



Minnesota TZD Program Highlights 2010

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Minnesota's traffic fatalities had been on the rise between 1995 and 2003, when the statewide Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) program was launched as a deliberate, interdisciplinary

approach to traffic safety. Since then, Minnesota's traffic fatality rates have decreased by more than 35 percent. To date, an estimated 900 people are living today who wouldn't be if Minnesota had changed nothing and stayed the course it was on.

Minnesota TZD is the state's cornerstone traffic safety program, employing an interdisciplinary approach to reducing traffic crashes, injuries, and deaths on Minnesota roads. While individual disciplines have a long history of successful traffic safety programs, TZD aims to tie these individual efforts together with a common vision and mission for even greater success. The program's vision is to ultimately reduce fatalities and serious injuries to zero.

TZD is a partnership led by the Minnesota Departments of Public Safety, Transportation, and Health and the University of Minnesota. Many other organizations throughout the state support and participate in TZD efforts.

The TZD program uses data to target areas for improvement and employ proven countermeasures, since focusing on countermeasures that have proven effective and on data from actual crashes increases the likelihood of success. The program also advances new technologies and innovations and implements best practices.

The TZD program's core values are **continuous improvement, engaged partners, and evidence-based approaches.**

Mission and Goals

Traffic safety culture in the United States has been characterized as one of complacency and indifference toward the approximately 34,000 traffic fatalities and 2.5 million injuries that occur on U.S. roads each year.

The mission of TZD is to create a culture for which traffic fatalities and serious injuries are no longer acceptable through the integrated application of **education, engineering, enforcement, and emergency medical and trauma services**—the “4 Es.” The program’s efforts are driven by data, best practices, and research.

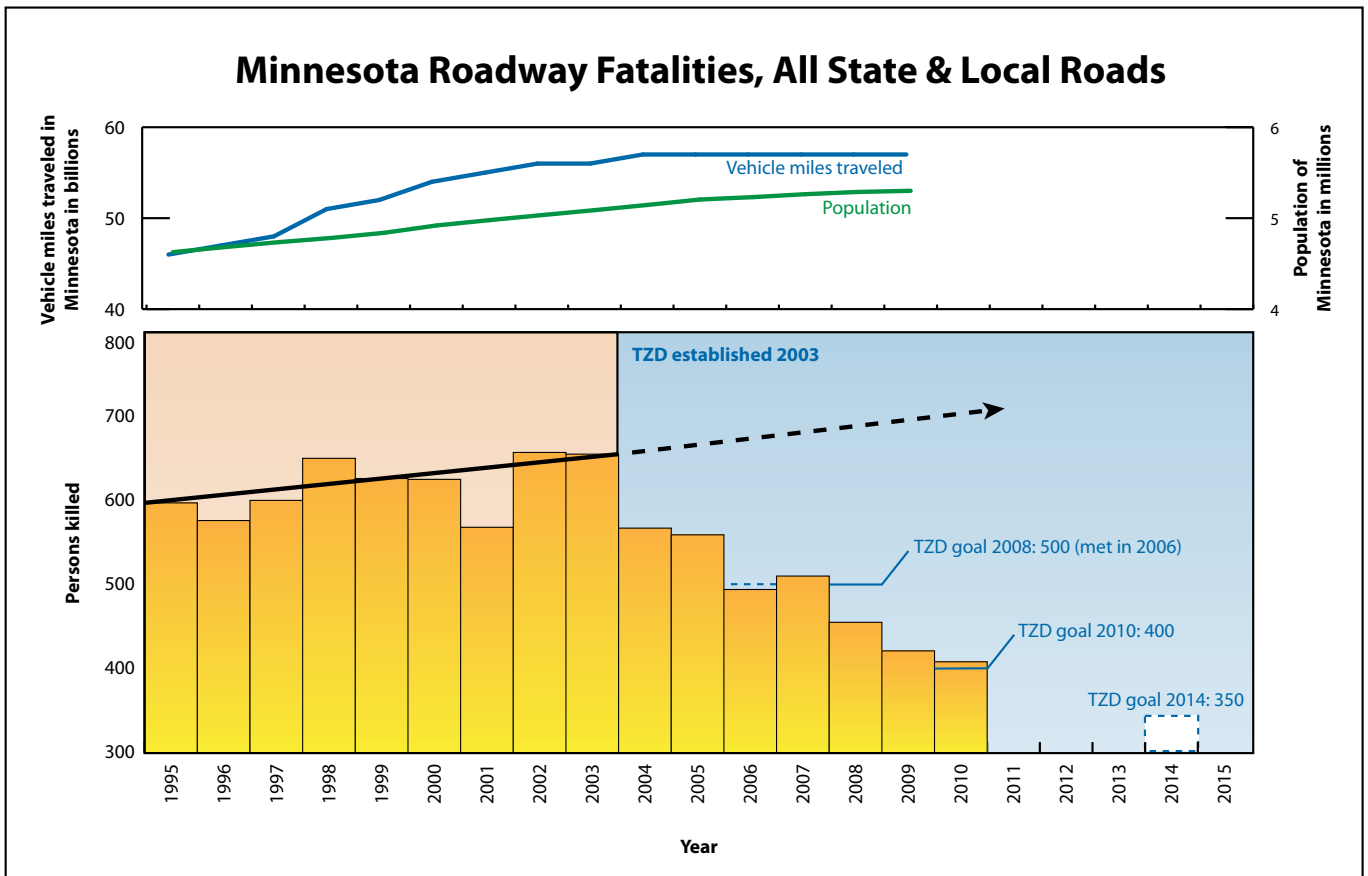
The TZD program aims to establish its vision as a priority for all state and local agencies and units of government, create and strengthen traffic safety partnerships, and promote and implement effective traffic safety initiatives. To achieve its goals, the TZD program will focus efforts on the following priority strategies:

