

Safe Communities



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NATIONAL NEWS

Free Community Development Tools

The President and First Lady issued a call to service for all Americans to empower their communities by giving of themselves through volunteerism. During his inauguration in Washington, DC, President Obama promoted USASERVICE.org and encouraged all citizens to visit the site and register for community service. The site allows visitors to register, submit volunteer opportunities, and enter upcoming community events and locations.

Visit www.usaservice.org to add information about your local Safe Communities coalition and upcoming events.

Building Safe Communities Tools

For years, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has provided support for the national effort of building and sustaining Community Traffic Safety Programs and Safe Communities coalitions. Since 1996, NHTSA has provided a portal for the distribution of Safe Communities material, technical assistance, networking for the sharing of best practices, and collaboration through its *Build Safe Communities* newsletter.

The national Safe Communities Service Center has updated the Data Toolkit created by the University of Georgia and NHTSA. In addition, the Safe Communities Startup Kit is available, which provides information to communities interested in starting a Safe Communities coalition. It is crucial to know what “real” problems your community faces in order to provide countermeasures for solutions, continued support and buy-in from community stakeholders and citizens.

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Now more than ever, America’s communities are struggling economically with dwindling and disappearing incomes because of job closings. These events affect *your* community profile where countermeasures, once established to address problems, no longer fit the community needs. Send an e-mail to safe.communities@dot.gov for more information about Safe Communities, and to order your free Data Toolkit CD and Safe Communities Startup Kit.

Veterans Safe Driving Initiative

“VA is committed to helping our returning heroes with world-class health care and educational benefits, home loans, job training, and now with a specific safe-driving program,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dr. James B. Peake.

On January 12, 2009, the Department of Veterans Affairs revealed that the leading cause of death for veterans is traffic-related crashes during the year after returning home from deployment. The VA, the Department of Transportation, and the Department of Defense have joined forces to help reduce traffic-related fatalities for our veterans.

The purpose of the new safe-driving initiative is to increase awareness of the importance of safe driving, seat belt and helmet use, and other measures. The VA will create a national educational program using its network of medical centers, community clinics, drop-in counseling centers (Vet Centers), and veterans' benefits offices.

To read the complete news release, go to <http://www1.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=1643>

May Is National Youth Traffic Safety Month

In May 2009, the National Organizations for Youth Safety (NOYS) will play a major role in promoting *National Youth Traffic Safety Month*. NOYS is also leading *Act Out Loud: Raising Voices for Safe Teen Driving*, a national teen- and school-led activism competition to help spread the word about safe teen driving. NOYS invites your organization to take the wheel and help drive the messages of the campaign and increase your organization's visibility.

Over the next several months, NOYS will develop opportunities for National Youth Traffic Safety Month designed to assist partners and supporters in participating in this campaign. The next NOYS meeting in May will include a "Hill Day" to let our Representatives know about the great work our partners and supporters are doing to address youth traffic safety and to increase awareness of the need for more attention and funds to address this crisis.

Tools and programs include:

- Promoting the National Youth Traffic Safety Month Project Toolkit, a PDF is now available to

help youth develop projects from the project list. The list contains these projects:

- Safety belt checks;
- Roll call briefings;
- Present "Smashed: Toxic Tales of Teens and Alcohol";
- Mock car crash;
- Raise awareness about distracted driving- host a mock party with underage drinkers as a training for local law enforcement or as an observation event at your school;
- Allstate Foundation and NOYS are awarding 50 teams up to \$1,000. Teams can apply for one of the 50 "Best" awards at www.noys.org.

- Promoting Act Out Loud: Raising Voices for Safe Teen Driving, a national teen- and school-led activism competition to help spread the word about safe teen driving. Teams have the opportunity to win a cool video camera and up to \$10,000. *Act Out Loud* is made possible through the generous support of the Allstate Foundation. Visit www.actoutloud.org for more information.
- Developing a public service announcement that will be available for use during this campaign.
- Working with Interactive Driving Systems to develop an online game that will help educate youth about risk awareness, offering prizes and awards to the top-scoring teens.
- Developing an 18-month calendar and two-sided poster to promote National Youth Traffic Safety Month. The back of the poster will have three lesson plans and easy-to-copy handouts for advisors to use.

NOYS will be re-launching the National Youth Traffic Safety Month general information site that will link to all of these activities, tools, and programs.

Your organization's support will help make a big impact this year and encourage more teens to act out loud. To access toolkits and to learn more about what your organization can do to make a difference for this initiative, visit www.noys.org and www.actoutloud.org.

SAFE COMMUNITIES HIGHLIGHTS

Future editions of *Building Safe Communities* will highlight activities of Safe Communities coalitions and traffic safety partners across NHTSA's 10 regions. NHTSA Region 10 has over 160 active Safe Communities, which is why they are our choice for this edition. Gina Beretta is a NHTSA Region 10 program manager and Safe Communities liaison and has been instrumental in helping us acquire information on activities conducted by the many Safe Communities coalitions in her area.

NHTSA Region 10 - From the desk of Gina Beretta



NHTSA's Region 10 office is located in Seattle, Washington, and is very proud of its many and diverse Safe Communities coalitions. Region 10 covers a large geographic portion of the United States, encompassing Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington. Therefore, community coalitions in these States frequently must work throughout large portions of their State. Members are involved with a great variety of projects – child passenger safety and other occupant protection issues, impaired driving, and bicycle and pedestrian safety are just a few.

