

# A Safe Resolution

AAA works to make Minnesota's roadways safer with a goal "Toward Zero Deaths."

Entering the New Year, we often make resolutions we can't keep. This new year, I encourage you to consider a resolution that could save your life, or the life of someone you love. Resolve to be a better driver.

You may consider yourself a good driver, and have an unblemished record, but none of us are perfect. All of us can do better. AAA is working with a variety of stakeholders to help drivers improve their skills, make Minnesota's roads safer and ultimately attain the state's goal of "Toward Zero Deaths."

A major component of this effort is the state's Strategic Highway Safety Plan, which was mandated by the federal government when it reauthorized transportation funding in 2006.

Because AAA has a long history of working with government, nonprofits and businesses to increase roadway safety, we were invited to participate in the plan's development.

As part of the process, Minnesota's crash data was reviewed to determine critical areas in need of improvement. Successes and progress in areas of highway safety were noted, and strategies developed to address specific safety issues.

All four of the highway safety "Es"—education, engineering, emergency response and enforcement—also were examined because no single factor will eliminate all types of roadway fatalities. Traffic safety professionals believe that vehicle accidents are not "accidents" but, in fact, crashes that could be



Randy Williams  
Regional President, Minnesota

prevented if all four Es are effectively implemented. Specifically:

- Drivers need to be educated about the importance of not speeding, not driving impaired, not driving distracted and always wearing their seat belts.
- Law enforcement needs to hold all drivers accountable for poor choices made behind the wheel that endanger everyone on Minnesota's roadways.
- Roads need to be engineered in a manner that anticipates problems in advance and solves them before serious crashes occur.
- Emergency response teams need the most accurate information to determine where crashes have occurred and how to respond quickly and effectively.

The Strategic Highway Safety Plan is a living document that adapts to successes and challenges, and is continually assessed for its effectiveness. You can read the current version of the plan at [tzd.state.mn.us](http://tzd.state.mn.us).

Working together, we can make roadways safer in 2008. So, make and keep your safe driving resolution. Let's drive Minnesota "Toward Zero Deaths." ●

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