



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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62,000 VEHICLES STOPPED IN NINE MONTHS OF HEAT ACROSS STATE

More Than 23,000 Speed Citations Issued; 10,000 Ticketed for Other Offenses

ST. PAUL — In the last three months of HEAT (highway enforcement of aggressive traffic), participating law enforcement agencies stopped nearly 23,000 vehicles for various traffic violations and cited 8,887 drivers for illegal speed. The reporting period was March through May.

Statewide, the first nine months of HEAT yielded 62,077 vehicles stops, 23,660 speed citations, nearly 33,000 speed warnings, and 10,287 citations for various offenses related to DWI, outstanding warrants, drugs, no insurance, illegal substance/open bottle, unbelted occupants and equipment.

In nine months of HEAT in the Twin Cities metro area, agencies reported 21,016 vehicle stops, 12,509 speed citations, 6,033 speed warnings and 5,535 citations for other offenses.

High travel speed continued to drop on roads that had speed limits increased from 55 mph to 60 mph. Speed data was collected by MnDOT automatic traffic recorders (ATR) for a seven-day period before and after HEAT enforcement.

In the metro, the number of vehicles traveling over 70 mph has dropped almost 25 percent based on data sampling on Highways 100, I-94 and I-35W. In greater Minnesota, data collected on Highways 2 and 71 shows the number of vehicles traveling over 70 mph has dropped more than 28 percent.

HEAT, a year-long \$2.5 million federally funded enforcement program, is supported by nearly 1,400 hours of additional weekly traffic enforcement by the Patrol, county sheriffs' offices and local police. Participating agencies in the metropolitan area include the State Patrol; Hennepin, Ramsey and Washington county sheriffs' offices; and Brooklyn Center, Golden Valley, Maple Grove, Minneapolis, New Brighton, North Branch, Robbinsdale, Roseville, St. Paul and Wyoming police departments.

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The number of vehicle stops and speeding violations in the last three months for the rest of the state were reported by Patrol districts: Brainerd (2,296/799); Detroit Lakes (1,358/355); Duluth/Virginia (2,016/503); Mankato (1,400/412); Marshall (1,925/336); Rochester (2,884/823); St. Cloud (1,768/624); and Thief River Falls (868/112).

The figures represent only HEAT vehicle stops and citations and do not reflect violations or warnings issued during regular traffic enforcement.

Each year in Minnesota, speed is a factor in about 150 traffic deaths and 7,000 injuries. Twice as many speed-related fatal crashes occur in rural areas than in urban areas. Illegal or unsafe speed is the greatest crash factor for younger drivers.

Editor's Notes: A breakout of traffic citations and warnings by offense by State Patrol district is available upon request from dennis.smith@state.mn.us .

The table "Minnesota Illegal/Unsafe Speed Statistics by County, 2001–2005" showing total speed-related traffic fatalities and estimated cost of speed-related fatalities is available upon request from dennis.smith@state.mn.us .

Driving Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths