that officers care that motorists obey the law."

Without seatbelts, the sta-

tistics can often be grim and dismal. According to the State Patrol:

- In 2015, 91 unbelted motorists died on Minnesota roads.
- In the last five years (2011-2015) 527 unbelted motorists lost their lives and 1,035 people suffered life-changing injuries.
- Of the 1,379 motorists who lost their lives in the last five years, only 51 percent of them were known to be belted.
- In 2015, 77 percent of vehicle occupants who were ejected, or partially ejected, and died were not wearing a seat belt.

The Southwest Central Safe Communities Coalition, Minnesota State Patrol, Chippewa County Sheriff's office, Yellow Medicine County Sheriff's office, Granite Falls Police Department, Granite Falls Hospital and Emergency Medical Services, and the Montevideo Hospital and Emergency Medical services have all partnered together to award 'Saved by the Belt' awards.



Children that were on a school bus during a July, 2015 head-on collision on Hwy. 212 were presented with the 'Saved by the Belt' awards on November 9, 2016 to honor how they were kept safe by their seatbelts.

Photo submitted

Meeker County Facebook post JOYRIDE



🕒 Wednesday, November 23 at 11 PM - 2:30 AM
 Nov 23 at 11 PM to Nov 24 at 2:30 AM

📍 Litchfield, Minnesota Show Map

About Discussion

✍️ Write Post | 📷 Add Photo / Video | 🗳️ Create Poll

📷 Write something...

Details

Meeker County safe roads coalition is pleased to announce Joyride - Safe Ride Home - returns to Litchfield, Mn - If you are out and about Thanksgiving Eve, November 23rd from 11:00 pm to 2:00 am. And you have chosen to consume alcohol, Choose to take a cheap, safe alternative home (Litchfield area.) Tickets are \$5.00 each and will get you home safe and sound. See your bartender or waitress for a ticket. The purchase price goes to supplement generous donations from The Eagles Club, VFW, American Legion, Meeker Memorial hospital, Watercade festival committee, Anderson Insurance, Jason Tibbits state farm insurance, Grove city Rescue Squad, Litchfield Fire department, and many others who have donated their money or time.

If there is enough interest, we could schedule a pre-purchase event. Respond to post.

If you have questions feel free to respond to this post or call our coalition coordinator Jesse Hudec cell phone -763-670-5939 or locally 320-377-9035.

📷 **Litchfield Eagles Club**
 November 20 at 6:52pm · Litchfield · 🌐

This Wednesday!!

👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share



Office of the Meeker County Sheriff

November 23 at 4:26pm · ✱



Remember Joyride will be operating tonight in Litchfield. Help us keep our roads safe and take advantage of this sober ride home. Have a Happy and Safe Thanksgiving!!



Sober rides available Thanksgiving eve

On the eve of Thanksgiving, sober rides home will be available to Litchfield residents through the JOYRIDE program.



Office of the Meeker County Sheriff added 2 new photos.

November 14 at 6:15pm · 🌸

The Joyride program returns to Meeker County Wednesday November 23, 2016. From 11 p.m. to 2:30 a.m. on the the 23rd you can get a Safe and Sober ride home in Litchfield for only \$5. Please help us keep our roads safe!!



IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 14, 2016

Contact: Annette
Southwest Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths coalition
507.304.8110, annette.larsen@twdmn.org

JOYRIDE PROGRAM ASSURES SAFE RIDE HOME EVERY TIME

Litchfield, MN, November 14, 2016 – Litchfield community leaders join forces to ensure all residents have the opportunity to get a sober ride home with the JOYRIDE program. This is a community-based initiative, begun by Meeker County Toward Zero Deaths Safety Coalition, who care about our communities and safety on the roads. This alternative transportation project provides safe and easy transportation for our citizens on the evening of **Wednesday, November 23 between the hours of 11 p.m. to 2:30 a.m.** JOYRIDE will only be available in Litchfield. There is a small charge for the JOYRIDE program, for this one night only. **Five dollars will get you a sober ride home.** If you should have questions or to find out more information on the JOYRIDE program, please contact Meeker County T2D Safe Ride Coordinator, Jesse Hudec at 320-877-9033.

Brian Cruze said, "The JOYRIDE program provides an easy and fun transportation option for patrons who wish to drink. We know that drinking patrons sometimes find themselves in a bind with no options to get home safely. Law enforcement sees this program as a great benefit to our community."

Litchfield bars are participating in the JOYRIDE program. They include the Fraternal Order of the Eagles, American Legion, VFW and Kokers. While bringing in more patrons is important, bar participants in the JOYRIDE program, they also appreciate the assurance that all patrons will get home safely. "It's about getting more people out to enjoy our celebration – while at the same time making sure everyone gets home safely. Every patron is safe." said Jesse Hudec.

Remember to thank the following sponsors for helping to bring the JOYRIDE program to our community and for providing you with a \$5 ride home after your celebration:

Gold Sponsors: Fraternal Order of the Eagles, American Legion
Silver Sponsors: Watercade committee, Meeker Memorial Hospital, VFW
Bronze Sponsors: Litchfield Fire Department, Grove City EMS, State Farm – Jason Tabbits, Andersen Insurance and Center Insurance Agency.

—mark—



Driving News Release

Living, a Sobering Reality

In 2015, nearly 25,000 drivers are arrested for DWI in Minnesota each year, this alarming number is nearly three DWI arrests per hour throughout the state.

In the last five years (2011 – 2015), 48 people died in crashes during the Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year holiday periods. Of the 48 people who died, 13 deaths were drunk driving related. "It's a sad, tragic and preventable deaths," said Cruze. "And the fact is, if you're stopped and arrested for DWI than causing a preventable death."