As you will see in the featured activities in this newsletter, there is a lot of great work achieved by these coalitions.

We are fortunate to have extremely passionate and talented coordinators working with such dedicated groups in our States.

To contact Gina for more information on Safe Communities in NHTSA Region 10, call 206-220-7646 or send e-mail to gina.beretta@dot.gov.

Just a Tidbit of What's Going on in Washington State

The following articles are just a few of the large number of projects and activities going on in the State of Washington. If you are interested in learning more, a contact source is listed below each article. For more information about community project grants in Washington, contact:

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"X-52" Patrols

"X-52" stands for extra patrols 52 weeks per year. The goal of the X-52 program is to reduce speeding and DUI-related traffic fatalities and serious injuries on Washington's roads. These sustained enforcement patrols will specifically target speed and DUI offenders, as well as look for other traffic violations. The program is being administered statewide through a network of community traffic safety task forces. The X-52 program also includes initiatives designed to let the public know that these extra patrols are happening in Washington every week.

The Chelan Douglas DUI Task Force and the Grant and Adams County Traffic Safety Task Force organized X-52 patrols throughout the year in their rural counties. The partnership they have created is second-to-none in the

area. They are constantly working the earned media side of the problem, addressing speeding and DUIs. The ability to have agencies work together, combined with media, have had a profound impact in local communities. In addition, the programs have excellent child passenger safety projects.

For more information about X-52, contact:

Eveline Roy

Chelan Douglas DUI Task Force

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Er.roy@verison.net

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Grant and Adams County Traffic Safety Task Force

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“PACE” Making Communities “Fatal-Free”

Snohomish County DUI and Traffic Safety Task Force works with law enforcement agencies in Snohomish County using a non-jurisdictional approach called Pro-Active Criminal Enforcement (PACE) during its multi-jurisdictional emphasis patrols. In August 2008, Snohomish County, the third largest populated area of the State, was “Fatal-free.” Snohomish County law enforcement is very active in traffic safety efforts and that coupled with earned media has made a difference in having August (usually a month high in traffic crashes) being fatal-free. Coordinator Tracy McMillan does an outstanding job and her numbers show it. For more information on PACE, contact:

Tracy McMillan

Snohomish County DUI Task Force

425-388-7229

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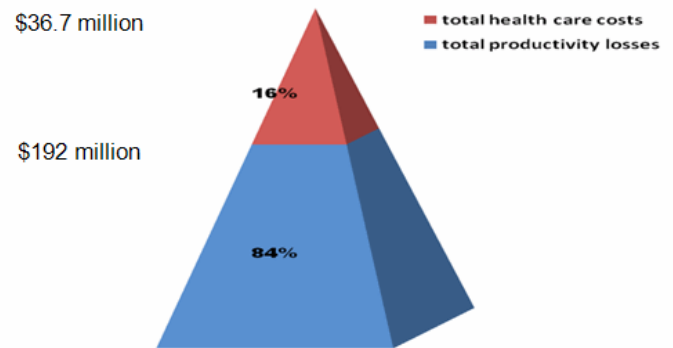
Visit the Snohomish County Traffic Safety Task Force Web site at:

http://www.wtsc.wa.gov/programs/taskforce/Taskforces/programs/snohomish_tf.php.

Seat Belt Use and Health Care Costs in Montana Brings Purpose to Coalition

On March 1, the Harborview Injury Prevention & Research Center released a report that revealed that in 2006, a record 887 unbelted individuals were hospitalized for care in Montana. The staggering emergency services cost for unbelted drivers and passengers was estimated at \$9.9 million. This cost includes hospital stays averaging 2.3 to 2.7 additional days with charges of \$52,993 relative to the average belted occupant of \$36,420.

Lifetime costs of unbelted motor vehicle crash injuries in Montana



To read the Harborview Injury Prevention and Research Report go to

<http://data.opi.mt.gov/legbills/2009/Minutes/Senate/Exhibits/his19a02.pdf>.

In 2005, to address the growing issue of unbelted drivers and passengers, the Montana Seatbelt Coalition went into action joining with the Montana Department of Transportation. The partnership produced a video that features seat belt safety issues on their Web site at seatbeltmontana.com. The message on having a primary seat belt law is the main message that has been disseminated throughout the State. The group Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies of Montana also conducted occupant protection training around the State and put together the presentation, *Safe & Alive: Disarming Montana's Biggest Killer*. The group gave law enforcement officers, first responders, and early-

childhood professionals the opportunity to get the latest information about occupant protection laws, Federal regulations, best practices, Montana data and facts about what's happening on its roadways each year, and how that relates to their roles in the community. In addition, the group will give a 2-hour workshop at the 2nd Annual Montana Crime Prevention Conference. The presentation can be seen at <http://hmhb-mt.org>.