- Improving the traffic safety records system across all disciplines.
- Continuing to support and develop regional TZD partnerships throughout the state.
- Actively promoting agency-to-agency collaboration.
- Engaging local traffic safety advocates.
- Engaging the court system as a traffic safety partner.

Recent Accomplishments

TZD met its 2008 goal of fewer than 500 crash fatalities two years ahead of schedule, but the program is not content to rest on this success. TZD has adopted a statewide goal of fewer than 350 fatalities and 850 serious injuries on Minnesota’s roads by 2014.

The TZD program can also point to the creation of regional partnerships as a significant accomplishment. Within this context, successes include the hiring of coordinators for the newly established TZD regions in North-eastern, Northwestern, and South Central Minnesota, and the expansion of the Southwestern and Southeastern TZD partnerships.



Key accomplishments in the “4Es”

The TZD program team has identified **four major focus areas** for communities working to reduce traffic injuries and fatalities: **education, enforcement, engineering, and emergency medical and trauma services**. The program recognizes that a combination of strategies from different focus areas is often most effective for solving a particular problem.

Education efforts aim to give drivers the knowledge they need to avoid hazardous driving practices and choose responsible driving behavior. Recent accomplishments in this area include:

- **Paid media:** \$2.5 million (federal) in ad buys were directly targeted to TZD’s primary audiences to promote seat belt, DWI, speed, and distracted driving enforcement messages. Bonus opportunities from paid campaigns resulted in public service campaigns, interview opportunities, and more.
- **Earned media:** More than 50 news releases were issued statewide in 2010 to sustain traffic safety messaging yearlong. In addition, various proactive and reactive media interviews resulted in substantive TV, radio, and print coverage. Earned media efforts included providing template, turnkey media materials for partners to customize and issue locally.
- **Motorcycle safety efforts** contributed to a drop in crash fatalities to their lowest level in five years. For a second consecutive year, the motorcycle public information campaign concentrated on reminding motorists to be aware of motorcycles in traffic. And a special one-day Safe & Sober enforcement saturation focused on motorcyclists.
- **How to Save a Life** and **Young Forever** videos created by the Minnesota State Patrol have been shown to more than 70,000 Minnesotans, with a focus on teens.
- **MinnesotaCrashVictims.org**, a website for sharing the stories of victims of fatal traffic crashes, was launched. To date, 72 testimonials have been uploaded to the site.

Enforcing compliance with traffic laws plays a significant role in changing driver behavior and reducing unsafe driving practices. **Enforcement** efforts ensure that traffic controls, driver licensing requirements, drunk-driving laws, and other safety-related regulations—known to be effective countermeasures—are obeyed by all drivers.