Consequences

For a first-time offender, a 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 blood 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. Repeat offenders with three or more offenses are required to use interlock for three to five years, or they will never regain driving privileges.

Drunk Driving

Plan for a safe ride – designate a sober driver, use a cab/public transportation or call a taxi to the location of the celebration.

Offer to be a designated driver, or be available to pick up a loved one anytime, anywhere.

Lock 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 vision of the T2D program is to create a safe driving culture in Minnesota in order to support a goal of zero road fatalities by practicing and promoting safe and sober driving behavior. T2D focuses on the application of four strategic areas to reduce crashes: law enforcement, engineering, and emergency medical and trauma response.

###



JOYRIDE
GOOD TIMES DELIVERED

LET JOYRIDE
GET YOU HOME
TONIGHT.

--- JOYRIDE is a sober ride home shuttle service ---
AVAILABLE:
---Friday, March 17th - 10:30 p.m. - 2 a.m.
---Saturday, July 8th - 10:30 p.m. - 2 a.m.
---Wednesday, November 22nd - 12:00 a.m. - 2 a.m.
Thank you for Designating a Driver!

For more information call Jesse at (763)670-5939

SERVICE AREA: City of Litchfield & 10 mile radius

Tickets \$5.00 & will be good all night! Advance ticket sales (see your bartender). More information will be posted closer to each event!

\$\$ Donations welcome!! Checks accepted, made out to: Southwest EMS w/ Joyride

Bus Schedule: **VFW** - 10:30, 11:30, 12:30, 1:15am **Eagles Club** - 10:45, 11:45, 12:45am
Kicker's - 11:00, 12:00, 1:00, 1:30 til 2:00am **American Legion** - 11:15am, 12:15am

Thank you to all our 2016 partners and to those who rode the bus, making it a success!

Gold Sponsors: Eagles Club, American Legion, Silver Sponsors: Watercade committee, Meeker Memorial Hospital, VFW
Bronze Sponsors: Litchfield Fire Dept., Grove City EMS, Shnyder Insurance Solutions, State Farm

Jesse Hudec with Joe Jans and 45 others in Litchfield, Minnesota.
March 15 at 3:03pm

For those going to be celebrating 🇮🇷 St Patrick's day in Litchfield, MN, This post is for you!!

Joyride is coming out of Hi'Burr'nation!! Available starting at 10:30 pm till 2:00am Friday March 17th! See your bartender and get your ticket 🎫, only \$5.00 and good all night 🍷!!!

Made possible, Thank you to our partners, Litchfield VFW, American Legion, Eagles Club, Meeker memorial hospital, Watercade committee, Litchfield fire department, Grove City EMS, Anderson insurance, Center insurance agency, Shnyder Insurance solutions of Litchfield, State Farm -Jason Tibbits

Office of the Meeker County Sheriff

March 15 at 4:50pm

The Meeker County Safe Roads Coalition is pleased to offer Joyride on Friday, March 17th for the St. Patrick's Day holiday. Joyride is a safe, sober ride home shuttle service offered within a 10 mile radius of the city of Litchfield. Participating bars include the VFW, Eagles Club, Kicker's and the American Legion. Tickets are \$5.00 and are good all night. Advanced tickets can be purchased through the bartenders.

The Meeker County Safe Roads Coalition is working to make Meeker County a safer community through educational events and safe community services.

The Meeker County Safe Roads Coalition would like to thank all 2016 partners for making it a success.

For more information on Joyride and/or the Meeker County Safe Roads Coalition, please call Jesse Hudec at 763-670-5939 or via email at jesse.hudec@state.mn.us.

Thank you for designating a driver!

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\$5 Donations welcome!! Checks accepted, made out to: Southwest EMS s/o Joyride

Bus Schedule: VFW - 10:30, 11:30, 12:30, 1:15am Eagles Club - 10:45, 11:45, 12:45am
Kicker's - 11:00, 12:00, 1:00, 1:30 til 2:00am American Legion - 11:15am, 12:15am

Thank you to all our 2016 partners and to those who rode the bus, making it a success!

Gold Sponsors: Eagles Club, American Legion Silver Sponsors: Watercade committee, Meeker Memorial Hospital, VFW
Bronze Sponsors: Litchfield Fire Dept, Grove City EMS, Anderson Insurance, Center Insurance Agency, Shnyder Insurance Solutions of Litchfield, State Farm

 **Jesse Hudec** added 3 new photos — at [City of Litchfield](#).
March 17 at 11:17pm · Litchfield

Still time to catch a ride on the Joyride bus! \$5 gets you around all night!





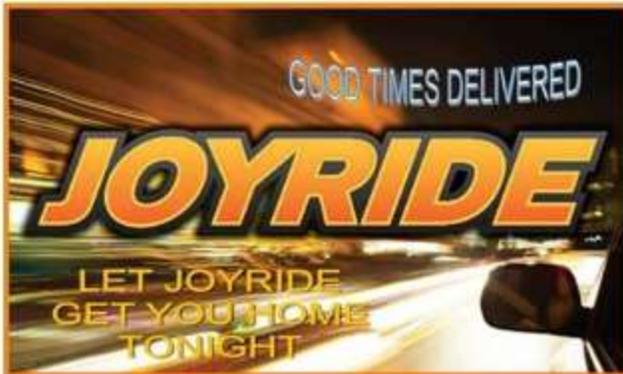
Meeker Safe Roads Coalition - MN TZD Program at Ramsey Printing & Design, Inc.

July 7 at 10:04am

Last day to get your Joyride tickets!! Hurry in they are closing at 3pm today! Just \$5.

Bars and buses will have tickets for last minute purchases.

Thanks for planning ahead for a safe ride home after all the fun. See you at the parade!!!



