

H-2024

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
WASHINGTON, D.C.

ISSUED: March 12, 1980

Forwarded to:

Honorable Joan Claybrook
Administrator
National Highway Traffic Safety
Administration
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

SAFETY RECOMMENDATION(S)

H-80-24

As part of our continuing safety objective to seek nationwide improvements in roadway skid resistance standards, the Safety Board has concluded a special study, "Fatal Highway Accidents on Wet Pavement -- The Magnitude, Location, and Characteristics," ¹/ which revealed that during 1976 and 1977, 13.5 percent of all fatal accidents occurred on wet pavement, while precipitation occurred only about 3.0 to 3.5 percent of the time nationwide. This indicates that fatal accidents on wet pavement occur 3.9 to 4.5 times more often than might be expected. In 1976 and 1977, the National Safety Council projected that about 18 percent of all accidents in 22 States occurred on wet pavement. These data indicate that perhaps six times more accidents may occur on wet pavement than might be expected.

Based on the magnitude of the wet-pavement accident problem, the statistical findings, and other independent studies, there appears to be a need for a public awareness program similar to "Operation Lifesaver" for railroad crossings that would alert the public to the need for extra caution on wet pavement.

Therefore, the National Transportation Safety Board recommends that the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration:

Develop a program to alert the public to the component factors and magnitude of the wet-pavement accident problem. (Class II, Priority Action) (H-80-24)

KING, Chairman, DRIVER, Vice Chairman, McADAMS, and BURSLEY, Members, concurred in this recommendation. GOLDMAN, Member, did not participate.

By: 
Chairman

¹/For more detailed information, read "Special Study--Fatal Highway Accidents on Wet Pavement--The Magnitude, Location, and Characteristics" (NTSB-HSS-80-1).