Several notable accomplishments in TZD enforcement include:

- The Department of Public Safety (DPS), in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), completed the second year of its **speed management program, HEAT**. Evaluation of the first year’s data shows a reduction in speeds in the 85th percentile and a reduction in the number of people driving 10 mph or more over the posted speed limit.
- The DPS developed a **DWI electronic charging system**, which provides law enforcement, Driver and Vehicle Services, and other DWI stakeholders with the ability to more effectively identify, charge, and sanction impaired driving offenders based on their driving history; manage impaired driving cases from arrest through the completion of court and administrative sanctions; reduce administrative costs for system stakeholders; and increase system efficiencies.



- A **driver's license sanctions/ignition interlock law** was passed, to go into effect July 1, 2011. The law states that first-time DWI offenders with a 0.16 percent and above blood-alcohol concentration—and all repeat DWI offenders—will be required to have ignition interlock devices installed on any vehicle they drive.
- The DPS's Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) identified nearly \$3 million in federal funds to provide law enforcement agencies with **in-squad digital cameras**. So far, 600 cameras have been provided to 136 agencies. Digital camera data improve officer safety, provide an unbiased account of enforcement contacts, assist in prosecution in the adjudication of cases, and promote model officer behavior and compliance with agency policies.



TZD **engineering** efforts focus on carefully evaluating road characteristics to ensure wise investments for modifying roadways and implementing engineering countermeasures. Among the recent accomplishments in engineering:

- Work continued on the development of **Highway Safety Plans** for all 87 Minnesota counties and the 8 MnDOT districts that outline specific investment priorities and projects for those areas based on crash data. Development of these plans is continuing will be completed in the fall of 2012.
- Road safety funding is being directed to state and local roads for **infrastructure improvements** focused on reducing fatal and serious crashes. These projects include systematic safety improvements such as rumble strips, cable median barriers, and rural intersection lighting.

- Technical policies have been adopted by MnDOT to insure that all construction projects, including preservation projects, include **rumble strips** and **safety edge treatments**.



The goal of the TZD program is to reduce not just crashes, but total road injuries and fatalities. Fast, efficient **emergency medical and trauma services** are critical to reducing fatalities and serious injuries whenever a crash does occur. This means having the appropriate equipment in place and staff members trained to be able to rapidly respond to trauma events, assessing severity and transporting patients to the appropriate facility for treatment.

Among recent accomplishments in this area:

- A **statewide trauma system** and **regional trauma centers** were implemented. As of early 2011, 118 Minnesota hospitals (out of 128 eligible hospitals) are designated as trauma hospitals, and more are being designated quarterly. As of July 2010, all EMS providers have been required to transport critical trauma patients to trauma hospitals.
- **Regional trauma advisory councils** (RTAC) were designated and implemented to focus on clinical continuous quality improvement on the local level. RTACs are required to interact with other entities that share similar visions, such as local TZD programs. Five RTACs have been approved or are in the process of review and approval in Minnesota.
- Every licensed ambulance service in the state now has written **trauma transport guidelines** in accordance with state law that took effect in July 2010.
- The Minnesota Emergency Medical Services Regulatory Board (EMS RB) collected more than **3.5 million patient care reports** for review and evaluation.

Legislation

TZD efforts, led by the Office of Traffic Safety at the Department of Public Safety, played a major role in the passage of traffic safety legislation in Minnesota over the past six years. Accomplishments in this area include:

- Expanded use of ignition interlock for DWI in 2010.
- Passage of the primary seat belt and booster seat laws in 2009.
- Implementation of graduated driver's licensing, and passage of a law banning texting, e-mailing, or accessing the web while driving in 2008.
- Implementation of a lower blood alcohol content (0.08, from 1.0) for DWI in 2005.



Courts

Minnesota's judicial system and courts support TZD program efforts in numerous ways:

- Since the inception of **DWI Courts**, 461 participants have been admitted into the program: 209 have graduated, 174 obtained a valid driver license, and 14 incurred an additional DWI arrest. During the 2010 federal fiscal year, 139 participants were admitted into a DWI Court program: 124 graduated, 24 were terminated, and 6 graduates incurred an additional DWI arrest.
- Since beginning the program in 2008, the **Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor (TSRP)** has provided 116 hours of Continuing Legal Education training for 612 prosecutors and 50 POST credits for 1,347 law enforcement officers.
- The TSRP maintains an **electronic mailing list for DWI prosecutors** consisting of more than 250 members. More than 3,200 messages have been posted to the group. The TSRP also publishes *The Traffic Report* quarterly newsletter.