JOYRIDE is a sober ride home shuttle service

Saturday, July 8th, 2017: 10:30 pm—2:30 am

\$5 per ticket

Advance sales at Ramsey Printing & Design or day of event sales with drivers!

PICK-UP LOCATIONS

Eagles-Kickers-Legion-VFW-Street Dance

DROP-OFF LOCATIONS

City of Litchfield and ten-mile radius

SCHEDULE

Buses will run on 30 minute schedules; last pickup at 2:15 am

THANK YOU FOR USING A DESIGNATED DRIVER!



Meeker Safe Roads Coalition - MN TZD Program added

2 new photos — at [Litchfield Watercade](#).

July 11 at 9:39pm · Litchfield · 🌐

It was a great weekend for the Litchfield Watercade! It was great seeing everyone at the parade and those who used Joyride! It was another successful outing. The buses were full and calls were coming in for information. Thank you to all that took advantage of Joyride! And a special thanks to our partners and donors making it possible. American legion, Meeker memorial hospital, Watercade committee, VFW, Thrivent financial, Hicks Bus service, Litchfield fire department, State farm - Jason Tibbits, Shnyder insurance solutions of Litchfield, Meeker public health, Meeker highway & Meeker sheriff's department, MN Dot, SW EMS and to those that chose a safer alternative, thank you!

Next Joyride event is Friday August 11th for the Thrivent community fundraiser / Litchfield Rotary bash at the Meeker county fairgrounds! Featuring The Fabulous Armadillos!!!



Meeker Safe Roads Coalition - MN TZD Program at [Litchfield Watercade](#)

Meeker County, Minnesota.

July 19 at 7:43pm · 🌐

After tallying the tickets and rides for Water Cade joyride. There were 115 rides given. That's 115 people delivered safely. With 136 total safe rides for the year! Thank you all for your support and for making Joyride a success! Don't forget Joyride will be out and about for the Litchfield Rotary Bash / Thrivent financial Crow River team community fundraiser on August 11th from 9:30 pm to midnight. Thanks to the sponsorship of Grow Rite Lawn Care - Litchfield.



👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share



Meeker Safe Roads Coalition - MN TZD Program was ^{now} **3** ...

attending Thrivent Community Fundraiser at Meeker County Fair - Litchfield, Minnesota.

August 11 at 7:32pm · Litchfield · 🌐

Don't forget your tickets tonight for safe and sober rides home courtesy of our fabulous sponsors Grow Rite Lawn Care! Check in with our coordinator Catherine at rotary tents by the entrance for your FREE ticket to ride home!



AUG 11 **Thrivent Community Fundraiser**

Fri 5 PM - Meeker County Fair - Litchfield, Minne...
You like Meeker Safe Roads Coalition - MN TZD...

★ Interested



Meeker Safe Roads Coalition - MN TZD Program ...

August 11 at 9:45pm · 🌐

Let Joyride take you home tonight - courtesy of our generous sponsors GrowRite Lawncare!!



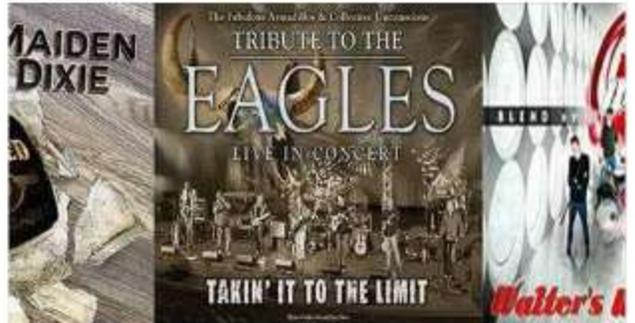
👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share



Meeker Safe Roads Coalition - MN TZD Program added an event. ...

August 7 at 9:09am · 🌐

Mid-Summer blast returns with a great lineup of acts!



AUG 19 **Joyride : Mid-Summer Blast - Eden Vall...**
Sat 5 PM - Eden Valley Elementary - Eden Valley
You like Meeker Safe Roads Coalition - MN TZD...

★ Interested



Meeker Safe Roads Coalition - MN TZD Program



August 20 at 1:12am · 🌐

It was a great night at Mid-Summer Blast in Eden Valley!! Over 70 people took advantage of the free rides home! Great service to a great community! Thank you all for the support and contributions!

Meeker safe roads coalition

👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share

👍 2

Chronological ▾



Meeker Safe Roads Coalition - MN TZD Program Over 90 people at last tally and we're not done yet. At Valley inn waiting for last call!!

Like · Reply · August 20 at 1:53am



Meeker Safe Roads Coalition - MN TZD Program added



5 new photos — 3 attending Meeker County Fair at Meeker County Fair - Litchfield, Minnesota.

August 5 · Litchfield · 🌐

Having fun out and about at the fair, demonstrating the effects of drinking and driving.





Meeker Safe Roads Coalition - MN TZD Program is 😊

...

feeling excited with Monica Schreiber at Meeker County, Minnesota

August 16 at 5:13am · Litchfield · 🌐

A big thank you to all our sponsors, partners and members! Yesterday was a great day, which remembered our beginning, highlighted our successes and forged a path for the future. With Announcements of our Towards zero death education Grant from the MN department of public safety. Introduction of Catherine Birr as Co-coordinator beginning in October. Changes coming to the intersection of TH 12 & Meeker CR 14 in Darwin. Future Joyride opportunities, school safety days and meetin... [See More](#)



Like Comment Share



Renville County TZD Safe Roads Coalition

June 14 · 🌐

You know....like the olden days!!



👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share



Renville County TZD Safe Roads Coalition

July 18 at 7:16pm · 🌐

Oh.....really?



