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Safety Sidekick Newsletter

Vol. 2, December 2015

The National Center for Rural Road Safety (Safety Center) is pleased to share our second Safety Sidekick newsletter with you.

We hope that you find this quarterly newsletter useful, and that you have looked at our website, which is the most comprehensive source of useful guidance and information. If you haven't checked it out yet, please go to the Safety Center [website](#) and see what's available. There is also an introductory video on our [Multimedia](#) page.

In our quest to provide information to others, we would like to hear from you about the good work that you are involved with. Rural safety champions, are you doing something well that should be shared? Let's share it! We are looking for noteworthy practices in rural road safety to share with the community at large. If there is an innovation or best practice that has worked well in your community, we'd like to share it on our [website](#).

Let us help you document and share the word about the good work you've been doing- please send an email to Jaime at info@ruralsafetycenter.org or call her at (844) 330-2200.

Thanks for letting us be your trusted "safety sidekick" to make rural road travel safer!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Albert".

Steve Albert
Director
National Center for Rural Road Safety
info@ruralsafetycenter.org

Road User

Winter Driving Safety Tips

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Slow down for wet, snowy, icy conditions.
Avoid quick braking or acceleration.
Find out about driving conditions before you go.
Every time you travel- Buckle Up.
Turn signals, brake lights, and windows need to be clear of snow.
You should never use cruise control in winter weather conditions.



Photo Credit: Janet Ward, NOAA HPCC

Law Enforcement

Here are some communications resources for roadway safety initiatives this winter!

The winter season is upon us and we have some useful communications and marketing resources to share with our law enforcement partners. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has created a website repository with relevant traffic safety campaign information and a lot of news to use in your local jurisdictions.

[Traffic Safety Marketing](#) currently includes:

- [Winter Driving Tips](#)
- [Pre-Holiday Season Drunk Driving Prevention](#)
- [Holiday Season Drunk Driving Prevention](#)

The website also shares great advice on how to brand traffic safety from a law enforcement perspective. Please check out our [Branding Traffic Safety](#) site for more information .

Source: *National Highway Traffic Safety Administration*

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Strategic Highway Safety Plan Primer

Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP)

The [Strategic Highway Safety Plan](#) (SHSP) is a State's comprehensive transportation safety plan, mandated since 2005 as a major component and requirement of the Federal Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP). Historically, SAFETEA-LU established the HSIP as a federal program. The current Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) continues the HSIP as a core Federal-aid program [1] . Through the continuation of the HSIP, it mandates the State development and implementation of an SHSP that it is periodically evaluated and updated, and identifies and analyzes highway safety problems and strategies to address them. The SHSP is approved by the Governor of the State, or a responsible State agency.

The SHSP uses a data-driven, long-range approach to establish goals and objectives for a statewide-coordinated safety plan. More specifically, "the plan provides a comprehensive framework for reducing fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads" [2]. The SHSP must address and demonstrate a number of factors that include: a consultative approach, coordination, data driven problem identification, consideration of additional safety factors, a performance-based approach, use of effective strategies and countermeasures, integration of the four E's of highway safety strategies, and an evaluation and update cycle.

An SHSP is intended to identify the key safety issues and needs within a State, in order to inform investment decisions that will both act as a countermeasure and act in the interest of saving lives and preventing injuries. To create an effective SHSP, States should use the best available safety data. This will assist in "identifying both critical highway safety problems and safety improvement opportunities on all public roads, including non-State-

THEY'LL SEE
YOU BEFORE
YOU SEE THEM.



owned public roads and roads on tribal land" [3]. In addition to analyzing crash, roadway, and traffic data to identify transportation and safety problems, States can also include data from findings of Road Safety Audits (RSA) to identify common countermeasure recommendations, locations of fatalities and serious injuries, locations that possess risk factors for potential crashes, rural roads that are commensurate with fatality data, motor vehicle crashes that include fatalities or serious injuries to bicyclists and pedestrians, and an analysis of the cost-effectiveness of improvements.