Evaluation

Analyzing traffic crash data and evaluating traffic safety initiatives helps the TZD program determine the effectiveness of strategies and target areas for improvement. Examples of these efforts include:

- *Minnesota Motor Vehicles Crash Facts*, a detailed report that compiles and summarizes information about the state's traffic crashes, is produced each year by researchers with the DPS's Office of Traffic Safety (OTS). The report includes the "who, what, where, when, and why" of traffic crashes and breaks out information by mode (e.g., motorcycle, truck, pedestrian) and other contributing factors (e.g., alcohol, seat belt use).
- The OTS conducts a seat belt observation survey annually to estimate a statewide use rate. This allows the OTS to capture demographic data to help target its passenger protection program and assist enforcement initiatives to improve seat belt use—and consequently save lives. Previous years' results have been 90.2 percent (in 2009) and 92.3 percent (in 2010).
- The first official regional evaluation efforts conducted annually by the TZD team of MnDOT and OTS staff will be completed in 2011.

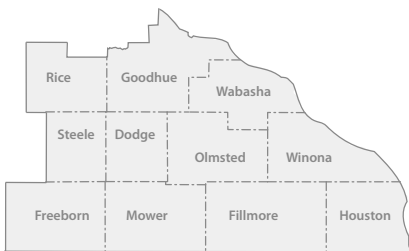
Regional Partnerships

In addition to the statewide TZD effort, partnerships have been created in five geographic areas of Minnesota to coordinate regional efforts. Regions are encouraged to look at data specific to their areas to identify factors leading to fatal and serious injury crashes, then work with their constituents to implement proven countermeasures.

Each partnership has a local steering committee, led by MnDOT and the State Patrol in that area and made up of local traffic safety stakeholders. For contact information for the regions, visit www.minnesotatzd.org/network/regional/index.html.

Key activities within each region include:

- Holding regular region-wide steering committee meetings of key stakeholders.
- Conducting regional seat belt evaluations.
- Coordinating six regional media events.
- Acting as a traffic safety resource at regional traffic safety meetings.
- Implementing traffic safety projects that blanket the entire region.
- Providing data for regional evaluation by MnDOT and the Department of Public Safety.

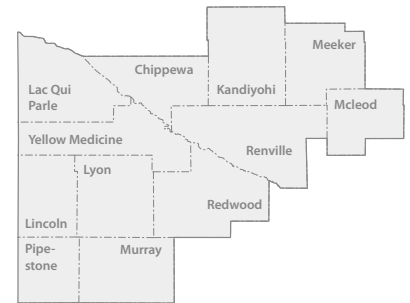


Southeastern Minnesota TZD

The Southeastern Minnesota (SE MN) TZD program, formed in 2004, includes partners from an 11-county area working together on programs to reduce traffic fatalities. Based on analysis of regional crash data, the partnership focuses its traffic safety efforts on alcohol, seat belt use, distraction, and speed. It also holds an annual workshop to facilitate a collaborative and comprehensive approach to reducing traffic deaths and severe injuries.

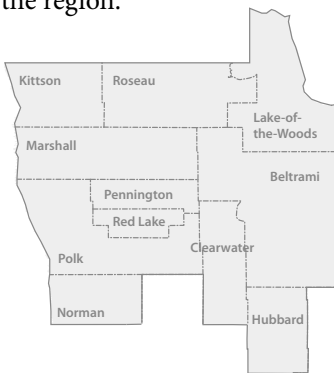
Southwestern Minnesota TZD

The Southwestern Minnesota (SW MN) TZD program was formed in 2008. Its traffic safety efforts focus on seat belt use, speed, distraction, and alcohol. The program also holds an annual workshop to bring together traffic safety stakeholders in the region.



Northwestern Minnesota TZD

The Northwestern Minnesota (NW MN) TZD program was formed in 2010 to bring together stakeholders to address traffic safety concerns in 11 counties in northwestern Minnesota. Based on regional crash data, the partnership focuses efforts on seat belt use, speed, distraction, and alcohol. The program held its first workshop in 2011 in conjunction with the district safety plan workshop.



