



Quick Notes

from the Idaho Office of Highway Safety

September 17, 2010

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General Message from the Highway Safety Manager

Hi Highway Safety Partners,

I am really pleased to see the below announcement from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) stating that the costs of crashes comes to nearly \$500/year for every licensed driver in the country. The CDC recently made motor vehicle injury a primary focus area for their efforts. This is a great addition to our partners.

The U. S. Department of Transportation released the 2009 crash data showing major declines in traffic deaths despite a slight increase in miles traveled. Following is some of the text from the release which can be found at <http://www.nhtsa.gov/PR/DOT-165-10>

U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood today released updated 2009 fatality and injury data showing that highway deaths fell to 33,808 for the year, the lowest number since 1950. The record-breaking decline in traffic fatalities occurred even while estimated vehicle miles traveled in 2009 increased by 0.2 percent over 2008 levels.

Fatalities declined in all categories of vehicles including motorcycles, which saw fatalities fall by 850 from 2008, breaking an 11-year cycle of annual increases.

“At the Department of Transportation, we are laser-focused on our top priority: safety,” said Secretary LaHood. “Today’s announcement shows that America’s roads are the safest they’ve ever been. But they must be safer. And we will not rest until they are.”

This is great news and Idaho’s fatalities, dropped as well. One of the highlights of the crash data is that 33 states experienced a decline in the number of alcohol-impaired driving fatalities in 2009. Four states had decreases of 25 percent or more in alcohol-impaired driving fatalities in 2009. They are:

Nevada: -36%

New Hampshire: -33%

Wyoming: -28%

Idaho: -26%

Yea Idaho! Thanks everyone for the smart driving choices that resulted from our education and enforcement efforts!

Next, the webinar on the Implementation Process Model for the Strategic Highway Safety Plan went well. There were over 150 people participating in it. We received nice comments on; our SHSP workshop-peer exchange last Nov 4, the fact that safety is a core component of our long range plan, and our logo design (thanks Lisa Losness!).

Next week, Brent Jennings and I are off to Rhode Island for their “Safety 2010 Conference” where we will be presenting on how we are blending engineering and behavior in our efforts to reduce traffic deaths and serious injuries. Our presentation is built on the implementation of Idaho’s Strategic Highway Safety Plan. We are very pleased to be sharing some of the successes that all of you play a part in.

Let us continue our effort to make sure our friends and family make smart driving choices so they can make it home at the end of their day.

Mary

CDC Study Finds Annual Cost of Motor Vehicle Crashes Exceeds \$99 Billion

Cost amounts to nearly \$500 for each U.S. licensed driver in one year

In a one-year period, the cost of medical care and productivity losses associated with injuries from motor vehicle crashes exceeded \$99 billion – with the cost of direct medical care accounting for \$17 billion, according to a study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The total annual cost amounts to nearly \$500 for each licensed driver in the United States, said the study in the journal *Traffic Injury Prevention*.

Motor vehicle crash injuries and deaths and the associated costs are preventable. CDC's Injury Center supports proven, effective strategies for prevention such as:

- Graduated driver licensing (GDL) policies: these laws allow new teen drivers to get experience on the road in lower-risk situations as they gain experience over time and are proven to reduce teen crashes. Strong GDL laws have been associated with up to 40 percent decreases in crashes among 16-year-old drivers.
- Child safety seat distribution and education programs: increased use of correctly installed and fitted child safety seats could help reduce the \$3.6 billion annual bill for injuries to children, the cost number found in this study.
- Primary seat belt laws: these laws allow motorists to be stopped and cited for not wearing seat belts. Seat belts reduce the risk of death to those riding in the front seat by about half.
- Enhanced seat belt enforcement programs: Enhanced enforcement programs in which law enforcement officers focus on getting people to buckle up (e.g.: Click It or Ticket), are effective at increasing safety belt use and reducing deaths and injuries."
- Motorcycle and bicycle helmet laws: helmets can reduce the risk of death in a motorcycle crash by more than one-third and reduce the risk of brain injury by 69 percent.
- Sobriety checkpoints: these checkpoints, where drivers are stopped to assess their level of alcohol impairment, can reduce alcohol-related crash deaths by more than 20 percent.