For more information about the Harborview Study or the Seat Belt Coalition, contact:

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TRAFFIC SAFETY FROM THE FIELD



Click It AND Ticket in Grays Harbor

Grays Harbor, Washington, Traffic Safety Task Force (GHTSTF) organized the *Click It AND Ticket* campaign, which was the mirror effect of the well-known NHTSA

Click It or Ticket Mobilization. *Click It AND Ticket* incorporated the task force and officers from all over the county where upon arrival to the schools, the students were met with a large law enforcement presence including police cars with flashing lights. Using “mock tickets” created by GHTSTF Coordinator Susan Bradbury (ticket design had each school’s colors and mascot), the students were pulled over for a quick observation and issued “citations” for being properly strapped-in. The students were advised to sign the ticket and turn it in at the student court being held in the school commons where leadership students conducted “traffic court.” When the tickets were turned in, they were exchanged for full-size candy bars. The tickets were then put into a drawing for awards that included DVDs, gift certificates to local area restaurants, iTunes, T-shirts specially made for the event, and many other prizes.

At the end of the day, an assembly was held for the students where officers discussed some important traffic safety facts, and a drawing for the grand prize of a debit card loaded with \$124 was held. Coincidentally, the grand prize of the \$124 gift card happened to be the amount of a real seat belt ticket. The task force repeated this at every Grays Harbor high school. The kids loved it so much they asked them to come back. The task force is in the process of building a new program aimed at impaired driving, which it plans to do in May just before prom season. The officers all felt the program was the most positive project they had participated in, which was an amazing compliment.

This event was a very creative way to involve school youth leadership clubs in increasing belt usage. The task force will offer photos and educational material that may be duplicated. This is a wonderful project and very inexpensive. For more information about *Click It AND Ticket* in Grays Harbor, contact:

Susan Bradbury

Grays Harbor Traffic Safety Task Force

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David Reed Memorial Emphasis

On January 2, the David Reed Memorial Emphasis, created in memory of David Reed, a McCleary man killed by an impaired driver, was conducted in Grays Harbor. The Friday night emphasis began with a dinner to honor Reed's parents, David and Jenny, who had served as longtime advocates for anti-drunk-driving efforts. Then Undersheriff Rick Scott, who went to high school with and was friends with Reed, made a presentation. Jenny Reed served for years with the county's victim impact panel, telling driving offenders about her son.

The evening awards were presented to officers for being invaluable members of the task force:

- Officer Jeff Weiss, Aberdeen Police Department;
- Lt. Matt Stowers, Grays Harbor County Sheriff's Office; and
- Sgt. Brad Johansson, the Grays Harbor County Sheriff's Office;

Officers awarded for the most DUI arrests last year:

- Officer Aaron Hergert, the Hoquiam Police Department; and
- Trooper Justin Eisfeldt, Washington State Patrol

A video presentation about David was shown and the parents of the victim stood at the door and shook hands with each officer as they left the building to begin the 8-hour emphasis. The emphasis was a joint effort involving 25 local officers and 5 State Patrol troopers. The local contingent came from the Sheriff's Office and the Aberdeen, Hoquiam and Montesano police departments. The State Patrol also contributed a portable breathalyzer station to the emphasis patrol. Extra staff members were also set to work the jail and 9-1-1-dispatch center. Scott said the David Reed Memorial Emphasis sent a strong message against driving under the influence.

The results netted 10 impaired drivers and produced nearly 50 alcohol-related citations, according to Scott. There were 36 other alcohol-related citations issued for offenses ranging from open containers in vehicles to minors in possession of alcohol. Impaired driving citations were issued to two people in the same vehicle on Highway 115 outside Ocean Shores, Scott said. Fifteen drivers were cited for driving with suspended licenses, while 39 citations were issued for various other traffic violations. In all, the officers made 298 contacts with drivers and issued 100 citations.

For more information concerning the David Reed Memorial Emphasis, contact:

Susan Bradbury

Grays Harbor Traffic Safety Task Force

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Cooper's Corner for Children Traffic Safety Education

Cooper's Corner is an interactive children's educational "city" where visitors can learn about traffic safety. The city is a joint project by the Benton Franklin Traffic Safety Task Force, Benton Franklin Safe Kids Coalition, and the Washington Traffic Safety Commission. The task force has built this permanent location at the Kennewick Police

Department Office located in the local mall, with a second location scheduled to open in March 2009.

Cooper's Corner is named for a 13-year-old boy killed by an elderly inattentive driver during a sanctioned bike ride. Capturing the children's attention through whimsical and entertaining design, Cooper's Corner teaches the children important lessons about traffic safety. Last May, Jim Ports, NHTSA's Deputy Administrator, visited the site.

For additional information regarding Cooper's Corner, contact:

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Kent Illegal Street-Racing Emphasis

Last summer, the Kent Police Drinking Driver Task Force organized a street-racing emphasis by joining with local law enforcement agencies, civilians, and the Washington State Patrol, which provided motor units and aircraft support, to address the severe street-racing problem in the Kent community. The action was prompted after police received complaints from residents reporting reckless driving and expressed fear that the racing would increase crime. Businesses in the large downtown industrial area also complained. Many times business owners would come to work in the morning to find their property covered with traction marks, littered with trash, and even human waste. The business area was considered a prime location for racers because of the wide streets designed for "semi" truck traffic, large vacant parking lots, and isolation.

Kent Police Traffic Sgt. Rafael Padilla assembled a team of 28 officers, 4 State troopers, and 7 civilians to conduct a large-scale racer emphasis sweep. Overlapping shifts, shift adjustments, and overtime (between 11 p.m. and 4 a.m.) were used to staff the well publicized event, which was broadcast on racing blogs covering the racing hours. Undercover officers conducted intelligence-gathering on racing activity during the weekends prior to the emphasis.