From the data, the SHSP describes a program of strategies and steps of action aimed at reducing or eliminating the safety hazards identified. In determining strategies, the SHSP should consider a number of factors and different impact areas. In order to do this, the plan should integrate the four E's of highway safety as the emphasis areas- "engineering, education, enforcement and emergency medical services (EMS)" [4]. Potential strategies for each of these areas include site-specific traffic engineering such as speed humps or other traffic calming measures, educational seminars and campaigns to address speeding or distracted driving, or increasing law enforcement in targeted areas. Strategies and countermeasures should be implemented and prioritized by their potential to effectively address their roadway safety problems and significantly lower fatalities, and severe injuries. These strategies should be tied to measurable goals and objectives in the State's SHSP, enabling them to track the status of SHSP implementation efforts and monitor the progress of the strategies' effectiveness. A [comprehensive evaluation](#) should occur as part of the State's SHSP update in order to review whether the strategies are being implemented as planned, and to analyze if the goals and objectives are being met. Evaluation results should be used to confirm the validity of the emphasis areas and strategies, and to address the SHSP process and performance issues that can be improved upon or incorporated in an SHSP update. Using the [SHSP Evaluation Process Model](#), States can ensure that the proper steps are taken when implementing their plans.

The SHSP requires input from a broad range of safety stakeholders, and through collaboration, allows highway safety programs and partners in a State to work together "in an effort to align goals, leverage resources, and collectively address the State's safety challenges" [5]. This collaborative effort consults "stakeholders identified in legislation, such as representatives of major modes of transportation; Federal, State, local, and Tribal safety stakeholders; State and local traffic enforcement officials"; as well as additional stakeholders, depending on the State's transportation needs, "including Departments of Health and Education, major employers, colleges and universities" [6]. This broad range is beneficial because of the shared responsibility that provides for stakeholders from various disciplines combining their skills and resources, a common goal that fosters camaraderie and trust, and a multidisciplinary approach that moves disciplines from their individual areas of expertise into a coordinated, comprehensive approach to safety.

SHSPs have a direct impact on transportation safety in individual states and the nation as a whole, and to aid in the implementation, FHWA has released the "[A Champion's Guidebook to Saving Lives](#)". "Since these plans were first required by legislation in 2005, traffic fatalities have dramatically declined. In fact, over the past 10 years there has been a reduction of nearly 25 percent in the number of fatalities on our Nation's roadways" [7].

[1] <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/hsip/shsp/>

[2] Ibid.

[3] <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/guidance/guideshsp.cfm>

[4] Ibid.

[5] <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/hsip/shsp/>

[6] http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/hsip/resources/fhwasa1102/flyr3_in.cfm

[7] http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/hsip/resources/fhwasa1102/flyr2_id.cfm

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Emergency Medical Services

The Emergency Medical Services Link to Roadway Safety

Emergency Medical Services (EMS), along with Engineering, Education, and Enforcement, make up the 4 "E's" of highway safety. A well functioning EMS system is a critical link in the initiative to reduce fatalities and serious injuries, especially in rural areas. EMS is a

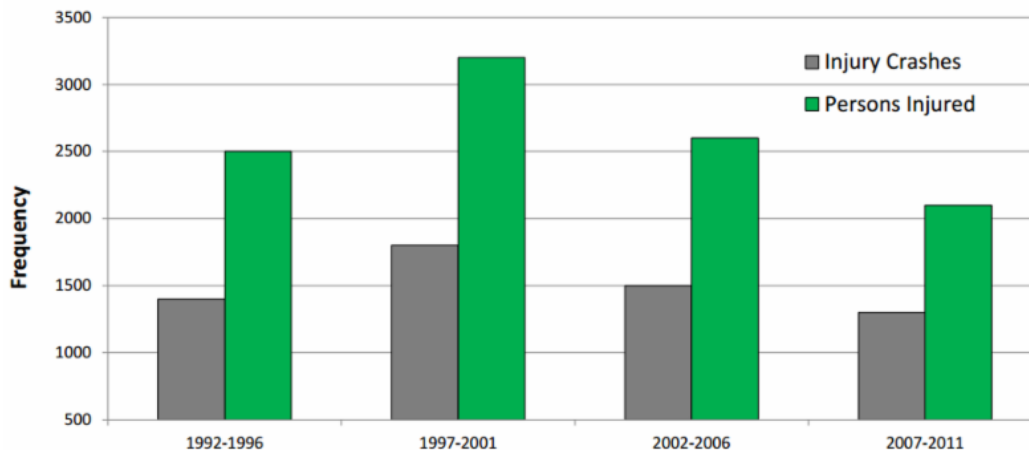
necessary collaborator in the state Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) process. Since the SHSP is intended to be a statewide coordinated effort, EMS issues need to be considered. Unlike the other "E's", EMS is often a post-crash participant. Response time to medical facilities, along with the skill of the EMS providers, is a tremendous factor in the outcome for patients.