Renville County TZD Safe Roads Coalition

July 5 at 9:30pm · 🌐

Don't Speed!!



👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share



Minnesota public safety conference focuses on Toward Zero Death mission

Saturday Posted Apr 29, 2017 at 12:01 AM

By Troy Krause

Every day in the United States there are 30 people who are killed in crashes that involve a drunk driver. While that statistic hits home, it becomes much more real when the story becomes personal.

Just about everyone knows someone whose life has been impacted by a drunk driving crash that either killed or seriously injured a friend, neighbor or loved one. That is the story of Gina Calistro.

Calistro, who is from Coon Rapids, lost her father in 2009 as a result of a head-on collision that involved a drunk driver. Calistro shared the story of her father and the impact that loss has had on her this past Friday afternoon during the Southwest Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) workshop held at the Redwood Area Community Center in Redwood Falls.

Dozens of individuals representing emergency response, engineering and education were in attendance to hear about the recent TZD statistics for the region and to listen to the story of Michael Calistro who died June 14, 2009 due to complications of the crash.

“My dad was always my hero,” said Calistro, adding as a law enforcement officer for the Minneapolis Police Department he did the kinds of things those in the room do on a regular basis. “I want to thank all of you for the work you do. You save lives. You have no idea how very important you really are.”

Those who rise up to the occasion when the need arises and then quietly slip away never looking for any kind of thanks are true heroes, said Calistro, adding that is what her dad was all about.

It was Easter, and Calistro’s parents were traveling back to their home after spending the day with family when they were struck head-on by a drunk driver traveling 60 miles per hour in the wrong direction.

“The driver was traveling south in a northbound lane,” said Calistro.

Calistro got the call and immediately knew something bad had happened, and so she made her way to the crash scene on Lexington Avenue.

“My dad was a Vietnam veteran and a 30-year member of the Minneapolis Police Department,” said Calistro. “He always put the needs of others first, and that was what he was doing that day.”

He wanted to make sure his wife was OK, and even that the driver of the other vehicle was all right. Thanks to those who responded Calistro’s mother is still alive, although she endured many years of therapy.

“It is because of the emergency personnel on the scene that she is alive, and I will forever be grateful to them,” said Calistro.

The drunk driver was a repeat offender, said Calistro, adding that person was actually on probation at the time of the crash from another DWI.

Statistics reveal that the individual who is arrested for drinking and driving has driven drunk more than 60 times before they are actually caught.

None of that will be any different until the culture is changed, said Sgt. Troy Christianson, Minnesota State Patrol public information officer for the southwest Minnesota Region.

That is what TZD is all about – changing attitudes and using the latest research to create the safest environment possible on the state’s roadways. The goal of TZD is to one day have no one die on the roadways of Minnesota.

“That seems far away,” said Christianson, “but we all will agree that even one traffic fatality is too many.”

According to Christianson, the traffic fatalities are trending downward and have been since TZD was implemented in 2003. The message of not drinking and driving, wearing a seat belt every time one gets in a vehicle and not texting and driving is making a difference, he said, but with more than 390 traffic fatalities in 2016 there is still a lot of work left to do.

The new goal for TZD is to reduce the number of traffic fatalities on Minnesota roadways to less than 300 by 2020. That will take a concerted effort on the part of those involved with traffic safety, but it can be done.

Attitudes can change, said Jon Huseby, Minnesota Department of Transportation District 8 engineer, adding at one time people did not recycle much if at all, and years ago a lot more people were smoking than are today.

Getting the right message out to the public and keeping that message on their minds is going to help change the mindset and move toward the TZD goal.

West Central Tribune

<http://www.wctrib.com/video/A40L7hCV>

April 12, 2017

Ridgewater College Health Career Job Fair



Ridgewater College students attend the Health Fair and Healthcare Job Fair Tuesday, April 11, at the college. The Kandiyohi County Education and Safety Team was also there to provide students with different driving simulated activities. Kandiyohi County Dave Holmquist and Public Information Trooper Sgt. Jesse Grabow had a field sobriety station set up for students to try and take a sobriety test with different simulation goggles. Southwest and Southcentral Towards Zero Deaths coordinator Annette Larson provided a driving simulator course for students to participate in. The television screen was hooked up to a wheel. Students were asked to perform distracting tasks to simulate how driving while distracted can cause accidents. The simulator also told students how much they would owe for any court fines and damage they caused while driving distracted.

Distracted Driving

Aired: 2/2/2017

In the featured story for the episode, **Compass** producer Laura Kay Prosser visits with Matt Logan, a motivational speaker from Byron, who lost his daughter in a distracted driving accident and with Willmar Police Captain Mike Anderson and Kandiyohi County Sheriff Dan Hartog about their project to crackdown on texting while driving known as “elevated enforcement.”

<http://www.pioneer.org/compass.html>

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

April 20, 2017

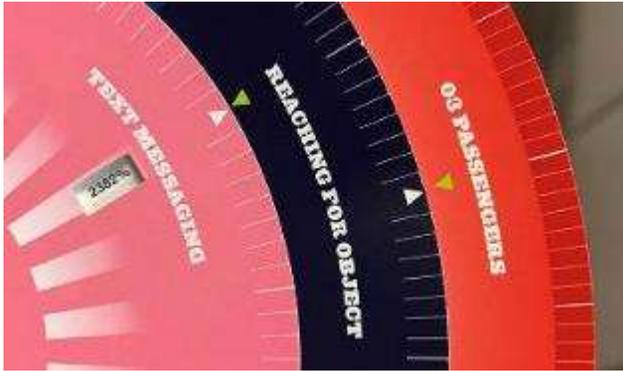


Photo: The distracted driving probability wheel shows that if a teen drives at night with three passengers while reaching for an object and texting, their risk of getting into a crash increases 2,382 percent.