More information can be found at: <http://www.cdc.gov/media/pressrel/2010/r100825.htm>

Americans Take More Risks When Driving on Rural Highways, New University of Minnesota Study Says

The following comes from the University of Minnesota News: http://www1.umn.edu/news/news-releases/2010/UR_CONTENT_236885.html

While Americans are much more likely to die on rural highways than urban freeways, a new survey released in August found that they feel much more relaxed and prone to risk-taking on rural highways. While U.S. Census figures show that about one out of five (21 percent) Americans live in rural areas, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has found that about six out of 10 (57 percent) highway deaths occur on roads that it considers rural. The study finds that 69 percent of Americans responded that they felt safe on multilane freeways in urban areas, while 79 percent felt safe on two-lane highways in rural areas.

Rural highways are also the most likely place for people to feel relaxed, with 38 percent responding that they feel relaxed on rural highways and just 19 percent feeling relaxed on urban freeways. Among rural residents, 69 percent felt relaxed on rural highways, versus just 13 percent who felt relaxed on urban freeways.

Americans are more likely to feel safe eating, use a cell phone and drinking and driving on rural highways than they are on urban freeways. This is particularly true of rural residents. Among rural residents, 44 percent said they feel safe using a cell phone on a rural highway versus 14 percent who feel safe using a cell phone on an urban freeway.

The exception to this trend of Americans feeling more comfortable engaging in risky driving behaviors on rural highways is speeding. About half of Americans feel safe speeding on urban freeways (47 percent), while a third feel safe speeding on rural highways. In an open-ended question, survey respondents who felt safer on rural highways than urban freeways were asked why they felt this way. The most common answer (51 percent) was that there were just fewer things on the road to worry about -- less traffic, less congestion and fewer people. The second most common answer (31 percent) was that the driver knew the area and felt comfortable in the area.

School Zone Safety Campaign

October 16-24 will focus on school zone safety for the first campaign of the federal grant fiscal year. Current fines in Idaho are:

- ✓ Drivers violating a speed limit in a school zone will cost at least \$151.50.
- ✓ Drivers younger than 18 can expect a fine of \$61.50 if they or any passenger under 18 are not wearing seat belts.

The deadline to request funding for the campaign is September 24. This will allow time to notify the agencies of funding. Before mobilization funding is considered, your agency will need a signed MOU in place. For questions, please contact Margaret Goertz at Margaret.goertz@itd.idaho.gov, or (208) 334-8104.

National Teen Driver Safety Week (NTDSW) is the week of October 17-23. The School Zone campaign is held in conjunction with NTDSW which was established by Congress in 2007 to focus attention on the nation's epidemic of teen car crashes.

This week stresses the importance of safe passenger behavior, as well as teenage drivers. A national survey by Children's Hospital of Philadelphia of teens found:

- **Sixteen year olds** are three times more likely to die in a car crash than other drivers;
- Simple **driver error** is a factor in two-thirds of fatal teen crashes;

- Two-thirds of teen occupants killed in crashes are not wearing **seat belts**;
- Two or more teenage passengers make fatal teen crash risk five times more likely;
- 2/3 of teenagers who die in car crashes are **passengers** of teenage drivers;
- **Speeding** is a factor in 40% of all teenage driver fatalities;
- Being **awake** for 18 hours equals a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) level of 0.08, which is legally drunk;
- Inexperience combined with **distractions** is lethal;
- The distractions proven to kill teens: **teen passengers and cell phones.**”

During the campaign and NTDSW, provide teenagers opportunities to understand how they can make good choices when driving or being passengers. Ideas to share this message:

- ✓ Conduct a poll following the guidelines on the www.teendriverssource.org website for “Friends Driving Friends”.
- ✓ Schedule an *Alive at 25* class for local teenagers to give them tools to help with good traffic safety choices, both as a driver or passenger. Contact Margaret Goertz at Margaret.goertz@itd.idaho.gov, or (208) 334-8104 for an instructor nearby.
- ✓ Work with your local youth leaders to conduct a seat belt and cell phone survey at their schools. Present the results with the teenagers observing and recording the survey.
- ✓ Issue a press release with the survey/poll results or organize a press conference to inform your community of the survey results.

U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood Announces Agenda for Second National Distracted Driving Summit

Washington, DC – U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood today announced the agenda for the second national **Distracted Driving Summit to be held on September 21st, 2010** in Washington, DC. Building on the success of last year’s summit, Secretary LaHood will convene leading transportation officials, safety advocates, law enforcement, industry representatives, researchers and victims affected by distraction-related crashes to address challenges and identify opportunities for national anti-distracted driving efforts.