Media personnel attended the emphasis and went undercover, after being provided with rules of engagement and safety protocol. Because the racers and planners for the illegal events have become more technologically savvy with the use of the Internet, blogging sites, cell phones, GPS, and police scanners, the task force was challenged to cover Kent's 29-square-mile area.

Emphasis outcomes of the street-racing project are as follow:

- 37 vehicles detained (spectators and racers) with an additional 100 vehicles identified en route to the event;
- 7 vehicles impounded;
- 83 people arrested and processed at the scene;
- 7 suspects booked (4 for racing, 2 DUI, 1 reckless driving);
- 52 adults cited and released;
- 24 juvenile cases referred to the juvenile court; and
- 166 total criminal charges filed.

The patrol emphasis was a huge success and a Web site focusing on Kent racing was shut down the next day. Earned media was incredible, with the emphasis running as the lead story all the next day. Another positive result is that there has been a drastic decrease in racing activity. This is an excellent program and well worth sharing.

For additional information on Kent Illegal Street Racing Emphasis, contact:

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Manejar Seguro = Drive Safe

A few years ago, the Washington Traffic Safety Commission provided a grant to the Yakima County Traffic Safety Task Force and its partners to develop a program

named *Manejar Seguro*, translated as “Drive Safe.” *Manejar Seguro* is a class taught by police officers and has been extremely popular. The program gives local law enforcement officers the opportunity to communicate with Spanish-speaking residents while understanding that most have reservations about local law enforcement. Moreover, *Manejar Seguro* allows law enforcement officers to build bridges with residents along the way.

Manejar Seguro has been in operation for four years and teaches monolingual Spanish-speaking residents how to pass the written portion of the Washington State Drivers Test. Many participants believe that if they memorized the questions they would pass the next time, not understanding that there is a pool of questions randomly selected for each test.

Manejar Seguro is a perfect venue for law enforcement to talk to the community about new traffic laws, upcoming mobilizations (speed and impaired-driving mobilizations) and other pertinent information for programs such as child passenger safety and pedestrian safety. Over 1,000 people have attended the six-week class. Hundreds have successfully received their licenses after failing the written drivers test multiple times.

Manejar Seguro is made possible by linking with community partners such as local churches and school districts. Partners advertise *Manejar Seguro* to parents and community members and provide a steady flow of participants for each class. Currently, the driver’s course is limited to the Lower Yakima Valley; however, the task force is looking forward to expanding the program with the support of other law enforcement agencies throughout Yakima County.

For more information about *Manejar Seguro*, contact *Edica Esqueda* at 509-837-2120 or at eesqueda@ci.sunnyside.wa.us.

Child Restraint Project in Grant County

In 2007, the number one cause of accidental death for children 14 and younger in Grant County was motor vehicle crashes. The Central Basin Traffic Safety Task Force (CBTSTF) joined with Safe Kids Grant County and started doing child restraint enforcement patrols. The Grant County Sheriff’s Office - Motor Traffic Unit (GCSO-MTU) took the role as lead law enforcement agency and other law enforcement agencies supported the effort.

Two GCSO-MTU officers were trained as child passenger safety (CPS) technicians. This brought clarity to the need to combine enforcement and CPS education for law enforcement officers in order to have a successful CPS campaign. The initial solution was to create a project that allowed CPS technicians to ride along with law enforcement to teach spotting techniques.

CBTSTF Coordinator Erika Simmons and WTSC Program Manager Jonna VanDyk produced a two-sided CPS Check Point Card for officers to use. Follow-up check-up events were conducted with patrols to enhance the educational component. The outcome of this combined training was that as officers became more confident with spotting techniques, their contacts with the public increased.

In 2008, VanDyk filmed a patrol in Mattawa, Washington and used it as a presentation in September with CBTSTF, WTSC, NHTSA, and law enforcement in a roundtable discussion. Because of its combined efforts, WTSC awarded CBTSTF a CPS grant for its project. The grant provided officer training for the first time to law enforcement agencies, funded technician support, radio PSAs, earned media, project support, printing, car seats and boosters, variable message signs, pop-up signs and project evaluation.

February and July are high CPS enforcement months for Moses Lake, Ephrata, Quincy, Mattawa, and Royal City areas, and in Othello (Adams County). Midway through February, there were 77 child restraint infractions and 34 child restraint warnings reported with more reports on

the way. Four radio stations (including one Spanish-language station) are airing the PSAs, which have generated a large number of calls from the public needing help with their car seats. Additionally, a law enforcement and CPS training presentation was created for training and briefing.

To assist the public with child safety seat issues when a contact is made during patrol, officers hand out fliers in both English and Spanish that provide information on check-up events and a list of technicians and contact information. This way the violators can get the problem fixed and take the check-up forms to court with them, where the infraction may be reduced or dismissed.

To learn more about this successful CPS project and outcomes in Grant and Adams counties, contact:

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Central Basin Traffic Safety Task Force Coordinator

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Underage Drinking Is Serious Business in Pierce County

Efforts to take underage drinking seriously in Pierce County, Washington, began two years ago when seven law enforcement agencies involved with the Tacoma-Pierce County DUI Task Force teamed up with three Tacoma Trauma Trust hospitals, substance abuse prevention professionals, parents, and other community activists to implement Party Intervention Patrol (PIP). The underage-drinking patrols were designed to not only enforce underage drinking laws and zero tolerance policies, but to link youth and their parents to help through brief interventions on the night of a teen alcohol party.