Many crash victims are able to survive in the 10-90 minute window post-crash, which is often referred to as the "golden hour", where time is critical for EMS to be able to make a difference in reducing morbidity and mortality. In rural areas, there are additional challenges to this timing, such as the distance to and from medical resources, detecting the crash location, and route optimization. Simple elements including distance and environment can have tremendous impacts on being able to get crash victims to hospitals in time. These factors support that the EMS system must be considered when a state develops and implements their SHSP. Coordination, primarily with enforcement, for incident detection and route optimization to and from the crash, can mean the difference between life and death outcomes for the patient. EMS system success is so very dependant on access to clear routes to destination hospitals.

We often think that once EMS is on the scene, the only thing to consider is treating the patient. EMS, however, are unfortunately also involved in crashes when responding to incidents. Ambulance crash data collected between 1992 and 2011, provided by EMS.Gov, shows that there are an average of 4,500 traffic crashes every year that involve ambulances- and 34% of these crashes result in injuries.

Estimated Ambulance Crashes resulting in Injured Persons 1992 - 2011

Between 1992-2011 there were an estimated annual mean of **1500** injury crashes involving an ambulance and **2600** injured persons* (includes ambulance occupants and occupants of all other vehicles involved)**.



While the crash could be unavoidable, some of these injuries are the result of EMS providers and patients being unsecured in the patient compartment- 84% of EMS providers and 67% of patients lack restraints, such as shoulder harnesses or lap belts. Just as with passenger vehicles, occupants need to be buckled up.

How can EMS systems be involved in the coordination process within a state? The first step is to guarantee that EMS is engaged in the SHSP planning and implementation. Safety resources and financial investments from the state are tied to SHSP priorities. EMS must be included in these discussions to help reduce fatalities and serious injuries on public roads. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has been supporting the Office of Emergency Medical Services to continue improving EMS' ability to provide the best "last chance" to reduce death and disability resulting from roadway crashes. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has also created a website resource for EMS engagement in SHSP, [Saving Lives Together](#).

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Roads

Clear Roads Program

Across the US, many states have joined a group called Clear Roads to provide uniform messaging during winter weather: Ice and Snow, Take it Slow. [Clear Roads](#) is a pooled-fund winter highway research project that brings together transportation professionals and researchers to drive innovation in winter maintenance materials, equipment, and practices in real-world conditions.



Photo Credit: Peter Griffin

Please visit the Clear Roads website to read more about completed research, newsletter items, and how your state can participate.

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Safety Center Blog

When Zero Is a Good Thing

Roadway safety is not only a public health issue, but it is also a challenge for every road user on a personal level. Many readers have seen the YouTube videos put out by several state departments of transportation regarding how many people are killed each year on America's roadways, and how many of those deaths are an "acceptable number". The videos then show random people being asked "What is the goal for your family?"

"Zero". The answer is always the same.

Those videos ask the interviewees more questions. Can we move the number of transportation related fatalities that far down? How do we work toward this goal? The good news is that we are already on the path. The concept of Zero Fatalities has been gaining momentum over the last several years, with a focused approach that has become known as "Toward Zero Deaths: A National Strategy on Highway Safety."

In 2009, the effort materialized when transportation safety stakeholders began the dialogue toward creating a national strategic highway safety plan. Much planning and strategizing has led to a broadly accepted zero



fatalities approach, recognizing that no roadway fatality is acceptable. Many (well over half) states have adopted TZD principles in their State Strategic Highway Safety Plans- some have gone as far as adopting a zero fatality target, while others have reflect a zero fatality vision.

To work towards zero, transportation professionals are working on better roadway design, maintenance, and implementation of safety countermeasures. Emergency medical service is improving performance and safety. Enforcement is targeting the reduction of high risk behaviors, such as speeding, impaired driving, and distracted driving. Your organization can participate in the TZD effort as a partner by following the guidelines [here](#).