“Thousands of people are killed or injured every year in accidents caused by distracted drivers,” said Secretary LaHood. “One year after our first national Distracted Driving Summit, we will reconvene to take stock of our progress and reassess the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. I look forward to hearing insights from our distinguished panelists and guests, and know that by working together, we will save lives.”

The 2010 Distracted Driving Summit will be live webcast at www.distraction.gov, enabling the participation of people around the country. Secretary LaHood is encouraging those who can’t attend in person – particularly students and classrooms of young drivers – to tune in and help put an end to distracted driving in their communities. People watching the summit via webcast can also submit questions for panelists in advance by emailing DDSummit@dot.gov and indicating which panel the question is for in the subject line. Questions should be submitted by close of business on Monday, September 20.

Members of the media should RSVP to DDSummit@dot.gov with the subject line “Media RSVP,” in order to obtain credentials and ensure they receive any additional information released prior to the summit. The full agenda is below. To learn more about the Department of Transportation’s efforts to stop distracted driving, please visit www.distraction.gov.

The 2010 Drive Safely Work Week, October 2-8

The toolkit, developed in partnership with DOT and the Network of Employers for Traffic Safety (NETS), includes fact/tip sheets, communications tools, and downloadable graphics that organizations can use to launch a new cell phone policy; reinforce an existing policy; or build awareness about the dangers of distracted driving. The materials can be downloaded free of charge through Sept. 20. [Click here to download the free tool-kit](#). Use the Drive Safely Work Week materials to customize your own safe driving campaign any time of the year.

Child Passenger Safety Week

Locate resources that will help promote your child passenger safety week. Click [HERE](#) to tailor your specific needs.

New University Study

A year-long field test of an integrated system of crash warning technologies designed to enhance the safety of commercial trucks was conducted, funding provided by RITA. Check out the [RESULTS](#).



Here are a couple of articles on underage drinking from the **Underage Drinking Enforcement Training Center**

Monthly Resource Alert September 2010

11720 Beltsville Drive Suite 900 Calverton, MD 20705 Toll Free 877-335-1287

Please visit our enhanced website at www.udetc.org for the latest information on preventing underage drinking.

Resource Alert Legal Case

“The Court of Appeals of Wisconsin Examines the Entrapment Defense for a Sale of Alcohol Made During a Compliance Check”

On June 24, 2010, the Court of Appeals of Wisconsin, District IV, handed down their opinion in the case of Jefferson County v. Gromowski, 2009AP2464 (WICA)

In January 2009, the Jefferson County sheriff's department ran a compliance check using a nineteen-year-old woman as their underage buyer. The young woman entered the tavern alone, sat down at the bar, and, after being approached by a bartender Jodi Gromowski, ordered an alcoholic drink. The bartender did not ask for identification or otherwise ask the agent her age. After the transaction was complete, Gromowski was issued a citation for violating Wisconsin Statute 125.07(1)(a)1.

Gromowski pled not guilty and, at a bench trial, advanced an entrapment defense and a statutory defense under Wisconsin Statute 125.07(6). The circuit court found that Gromowski violated § 125.07(1)(a) and did not qualify for a defense, and it issued a judgment fining her a total of \$249, including costs. Gromowski appealed, contending that her two defenses were valid.

To read more about this interesting case and determine whether her arguments prevailed, please click on the link below.

<http://www.udetc.org/documents/judicial/0910case.pdf>

Strict Enforcement Reduces Underage and Binge Drinking on Campuses

A new study by the Center for Adolescent Substance Abuse Research (CeASAR) at Children's Hospital Boston finds that strict college alcohol policies can actually decrease underage and binge drinking on campus without causing a compensatory rise in marijuana use.

The CeASAR study staff asked students and administrators at 11 Massachusetts colleges and universities about more

restrictive alcohol use enforcement policies that were put forth by the Mass. Board of Higher Education. The results showed decreases in past 30-day rates of any drinking, binge drinking, and regular heavy drinking. The declines in binge drinking were greatest in schools that adhered to the new enforcement policies from the very beginning.

Sion Kim Harris, PhD, CPH, lead author of the study stated, "Policies can only work if they are sufficiently enforced," "Our study adds to a growing body of evidence that alcohol control policies and strong policy enforcement can, over time, reduce underage high-risk drinking behaviors. We found that an aggressive enforcement stance by college leaders is particularly important to the success of these efforts." The study was published in the journal, Substance Abuse Treatment, Prevention, and Policy and can be seen here:

<http://www.substanceabusepolicy.com/content/5/1/18>