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.

Your ‘What is that person doing on the road?’ distracted driving story of the day

by Shaymus McLaughlin

February 14, 2017 11:03 am

<http://www.gomn.com/news/your-what-is-that-person-doing-on-the-road-distracted-driving-story-of-the-day/>



Credit: [Mark Guim, Flickr](#)

Here’s a pretty horrifying story of a driver not paying any attention on the road, **shared by the McLeod/Meeker County Toward Zero Deaths Facebook page.**

It’s 11:30 a.m. or so on Monday, just southwest of Hutchinson. And there’s a woman in a pickup truck driving along. She reaches over to get her coffee – taking her eyes off the road, and crossing over to the gravel shoulder.

After that, she starts doing her hair. There were no hands on the wheel during this time (she was probably steering with her knees, the post says), and the pickup is weaving within the lane.

“I figured after she was done with her hair she would now focus on driving,” the post continues. “I was wrong.”

The driver looks into the mirror, still with no hands on the steering wheel, and begins doing her makeup. And the pickup continues swerving.

“If I was working it would have been a good stop for sure,” Officer Andrew with the Glencoe Police Department told GoMN.

He’s the one who shared that story on the Facebook page. He wasn’t on duty at the time, just out and about personally. But it’s the type of distracted driving he sees “very often” while out on the road.

It gets especially bad early in the morning, when there's that rush of people going back to work, he said. He's even seen drivers that have "bowls of cereal with milk in hand," he added.

"A generation where it has now become the 'norm' to be running late and trying to catch up with things inside the car," he wrote in the Facebook post. "Wake up 5 minutes earlier than your 'norm' and finish getting ready at home."

Distracted driving kills people

In Minnesota, **it's illegal** for drivers to send a text or email or access the internet while the vehicle is part of traffic – meaning drivers shouldn't be reaching for their phone while waiting at a red light. A motorist could face a \$50 fine plus court fees for their first texting-and-driving offense, and \$275 in fines for additional offenses.

But texting and driving isn't the only distraction. Adjusting music, eating or drinking, reading, and **other tasks** can cause drivers to take their attention off the road, which can be dangerous or even fatal.

Being distracted behind the wheel is a contributing factor in one out of every four crashes in Minnesota, **the Department of Public Safety says**. That results in at least 70 deaths and 350 serious injuries every year, according to their estimates.

In 2015 **they did a distracted driving study**, looking for signs of distraction on the road for a couple weeks during that summer.

Their results? Nearly 30 percent of the 11,471 drivers they observed were distracted.

Men tended to be distracted more often than women. And people between the ages of 16 and 29 had the highest distraction rate, at 35 percent.

Hands-free only proposal

There is a bill in the **Minnesota House** and **Senate** that would make it illegal to use a cellphone while driving, unless it's being used hands-free.

That could be with voice commands, whether that's through a headset or other accessory or simply on speaker. You can use one-touch functionality to make the call however.

Both versions are in committees, but it's unclear whether there's enough support to get a version approved and to the governor's desk, where it could then become law.

The McLeod County Chronicle

Click It or Ticket campaign under way

Submitted by admin on Wed, 05/24/2017 - 12:00am

<http://www.glencoenews.com/content/click-it-or-ticket-campaign-under-way>

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, barbecues and fun

at the lake, seat belt safety should be a part of every Minnesotan's plans.

Motorists who are not buckled increase their odds of being injured by six times if they are in a crash. To continue educating motorists that seat belts save lives and that it's the law to buckle up, the McLeod County Sheriff's Office, Glencoe Police Department, Brownston Police Department, Winsted Police Department, Silver Lake Police Department, Minnesota State Patrol, along with more than 300 law enforcement agencies across the state, will be participating in the statewide Click It or Ticket campaign May 22-June 4. The extra enforcement and education campaign is coordinated by the Department of Public Safety Office of Traffic Safety.

Good, bad news

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

- According to the 2016 Minnesota Seat Belt Survey, 93 percent of front seat occupants are wearing their seat belts.
- Severe injuries are also going down. In 1987, there were 4,176 vehicle occupants who suffered severe injuries in traffic crashes. That number dropped to 745 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).

"We may be good drivers but that's not always good enough to keep us safe in a crash if we choose to ignore the seat belt," said Officer Andrew Fiebelkorn of the Glencoe Police Department. "A seat belt is like insurance. You hope it never has to save your life but if another driver crosses the center line toward you, is distracted or drunk, that seat belt may be the only thing that keeps you alive if there's a crash. Please buckle up because you just never know what'll happen on the road."

Speak 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.

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.

Child car seats

- In Minnesota, all children must be in a child restraint until they are 4 feet, 9 inches 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.

McLeod TZD is on Facebook. Stay up to date on current efforts and happenings in our area by visiting

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

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.

Redwood Falls GAZETTE

Click It or Ticket campaign now taking place in Minnesota

Tuesday

Posted May 23, 2017 at 8:07 AM

<http://www.redwoodfallsgazette.com/news/20170523/click-it-or-ticket-campaign-now-taking-place-in-minnesota>

Looking around, it doesn't take long to find a distracted driver drifting over the fog line.

Many Minnesotans also know that heartbeat-skipping moment when a vehicle pulls out in front of them, when a deer comes out of nowhere or when a road-rage driver follows dangerously close.

The first line of protection against all of those dangers is a seat belt. To remind motorists that seat belts save lives and enforce the law, more than 300 law enforcement agencies across the state will participate in the Click It or Ticket campaign May 22-June 4.

The Department of Public Safety Office of Traffic Safety (DPS-OTS) coordinates the extra enforcement and education campaign.