Let's go back to those videos where your average, every-day citizen is asked what the goal is for their family. They all replied with "zero". Reaching zero means there is a lot of work to be done, and not all responsibility falls to transportation agencies. Adopting a road safety culture transcends what lawmakers and enforcement do. It means that you and I have to make a concerted effort to be responsible road users. Put our phones away, pay attention to our surroundings, and adjust our driving for the conditions of the road. We will make sure our passengers wear seatbelts. It means we will take care to do the right thing, not the quick thing or the easy thing- because we want to all have the same answer when asked how many roadway fatalities happened to someone we know: ZERO.

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Upcoming Safety Center Trainings

Did You Miss Our Last Webinar?

The recording and handouts for the Safety Center's first webinar: Introduction to the National Center for Rural Road Safety can be found on our website at:

<http://ruralsafetycenter.org/training-education/safety-center-trainings/archived-safety-center-trainings/>

(Due to recent issues with email servers this link has been deactivated, therefore please copy and paste this web address into your browser.)

Upcoming Safety Center Trainings

Webinar: Understanding Organizational Culture and Its Impact on Safety Culture

Date: December 15, 2015

Time: 11:00 am to 12:00 pm MT

The National Center for Rural Road Safety (Safety Center) will be hosting a FREE, one hour online training event.

This Safety Center sponsored webinar will provide an overview of organizational culture, key factors that influence organizational culture, and how leaders can change their culture with respect to building a stronger safety culture. This presentation provides the highlights of the recent plenary discussion "Understanding Culture" given at the TRB sponsored 2nd National Summit on Roadway Safety Culture at the National Academy of Sciences in Washington D.C. and includes practical case study examples of what others have done to improve their cultures.

Webinar: Application of Systemic Safety to a Non-Engineering Concern

Date: January 21, 2016

Time: 11:00 am to 12:30 pm MT

The National Center for Rural Road Safety (Safety Center) will be hosting a FREE, 1.5 hour webinar.

This Safety Center sponsored webinar will provide a background on the rural safety problem and how the systemic safety approach is used to help address these problems. Some examples of systemic safety applications will be summarized and non-engineering application discussed. An overview of the High Five Rural Traffic Safety Project administered through the Iowa Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau (GTSB), a non-engineering application, will be provided. This project uses 10 years of crash data and seat belt compliance data to determine annually which five rural counties will receive additional funding in order to increase enforcement, engineering, and education related to traffic safety in those counties. This webinar will discuss how the project works, its ongoing outcomes, and how to develop a similar program in your area.

For more information or to register for these trainings, check our our [Training and Education](#) page.

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What's Hot Off the Press?

Having Trouble Receiving Our Emails?

Your email system may have a filter that is either sending the info@ruralsafetycenter.org emails into your junk/spam folders or because we included a link in the email and it is

delivered from constant contacts, your email system is withholding it altogether from your mailbox.

To fix the issue prior to the next webinar, newsletter, or training e-blast (anything that may include links), we have a template letter that has been provided to us by constant contacts (the service we use for training registration) as a way to communicate the problem, and solution, to your **IT department**. **If you would like a copy of this email, please send a request to info@ruralsafetycenter.org.**

Emergency Responder Safety Institute Learning Network

If you're a First Responder, check out the new [Traffic Incident Management](#) module, as well as many other safety related learning modules from the Emergency Responder Safety Institute.

*Note: you must have a user name and password to access learning modules.

Noteworthy Practices from 2015 National Roadway Safety Foundation Award Winners

The Federal Highway Administration has released the [2015 Noteworthy Practices Guide](#) to highlight the achievements and best practices of those selected for the 2015 National Roadway Safety Awards.

NHTSA "5 to Drive" Campaign for Young Drivers

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration encourages you to join the "[5 to Drive](#)" campaign to improve teen driver safety. This campaign addresses discussion about the five most risky behaviors for teen drivers.

FHWA Roadway Departure Crash Emphasis Area Brochure

The Federal Highway Administration has released a [brochure](#) highlighting roadway departure crashes.

FHWA Speed Management Action Plan Development Package

The Federal Highway Administration [Speed Management Action Plan Development Package](#) can help local practitioners develop speed management plans in order to reduce speed related accidents.

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