The project, currently funded by the Washington Traffic Safety Commission, initially began with a series of MySpace trainings. The trainings showed parents how to monitor their children's online connections to illegal alcohol parties and suppliers. It also made the community realize the extent of the local underage drinking problem and mobilized communities that had not previously taken action to hold town hall meetings involving panels of expert on underage drinking.

Following the training, parents mapped their neighborhoods, identifying for police the houses and apartments where illegal drinking parties had taken place over the past three years. Law enforcement data from calls for service for a similar period identified the hot spots for alcohol partying in the county. Chemical dependency professionals from Tacoma Trauma Trust hospitals were recruited for the project. They had successfully demonstrated, through a Pierce County Human Services-funded project the previous year, which interventions involving brief alcohol and drug screening and intervention of injured juveniles who had been brought to hospital emergency rooms were highly successful in linking youth to treatment and other follow-up services when needed.

A multijurisdictional law enforcement approach involving city, county and State police agencies was developed so that partying teens could not simply move their party to the next city when cops began busting events in their hometown. A 60-page manual describing a very detailed law enforcement tactical operation and the equally important steps to community engagement was written over the summer by the project's traffic safety and law enforcement coordinators along with the lead-trauma outreach coordinator.

Training for 45 law enforcement and community volunteers and professionals involved in the project will be repeated this spring for a growing number of agencies that want to get on board with the project in their jurisdictions. Additional specialized training for parent

volunteers also was provided so that volunteers could provide up-to-date information about how to prevent underage drinking to parents when they came to pick up their arrested teenagers.

Television and print coverage before and after each party intervention patrol also has been a key element of the three PIPs implemented to date. It is used to send the message that partying teens will get caught; and if they do, help is on the way, if needed.

The last PIP, implemented in January, resulted in the arrest of 35 high school students, including one with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .145 grams per deciliter who was attempting to leave a party with three other teen passengers partying in the car. (One researcher has estimated that with a BAC of .09, 16- to 20-year-olds are 24 times more likely to be in a fatal crash.) Officers entering the same party also discovered a teenager in a bathtub who was unresponsive from advanced alcohol poisoning. The intervention and resulting trip to the emergency room saved the boy's life, according to emergency medical personnel.

A tool to evaluate the project has been developed with the help of a consultant and evaluators at Pacific Lutheran University. The long-term goal of the project is to engage the entire county in implementing PIP and establish the PIP as a multidisciplinary, evidence-based, best practice to reduce teen fatal crashes and other injuries and deaths from alcohol-related incidents. Additional funding will be sought.

For more information, contact:

Gloria Mansfield Averill, Coordinator
Tacoma/Pierce County DUI Task Force
253-798-6112
or Carol Mockridge, Communications Specialist
253-798-6228



School Zone "20 Is Plenty"

In February 2008, the "20 Is Plenty" campaign was launched by the Spokane County Traffic Safety Commission, Spokane Police Department, the County Sheriff's Office, Washington State Patrol, and the Spokane Regional Health District. The Spokane County Traffic Safety Task Force led the way to bring attention to school zone safety and led the major "20 Is Plenty" campaign. The intent is to bring awareness to drivers in the school zone that 20 mph is the limit.

To promote the "20 Is Plenty" campaign, new flashing school zone billboards, brochures, static-cling window decals, and stickers were developed and distributed to law enforcement agencies. Seven billboards were produced, designed by officers from the various law enforcement agencies, one fire district, and children from a local elementary school.

The City of Spokane worked closely with the Spokane Regional Health District and received funding for the largest flashing-light grant ever awarded by the WTSC. The billboards were up at locations where the total traffic count at the seven intersections over the 3-month period was 6,789,915. Eighteen law enforcement officers worked a total of 19 hours on an emphasis patrol in various school zones in Spokane County with the following results: 87 contacts made, 69 infractions and citations were issued, which included 55 school zone tickets and 18 school zone warnings.

The community response was excellent and school zone safety soon became a well-known issue to all drivers and pedestrians in Spokane. The campaign was very well received by the public and has had a lasting impact. The beauty of the campaign is its ongoing potential. One other community has already requested the material to use in their own locale. Well worth inquiring about!

For more information on “20 Is Plenty,” contact:

Peggy Gilliland

Spokane County Traffic Safety Task Force

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State of Washington on “Top Three” List

Next to Hawaii and Michigan, Washington has the third highest seat belt use rate in the nation. On January 6, 2009, NHTSA released results off the latest nationwide observational research survey of seat belt use. Results show that Washington experienced a consistent increased use rate from 94.2 to 96.5 percentage points from 2004 to 2008. The statewide survey was comprised of 98,572 vehicle drivers and passengers and was conducted on a variety of road types. Studies conducted in Washington reveal medical costs from collisions alone amounted to more than \$276 million with unbelted passengers experiencing an average medical cost of \$11,000 per collision.

For more information on Washington’s seat belt use rate and other traffic safety programs, contact Lynn Drake at 360-725-9886.