"Most Minnesotans are making the right choices by buckling up at a 93 percent rate," said Donna Berger, Office of Traffic Safety director. "Still, law enforcement across the state ticketed 1,517 motorists for not buckling up during a two-week extra distracted driving enforcement period in April. That decision could have had life-changing consequences."

"Don't be complacent and drive unbelted, even for a two-block ride down to a friend's house," added Berger. "You never know when taking three seconds to buckle up will save your life."

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 were wearing their seat belts.

Since 1987, motor vehicle occupant serious injuries have decreased 82 percent. For those choosing not to buckle up, the results are tragically hurting families across Minnesota.

Over a five year period (2011-15), 152 unbelted motorists lost their lives during the 100 deadliest days on Minnesota roads (Memorial Day – Labor Day).

In 2016, preliminary numbers show 79 unbelted motorists died on Minnesota roads. In 2015, 87 percent of the unbelted deaths occurred in rural Minnesota (outside the seven-county metro area). To kick off the Click It or Ticket campaign, Minnesota law enforcement is participating in the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's "Border to Border" Operation.

The nationwide seat belt enforcement effort will cover half the country and will focus on seat belt violations from 4 – 8 p.m. May 22.

Nationally, unbelted fatalities are more prevalent at night than during the daytime hours. Fifty-one percent of those killed in 2015 during the overnight hours of 6 p.m. to 5:59 a.m. were unbelted at the time of the crash. 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. In Minnesota, the law requires that all children must be in a child restraint until they are 4'9" tall or at least age eight, whichever comes first.

- Rear-facing child seats – Newborns to at least one year and 20 pounds and recommended up to age two. It is safest to keep a child rear-facing as long as possible.
- Forward-facing seats – Age two until around age four. 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; it's safest to remain in a booster until 4 feet 9 inches tall, or at least age eight, whichever comes first.
- Seat belts – Use when children can sit with their back against the seat and have their knees bent comfortably over the edge with their feet touching the floor.

DPS-OTS is an anchoring partner of the state's Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) traffic safety 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.

West Central Tribune

May 25, 2017

<http://www.wctrib.com/news/local/4272830-joyride-service-begins-fourth-season>

ca and the trail will be release. "The construc- may not be able to go all grade, the Glacial Lakes deciduous forests. It is a web page.

Joyride service begins its fourth season on Friday

By Clay Conover

cconover@wctrib.com

WILLMAR – Area bar goers will have another option for a safe ride home starting Friday because of Joyride, a sober ride program starting its fourth season in Willmar and Spicer.

Joyride offers bus rides from several bars in Spicer and Willmar for those who cannot drive safely. Tickets cost \$5 and can be bought at participating bars and Central Community Transit, which administers the bus rides.

The bus picks up riders from the participating bars on Friday and Saturday nights, and will drive them anywhere within a

six-mile radius of Spicer, or within Willmar city limits. Rides can also be scheduled by calling Central Community Transit.

"Sometimes there are groups that are at a house, and they want a ride back safely," said Doug Sweetser, Central Community Transit operations coordinator. "They have to call in here during the week, to our dispatch."

Bars participating this year are the Green Mill and Ruff's Sports Bar in Willmar, and in Spicer the American Legion, O'Neils and Zorbaz.

Joyride was begun in 2014 as part of an initiative to combat drunken driving in the state of Minneso-

ta through the Minnesota Department of Public Safety's Office of Traffic Safety. Drunk driving kills many Minnesotans every year. In 2015, 95 fatalities were the result of drunken driving, according to the Office of Traffic Safety.

Being convicted of a DWI can also make it hard to get some jobs, and can cost the offender thousands in fines and insurance costs. Joyride was made to be an alternative to driving drunk, said Stephanie Felt, the coordinator of the Kandiyohi County Traffic Education & Safety Team.

"This is our way to locally work towards preventing deaths or serious injuries, while also pro-

viding people with a way to go out and enjoy themselves," Felt said.

Official statistics on the effectiveness of the program do not exist, but Felt said there have been more cars in the parking lot after the bars close down since the program began four years ago.

"It's giving people that option," said Kandiyohi County Sheriff Dan Hartog. "We always encourage people to have a designated driver. If that doesn't work out and they plan on going out, we have another option for them, to take and use this Joyride program."

The program is paid for in part by forfeitures

from convictions for driving while impaired. When someone is convicted and their car is forfeited, the car is auctioned off. The money from that sale is mandated by the state to be used to buy equipment or go toward programs to fight drunken driving. Some of the forfeiture money in Kandiyohi County and the city of Willmar goes to the Joyride program.

Donations also help fund the program, including from the participating bars, where it has been well-received.

"I think it's a great program," said Michelle Olson, owner and operator of Johnny O'Neil's

in Spicer. "We just want people to enjoy their time in Spicer while having the option to get a safe and sober ride home."

The buses will run every Friday and Saturday night from this weekend until Labor Day weekend. Call Central Community Transit at 320-214-7433 during business hours for information on participating bars and the scheduled pickups.

"It's a good example of community agencies pulling together to provide a way for people to stay safe on the roads, because alcohol impairment kills a lot of Minnesotans every year," Felt said.

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



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.

West Central Tribune

Opening eyes to danger on the road

By [Tom Cherveney](#) on May 25, 2017 at 6:59 a.m.

<http://www.wctrib.com/news/region/4272834-opening-eyes-danger-road>

WILLMAR — Sgt. Jesse Grabow of the Minnesota State Patrol watched the vehicle in front of him on the freeway weave from the right lane to the left lane and onto the shoulder before the driver snapped the wheel and nearly overcorrected.