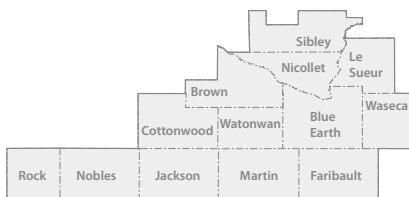
Northeastern Minnesota TZD

Northeastern Minnesota (NE MN) TZD was formed in 2010 and held its first annual workshop in 2011. The program also recently hired a coordinator dedicated to its efforts in improving traffic safety. Based on regional crash data, the partnership is focusing efforts on speed, seat belt use, distraction, and alcohol.



South Central Minnesota TZD

South Central Minnesota (SC MN) TZD is the most recently formed regional partnership. The program has hired a coordinator dedicated to its efforts in improving traffic safety in the 13 counties that make up this partnership.



Outreach

The TZD program offers a number of events throughout the year. TZD's statewide **annual conference** provides a forum for sharing information on best practices in the 4Es and for identifying new approaches to reducing the number of traffic fatalities and life-changing injuries on Minnesota roads. In 2010, the conference drew more than 700 attendees—a record high.



Stakeholder breakfasts, open to the public and held three times per year, give attendees a chance to discuss recent TZD efforts and progress. The meetings also feature a presentation on a traffic-safety-related topic. Attendance at these events has increased by 25 percent over the last two years. In addition, the presentations are streamed live and recorded for later viewing online.

Annual **regional workshops** have been held by the NE, NW, SE, and SW Minnesota TZD programs to bring together stakeholders to collaborate on approaches for reducing traffic deaths and severe injuries on a regional level.

In addition to its website, which received 16,421 visits from June 2010 through May 2011, the TZD program maintains an electronic distribution list of about 1,700 stakeholders to share programmatic updates and announcements.

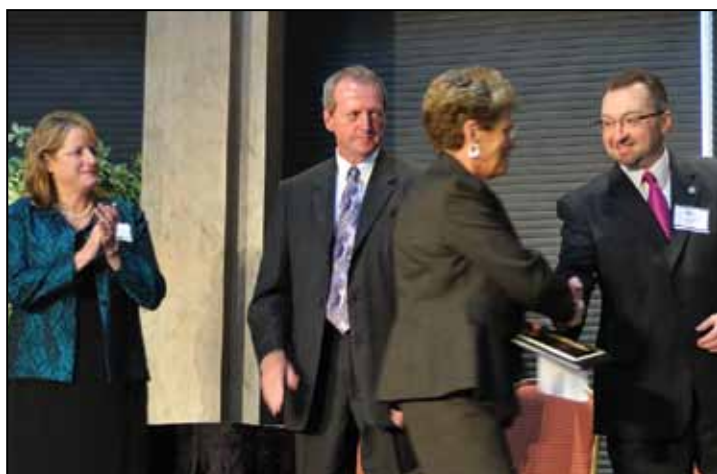
Awards

At its annual conference, the Minnesota TZD program gives awards to recognize the contributions of individuals working toward zero deaths. For a list of previous award winners, visit www.minnesotatzd.org/about/awards/index.html.

The **Kathy Swanson Outstanding Service Award** recognizes an individual who has shown exceptional leadership in efforts to improve traffic safety in Minnesota, build partnerships, and mentor others in the field. The recipient will have also demonstrated a long-term passion, dedication, and commitment to reducing the number of deaths and injuries resulting from crashes on Minnesota roads.