Washington’s New Interlock Law

Washington Governor Christine Gregoire signed a bill to protect the State’s communities from those charged with driving while impaired and from convicted drunk drivers including first time offenders. House Bill 3254, sponsored by State Rep. Roger Goodman of Kirkland and supported by Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), was passed in the Senate by a 47-0 vote and the House by a 95-0 vote, and went into effect on January 1.

In order for charged or convicted drivers facing license suspension to get driving privileges restored, they are required to have an interlock system installed in their vehicles at their own expense.

The interlock license is not available in cases of conviction for vehicular homicide or assault, conviction of crimes in the past seven years, or impairment caused by drugs other than alcohol.

To read the complete article, visit the WTSC Web site at http://www.wsp.wa.gov/information/releases/2008_archive/mr122908.pdf.

Other NHTSA Regional Offices

Find your Region’s Safe Communities liaisons. We look forward to hearing from your community for our next edition of *Building Safe Communities*.

REGION	SAFE COMMUNITIES LIAISON	
Region 1	Mario Damiata	region1@dot.gov
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Region 8	Mary Damon	region8@dot.gov
Region 9	Jack Champlin	region9@dot.gov
Region 10	Gina Beretta	region10@dot.gov

OTHER SAFE COMMUNITIES AND PARTNER NEWS

Medina Web Site Up and Running

In January Safe Communities Medina County, Ohio, kicked off the opening of its first Web site. The site features the latest in video technology, information on the coalition, programs and PSAs on impaired driving, school bus safety, seat belts, and checkpoints. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Safety Programs Engineer Joe Glinski said, "I think this is a great example of how to provide educational outreach inexpensively in support of the State's strategic highway safety plan."

Under the direction of Officer Jerome T. Klue, Safe Communities Medina County has achieved much success in its community traffic safety programs and the reduction of costs associated with the administration of these programs. The coalition has been in operation for over 13 years with approximately 70 member organizations representing law enforcement, health, educational institutions, churches, judicial organizations, employers, and media.

For more information about Safe Communities Medina County, contact Officer Jerome T. Klue at jklu@mpd.medinaohio.org or call 330-725-7777. Visit www.medinasafecommunities.org to learn more about Medina Safe Communities activities.

Outreach and Enforcement Cited for Low Traffic-Related Fatalities in Kansas

In September 2008, the National Occupant Protection Use Survey (NOPUS) showed that seat belt use rose to 83 percent in the United States. Successful campaigns such as *Click It or Ticket* that include public awareness, education, and high-visibility enforcement were major contributors for those lives saved.

Kansas 2008 preliminary data revealed traffic-related fatalities decreased from the 2007 totals. The Kansas

Department of Transportation's (KDOT) *Click It or Ticket* campaign uses radio, television, billboard ads, and stepped-up enforcement along with the implementation of a new booster seat law to promote traffic safety. Additionally, Kansas has a graduated driver licensing bill that has three data-driven components:

1. All young drivers must have a learners permit for one year;
2. Driving times for 16-year-old drivers may be unsupervised with a 9 p.m. curfew with exceptions for school and work; and
3. During the unsupervised period, a young driver may transport only one passenger in the vehicle.

The combination of initiatives, education, passage of new traffic safety laws, and community outreach is expected not only to reduce the number of fatalities, but to help reduce the associated medical costs for the State in Medicaid cost recovery.

For more information on Safe Communities efforts in Kansas, contact NHTSA Region 7 Program Manager Dean Scott at dean.scott@dot.gov.

To view and download the *Traffic Safety Facts Seat Belt Use in 2008 _ Overall Results*, visit <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/Pubs/811036.PDF>.

Growing Safe Communities "Texas Style"

In November, the *Texas Transportation Researcher* published an article about the growth of Safe Communities coalitions in Texas. Using NHTSA's vision of Safe Communities, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), Texas Transportation Institute (TTI), NHTSA Region 6, and the Safe Communities Service Center have united efforts for coalition-building to provide training and sharing of best practices for sustainability, as well as offering free technical support to communities. TTI has created a new Texas Safe Communities Web site that will be launched in the spring

to serve as a portal for positive change. Check out TTI at <http://tti.tamu.edu> for the coming URL.

“Texas Safe Communities takes the program pioneered by NHTSA and puts it into action in towns as diverse as College Station and Dallas,” explains TTI Assistant Research Specialist Irene Rodriguez, who serves as coordinator for the Safe Communities effort in Texas. Rodriguez recognizes the need for advocacy to community stakeholders to become engaged in their communities in order to identify real problems and make a difference. TxDOT has 25 districts supported by traffic safety specialists who manage programs and grants, and report to the district engineers, among many other tasks. TxDOT recognizes the value of grassroots efforts especially with its many counties and districts. TxDOT and TTI are supporting the traffic safety specialists with plans of developing Texas-style safe community models that will work well with its many diverse cultures.

Read the full article in the Texas Transportation Researcher at <http://tti.tamu.edu/publications/researcher/newsletter.htm?vol=44&issue=4&article=0>.

To learn more about Safe Communities in Texas, contact:
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Region 4 Launches Rural Seat Belt Project

Rural America is significantly over-represented in the total number of fatal crashes and occupant fatalities as compared to the rest of the Nation. In 2007, 23 percent of the population lived in rural areas, and rural roadways accounted for 34 percent of the vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Yet in 2007, 57 percent of all traffic fatalities occurred in rural areas and 63 percent of the passenger vehicle occupants killed in fatal crashes were on rural roadways.