Another drunk driver? No, it was another drowsy driver. Drowsy driving is very possibly one of the most underreported causes of accidents on the roads, said Grabow, a 19-year veteran of the Patrol.

Roughly 12 to 13 percent of fatal accidents in the country are related to drowsy driving, according to research cited by Jarad Ripperger, director of the Sleep Center of Willmar.

He classifies it as part of the four dangerous "D's" of the road: Drunk, drugged, distracted and drowsy driving.

Ripperger has 12 years of experience in sleep medicine. Last month, he spoke on the dangers of drowsy driving to attendees at the Toward Zero Deaths traffic safety conference for Southwest Minnesota.

The number one thing to consider, Ripperger said in a recent interview with the West Central Tribune, is that many people just don't get enough sleep. With busy lifestyles, fewer people get the seven to nine hours of sleep needed. We put ourselves into a sleep debt, and the problem only compounds itself, Ripperger said. "You never get that sleep back."

He said that one well-known study demonstrated that after 18 to 20 hours without sleep, you have the cognitive abilities of someone who has an 0.08 percent blood alcohol level — someone legally drunk.

Driving is often a repetitive and tedious cognitive task, where mental alertness is challenged, he said.

He referenced a study by the American Automobile Association that hooked drivers to EEG monitors. It found that tired drivers will nod off for one to three seconds of micro-sleep behind the wheel. At a highway speed of 55 miles per hour, they covered the length of a football field during that brief nod, Ripperger said.

What to do about it? Make sure you get your sleep, Ripperger said. Sleep is a performance enhancer. A 29-minute nap has been shown to increase mental performance by 34 percent, he said.

It's common for new patients at the Sleep Center to report that they have experienced drowsy moments behind the wheel. Ripperger needs only to look through the questionnaires that all of his new patients complete. One respondent answered that he could recall eight to 10 such incidents in the prior month.

The Sleep Center of Willmar treats people with any of more than 60 different sleep disorders. Ripperger said that all can be treated successfully.

But he also warned that everyone is vulnerable to driving drowsy if they do not set aside the time for quality sleep. One survey of drivers found that 41 percent of American drivers acknowledged driving drowsy at some point.

A person's level of alertness varies during the roughly 24-hour circadian rhythm, he said. People are usually at their low point of brain activity in the middle of the night, and there is a little dip in the mid-afternoon. Shift workers and people making long, monotonous drives during the night on rural roadways are more vulnerable to becoming drowsy, he said.

Having a passenger helps. Blaring music not so much.

Caffeine can give you a short boost, but it's not going to take you a long way. Ripperger said one study of drivers who are believed to have died as the result of falling asleep behind the wheel discovered that many had very high levels of caffeine.

It told investigators two things. The caffeine didn't help, and the fact that they had been consuming lots of caffeine suggested the drivers knew they were tired, Ripperger said.

All drivers should make sure they have had enough sleep before they get behind the wheel, Sgt. Grabow said. He added that every driver should be defensive, and aware that others on the road could be drowsy. The 100 days between Memorial Day and Labor Day are the most dangerous on the roads. Troopers will respond to more serious and fatal accidents during this period than any other, he said.

"A fatigued, tired driver can be just as dangerous as an impaired or distracted driver," Grabow said.

Redwood Falls GAZETTE

<http://www.redwoodfallsgazette.com/news/20170621/mndot-study-shows-rcis-are-reducing-deaths>

MnDOT study shows RCIs are reducing deaths

Posted Jun 21, 2017 at 9:44 AM

A new safety study by the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) shows that the state's reduced conflict intersections (RCIs) are saving lives.

RCIs are intersections on multi-lane highways. They allow drivers to turn right from the smaller, local roadway onto the higher speed road and make a u-turn at a nearby opening in the median. They prohibit drivers from making left turns onto the highway. Historically, these intersections, without the RCI design, have more severe right-angle crashes than most other intersections.

The study shows that eight RCIs studied in Minnesota had a 100 percent reduction of fatal and serious injury right-angle crashes, a 77 percent reduction of all severity right-angle crashes and a 50 percent reduction of injury crashes.

The state has four other RCIs, not included in the study, and those intersections have not had a serious injury nor fatality since construction.

“RCIs prevents drivers on the minor road from exposing themselves to the most common type of severe crash, the right-angle crash,” said Derek Leuer, assistant state traffic safety engineer. “Drivers complete a series of driving maneuvers that reduce their probability of a severe crash and the risk of a death or serious injury.”

Leuer said the findings in the study are consistent with other studies done throughout the U.S. MnDOT has plans to build at least 20 more RCIs in the next five years.

“Reduced conflict intersections have firmly shown to reduce deaths, injuries and crashes. That’s why we want to keep building them,” Leuer said.

Learn more about RCIs at www.mndot.gov.

LITCHFIELD Independent Review

INDEPENDENTREVIEW.NET

http://www.crowrivermedia.com/independentreview/life-is-a-highway-ride-it-safely/article_f108de0e-8f99-53c3-9783-6a7e66e1a5cd.html

OUR VIEW

Life is a highway — ride it safely

Ellarry Prentice Jun 30, 2017

July marks the middle of what the Minnesota State Patrol refers to as the "100 deadliest days on Minnesota roads."

Last year, the 100-day stretch between Memorial Day and Labor Day accounted for 120 fatalities, 31 percent of the 392 traffic deaths that occurred in Minnesota in 2016.

Weekend traffic increases exponentially the Friday before Memorial Day, and the increase typically lasts through Labor Day.

To date, preliminary numbers by the Department of Public Safety Office of Traffic safety show 115 fatalities on Minnesota roads in 2017 compared with 125 this time last year.