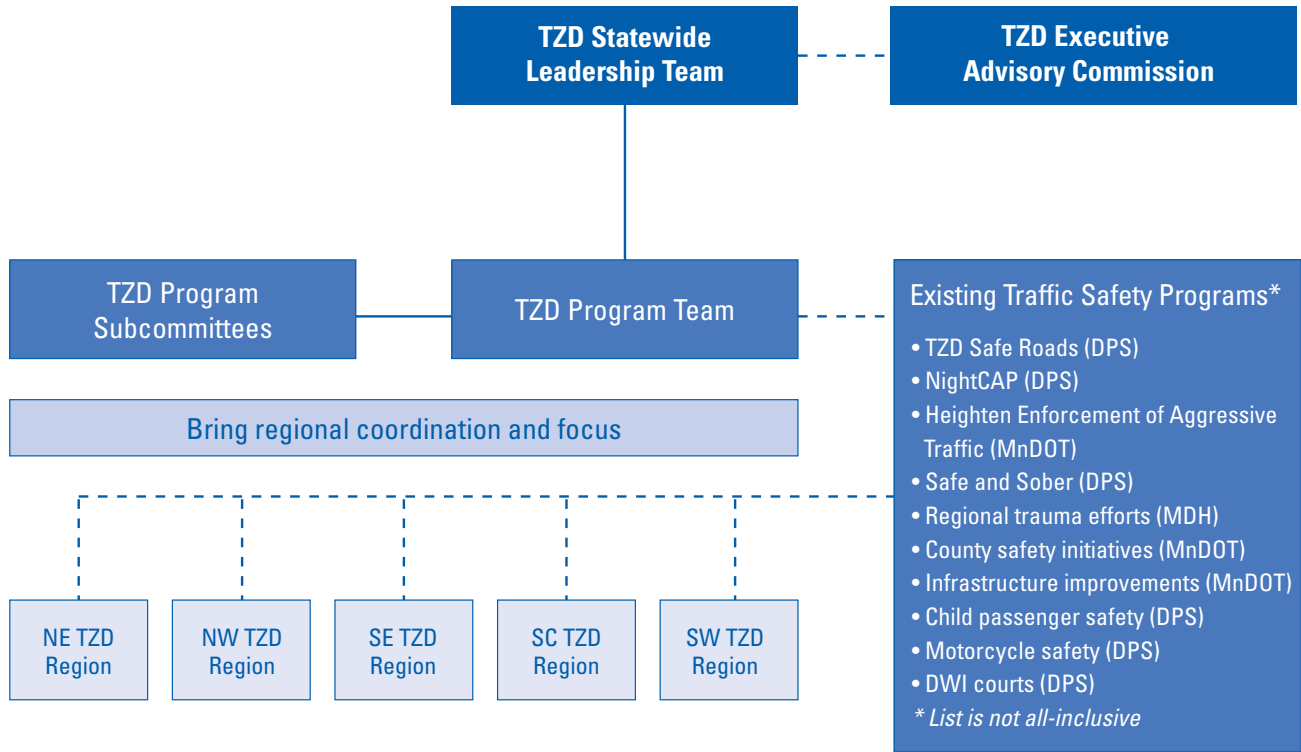
The **Toward Zero Deaths Star Awards** recognize excellence in enforcement, emergency medical and trauma services, education, engineering, child passenger safety, judicial/court systems, and the media. Award recipients have demonstrated exceptional creativity, leadership, and organizational skills and the ability to successfully motivate and collaborate with others in efforts to move toward zero deaths on Minnesota's roads.

The **Distinguished Public Leadership Award** is given to public leaders who, through their vision, leadership, and knowledge, have influenced traffic safety policy directions that benefit society.



TZD Program Structure

The TZD program is a joint effort led by the Minnesota Departments of Public Safety, Transportation, and Health with support from the University of Minnesota. Many other groups support and participate in this organization.



The **TZD Executive Advisory Commission** strengthens the role and influence of TZD efforts by providing top-level, visible leadership. Members include the commissioners and top staff of the Minnesota Departments of Transportation, Public Safety, and Health.

The **TZD Leadership Team** is responsible for providing strategic direction and overseeing the implementation of TZD initiatives to ensure an aggressive and effective Minnesota Highway Safety Program.

The **TZD Program Team** is made up of stakeholder interest groups focusing on all four Es. These members bring their experience and expertise in traffic safety to ensure a balanced perspective on Minnesota’s traffic safety challenges as well as solutions to address them.

TZD Regional Partnerships engage traffic safety stakeholders at the local level by implementing effective traffic safety countermeasures for safety problems identified through crash data.

The **working group** manages the daily activities of the TZD program. TZD **subcommittees** are also formed as needed to work on initiatives related to the TZD program, such as annual conference planning, stakeholder breakfast planning, and award recommendations.

Finally, many **existing programs**, although not directly overseen by TZD, work in collaboration with TZD program efforts, sharing information and coordinating activities when possible to ensure that Minnesota has a united effort for improving traffic safety.

To see a map showing local TZD initiatives and programs throughout Minnesota, visit www.minnesotatzd.org/network/index.html.

For more information on Minnesota TZD:

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www.minnesotatzd.org