To effectively address the challenge of increasing seat belt use among vehicle occupants in rural areas, the Region 4 Rural Seat Belt Project was created in July 2008. The campaign consists of high-visibility enforcement, and messages and material tailored toward rural populations regarding enforcement of seat belt laws. Efforts will take into account high-risk driving times and situations, such as nighttime, rear seat belt use, and other issues related to low belt use for rural populations.

The project will re-test the strategies and refine the model developed in the Great Lakes Region (Region 5) nationwide Rural Demonstration Program in 2005. That project marked a shift in strategy for conducting rural seat belt programs from an education/social norming approach to high-visibility enforcement. Seat belt use increased significantly in all Region 5 States, and rates increased more in rural targeted areas than they did statewide. After the first year, rural-targeted areas had a median 7-percentage-point increase in belt usage, compared to 5 percentage points statewide.

The cooperative effort in Region 4 will work within rural communities to prevent injuries and fatalities by raising belt use and has already begun in two States; Georgia and Tennessee. The project complements the national Click It or Ticket mobilizations and the States launched their first campaigns in November 2008. Florida will join the other States with its first campaign in March 2009. The second campaign for all three States will be conducted in conjunction with CIOT in May 2009 and the third wave in November 2009. The campaign will end with the May 2010 national CIOT mobilization.

For more information visit

<http://www.region4ruralbeltproject.org/>

Region 6 Launches Teen Seat Belt Project

Teens have higher fatality and injury rates in motor vehicle crashes than any other age group. One of the most effective measures a teen can take to prevent injury and death in a crash is to wear a seat belt, but the majority of fatally injured teens are not buckled up. While observed seat belt use for teens has risen gradually, the majority of 16- to 20-year-old passenger vehicle occupants killed in car crashes continue to be unrestrained (61 percent in 2007). Past demonstration projects and evaluations of teen belt use indicate that strategies that have been effective in increasing belt use for adults are also the most promising strategies for teens. These include primary laws and highly publicized enforcement of belt laws (such as *Click It or Ticket* programs).



Number of unbuckled teen deaths during 2001 – 2006 in the Region 6 States

Historically, NHTSA has done small-scale, community-based projects to address this problem area.

Unfortunately, seat belt use for teens in fatal crashes has remained virtually unchanged and necessitates a concentrated, intense, large-scale effort.

In May 2009, the NHTSA Region 6 States will launch a region-wide teen seat belt campaign, which will emphasize high-visibility enforcement, messages and materials regarding enforcement of seat belt laws. The campaign has been tailored specifically towards teens and their families.

The project is modeled after previously successful regional efforts to increase belt use in high-risk groups (e.g., pickup drivers and rural drivers and occupants) where uniform messaging, coordinated outreach, and enforcement efforts across States built the energy and momentum needed to increase seat belt use across State borders. Best practices from two successful statewide teen seat belt demonstration projects conducted in Colorado and Nevada in 2007 and 2008 will also be incorporated into this project.

The regionwide approach will focus on geographic areas in four of the five States in Region 6 (Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, Texas, and the Indian Nations) which have been selected because of a high incidence of unbuckled teen deaths. The project activity will

complement the national *Click It or Ticket* initiative. The first campaign wave will be conducted in May 2009 in conjunction with CIOT. There will be two interim waves and a final campaign conducted in conjunction with the May 2010 CIOT mobilization. An evaluation of the campaign activity and results will be performed to include examination of control areas in each State.

cmurray@ci.tulsa.ok.us or visit <http://buckledownawardsok.com>.

For more information visit:

<http://www.region6teenbeltproject.org/>

Oklahoma's 16th Annual Buckle Down Award

On February 12, Oklahoma's Top Cops hosted its 16th Annual Buckle Down Awards in memory of retired Tulsa Police Sergeant Michael J. Garner. Garner was recognized as a champion of child passenger safety and law enforcement. The categories for nomination were:

- Fabrienne Van Arsdell Memorial Award,
- Don Byerley Memorial Award,
- Matthew Scott Evans Memorial Award,
- SAFE KIDS Child Passenger Safety Advocate Award,
- Occupant Protection Enforcement,
- Occupant Protection Prevention,
- Impaired Driving Enforcement,
- Traffic Safety Enforcement,
- Traffic Safety Prevention, and
- Oklahoma Seat Belt Advocate Award.

Sponsors of the Top Cops event were State Farm Insurance Companies (Tulsa), CMI Intoxilyzer, Inc. (Owensboro, Kentucky), Mothers Against Drunk Driving (Tulsa), SAFE KIDS Tulsa and SAFE KIDS Oklahoma, Oklahoma Police Supply, Oklahoma Regional Community Policing Institute (OKC), Oklahoma Highway Safety Office (Oklahoma City), Oklahoma Sheriff's Association, Tulsa Drillers, Children's Hospital at Saint Francis, Skiatook Statuary, and iMarketing Design Group.

For more information on Oklahoma's 16th Annual Buckle Down Awards, contact Craig Murray at

NEW RESOURCES AND PUBLICATIONS

New Research Reports recently released by NHTSA

- Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey: Volume 4 – Crash Injuries & EMS Report. Boyle, J., & Lampkin, C. DOT HS 810 877. December 2008.