Driver behaviors continue to play a significant role in motor vehicle crashes with speed, distraction, lack of seat belt use and drunk driving the top contributing factors in road fatalities, according to sergeant Jesse Grabow, the public information officer for the Minnesota State Patrol's northwestern, west central and central Minnesota divisions.

As the weather heats up, so do speeds. Extra enforcement targeting speeding motorists will take place July 7 through July 23, Grabow said.

Alcohol-related crashes claim lives and severely impact the lives of those who survive them. An average of 253 life-changing injuries are caused by alcohol-related crashes each year. Extra impaired enforcement will run Aug. 18 through Sept. 3, according to the Minnesota State Patrol.

Meeker County continues to remain in the top 25 most dangerous drunk driving counties in Minnesota. Meeker County is down to number 25 from 18, the previous year, but efforts continue to be made to reduce drunk driving and related crashes and deaths, according to Sheriff Brian Cruze.

Last year, Meeker County had a total of 269 traffic accidents, up 20 from 249 in 2015. The Sheriff's Office initiated 49 DUI arrests and responded to 10 reckless driving incidents.

More than 25,000 drivers are arrested for DWI in Minnesota each year, and this alarming number averages nearly three DWI arrests per hour throughout the state, according to information provided by Southwest Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths program.

JOYRIDE

People attending Watercade festivities next week will again have the option to be chauffeured home after consuming alcohol.

Last year, the Meeker County Toward Zero Deaths Safe Roads Coalition piloted its JOYRIDE program, where buses drive people home who have had too much to drink.

A sober ride home is just a suggested donation of \$5 this year.

The program will run 11 p.m. to 3 a.m. Saturday, July 9, during Watercade's street dance. Riders will be picked up every 15 minutes at several locations in Litchfield including, Fraternal Order of the Eagles, American Legion, VFW and Kickers. Riders will be dropped off at any location within a 10-mile radius of Litchfield.

SPEAK UP AND SAVE LIVES

Grabow offered these tips for vehicle passengers:

- If you are with a driver who is distracted, speak up, tell them to put the phone down.
- Refuse to drive until every passenger is buckled up.
- Slow down — trying to save a few minutes off your drive isn't worth causing a crash.
- Plan ahead before you go out by designating a sober driver, and if you see a person who has had too much to drink, speak up and offer them a safe ride home.

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 and
- ◆ Evidence-based approaches

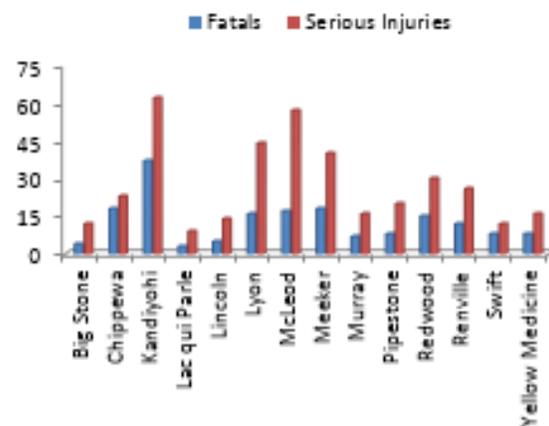


The Southwest Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) program began in 2007. The counties involved include: Big Stone, Chippewa, Kandiyohi, Lac qui Parle, Lincoln, Lyon, McLeod, Meeker, Murray, Pipestone, Redwood, Renville, Swift and Yellow Medicine.

The leading cause of deaths and severe injuries in southwest Minnesota include:

- ◆ **Lack of Seatbelt Use**
- ◆ **Impaired Driving**
- ◆ **Speed and Aggressive Driving**
- ◆ **Inattentive Driving**

**Southwest Minnesota Fatals and Serious Injuries
by County (2012-2016*)**



The leading type of crash resulting in deaths and severe injuries include:

- ◆ **Run-off-Road**
- ◆ **Intersection-Related**

The Southwest Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths program is led by a Steering Committee comprised of the "4 Es:"

- ◆ Enforcement
- ◆ Engineering
- ◆ Education
- ◆ Emergency Medical and Trauma Services

Southwest Minnesota TZD Leadership Contacts

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*2016 data are preliminary.



Southwest Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths Regional Strategic Plan

Mission

To move southwest 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 southwest Minnesota from the past 5-year average (2012-2016*) of 35 fatalities and 76 serious injuries. Note: New injury definitions were introduced in 2016 and may have contributed to a higher reported number of serious injuries.

Objectives

- D. To continuously increase regional seatbelt use rates.

The statewide average **was 93 percent in 2016**. The preliminary regional seat belt rate **is 82.8 percent in April 2016**. This rate is down 3.1 percent from the 2015 rate of 85.9 percent. This was a significant change in seat belt rate usage.

- E. 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.

- F. To continuously decrease the following:

5-year average (2012-2016*) in Southwest Region

Contributing Factors:

<i>Average Annual number of:</i>	Alcohol	Speed	Distraction**	Total
Fatalities	9	5	5	35
Fatal Crashes	8	5	5	31
Severe Injuries	17	16	15	76
Severe Injury Crashes	14	13	12	57

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

**2016 data are preliminary.*

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



Southwest Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths Regional Strategic Plan

Total Southwest Region (2016*)

	Fatalities	Fatal Crashes	Severe Injuries	Severe Injury Crashes
2016* Total	24	22	90	67
2012-2016* Total	176	157	381	286

**2016 data are preliminary.*

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

Region Goal 2 – TZD Partnership Goals

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

4. Establish the vision of TZD as a priority for all region, county, city (government agencies)
 - D. Engage local government involvement in TZD steering committee and workshops
 - E. Educate/promote traffic safety awareness of city/county officials
 - F. 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))

5. 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)

6. 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)