Link to the full report on NHTSA's Web site:

<http://www.nhtsa.gov/staticfiles/DOT/NHTSA/Traffic%20Injury%20Control/Articles/Associated%20Files/810977.pdf>

- Research Note: 2007 MVOSS Findings Regarding Driver Education & GDL. Block, A., W., & Walker, S. DOT HS 811 047. December 2008.

Link to the full report on NHTSA's Web site:

http://www.nhtsa.gov/portal/nhtsa_static_file_downloader.jsp?file=/staticfiles/DOT/NHTSA/Traffic%20Injury%20Control/Articles/Associated%20Files/811047.pdf

- Evaluation of the Checkpoint StrikeForce Program. Lacey, J. H., Kelley-Baker, T., Brainard, K., Tippetts, S., & Lyakhovich, M. DOT HS 811 056. November 2008.

<http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/staticfiles/DOT/NHTSA/Communication%20&%20Consumer%20Information/NHTSA%20Now!/Associated%20Files/NNow8.pdf>

- Cost Savings in Massachusetts by Implementing a Primary Seat Belt Law. Chaudhary, N., & Tison, J. DOT HS 811067. December 2008.

http://www.nhtsa.gov/portal/nhtsa_static_file_downloader.jsp?file=/staticfiles/DOT/NHTSA/Traffic%20Injury%20Control/Articles/Associated%20Files/811067.pdf

- Countermeasures That Work: A Highway Safety Guide for State Highway Safety Offices – 4th Edition. Goodwin, A. H., Hall, W. L., Raborn, J., Thomas L. J., & Tucker, M. J. DOT HS 811 081. January 2009.

Link to the full report on NHTSA's Web site:

http://www.nhtsa.gov/portal/nhtsa_static_file_downloader.jsp?file=/staticfiles/DOT/NHTSA/Traffic%20Injury%20Control/Articles/Associated%20Files/811081.pdf

Printed copies of the reports below (previously posted on NHTSA's Web site) are now available by writing the Office of Behavioral Safety Research, NHTSA, NTI-130, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20590 (fax 202-366-7096) or e-mailing: Julie.Korkor@dot.gov.

- Technology Applications for Traffic Safety Programs: A Primer. Volpe Center. DOT HS 811 040 September 2008.
- Update of Vehicle Sanction Laws and Their Application, Volume I – Summary. Voas, R., McKnight, S., Falb, T., Fell, J., Stewart, K., & Sweedler, B. DOT HS 811 028. September 2008.
- Update of Vehicle Sanction Laws and Their Application Volume II – Vehicle Sanctions By State. McKnight, A. S., Watson, D. E., Voas, R. B., & Fell, J. C. September 2008
- The 2006 National Labor Day Impaired Driving Crackdown: Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest. Solomon, M. G., Hedlund, J. L., Haire, E. R., & Chaffe, R.H. DOT HS 811 039. September 2008.

2009 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Date	Event	Sponsor/Web Link
May	National Youth Traffic Safety Month	National Organizations for Youth Safety (NOYS)
May	Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month	NHTSA
May	National Bike Month (Bike to Work Day: May 14)	League of American Bicyclists
May 17-23	EMS Week	American College of Emergency Physicians
May 18-31	Click It or Ticket Mobilization	NHTSA
June 7-13	National Tire Safety Week	Multiple public and private orgs
July 12-16	International Forum on Traffic Records and Highway Safety Information Systems (Phoenix, Arizona)	Assn of Transportation Safety Information Professionals
July 15	Ride Your Motorcycle to Work Day	Ride to Work
July 24-25	Off the Job Safety & Health	National Safety Council
August 2-8	National Stop on Red Week	Federal Highway Administration
August 19-September 7	"Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest." National Crackdown	NHTSA
August 30-September 2	Governors Highway Safety Assn. (GHSA) Annual Meeting (Savannah, Georgia)	GHSA
September 12	Seat Check Saturday	NHTSA
September 12-18	Child Passenger Safety Week	NHTSA
October 18-24	National Teen Driver Safety Week	State Farm, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
October 19-23	National School Bus Safety Week	National Assn of Pupil Transportation
December	National "Drunk & Drugged Driving" (3D) Prevention Month	NHTSA, MADD, GHSA
December 16-January 3, 2010	"Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest." National Crackdown	NHTSA, MADD, GHSA



Change the Date

Dear Colleagues,

We wanted to let you know that NHTSA has decided to reschedule the annual observance of Child Passenger Safety Week and Seat Check Saturday in 2009 and 2010 as noted below. The date changes were necessary to ensure that these events do not conflict with important religious holidays that occur each year in September.

New dates for Child Passenger Safety Week and Seat Check Saturday in 2009 and 2010 are as follows:

- 2009:
 - Child Passenger Safety Week: September 12-18
 - Seat Check Saturday: September 12
- 2010:
 - Child Passenger Safety Week: September 11-17
 - Seat Check Saturday: September 11

Please update your local planning calendars and share with your colleagues and stakeholders. NHTSA's 2009 Communication's Calendar and other material will display the new dates shortly.

We apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused and thank you for your understanding and cooperation. If you have any questions please contact Sandy Sinclair at 202-366-2723 or sandy.sinclair@dot.gov.