2019-2020
Southeast Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths
Annual Report

Jessica Schleck
Toward Zero Deaths
Regional Coordinator,
Southeast Region
October 2020
# Table of Contents

## Goal 1 – Reduce Fatal and Serious Injuries

- Regional Overview, pg. 4
- Strategic Plan, pgs. 5-6
- Background, pg. 7
- Regional Crash Data, pgs. 7-11

## Regional Activities

- Challenges, pg. 11
- Successes, pgs. 12-14
- Workshop (Canceled-COVID), pgs. 15-17
- Seat Belt Survey (April), pg. 18
- Seat Belt Championship (Canceled-COVID), pgs. 18-19
- Seat Belt Mobilization News Conference (Canceled-COVID), pg. 19
- TZD at the Honkers (Canceled-COVID), pg. 19
- Rollover Simulator Demonstration (Oct.), pg. 19
- Dodge County Seat Belt Project, (Sept.) pg. 19
- Distracted Driving Activities, pg. 20
- DWI Kickoff (Nov.), pg. 21
- Voluntary Preliminary Breath Tests (Canceled-COVID), pg. 22
- DWI Activities, pg. 22
- Speed Poster, pg. 23
- Border-to-Border Speed Saturation (July), pg. 24
- Motorcycle Safety Education, pg. 25
- MN/WI Cross-Border Partnership, pg. 25
- Pedestrian Safety Education, pg. 25

## Goal 2 – TZD Partnership Goals

- Building Relationships within the Region, pgs. 26-27
- Building Relationships – Engineering, pgs. 27-28
- Building Relationships with the Media
  - Regional Media Advisories, pgs. 29-30
  - Regional Media Coverage, pgs. 31-35
Mission
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. These efforts will be driven by data, best practices and research.

Values
- Continuous improvements
- Engage partners
- Evidence-based approaches

The Southeast Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths program began in 2005. The counties involved include: Dodge, Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, Houston, Mower, Olmsted, Rice, Steele, Wabasha and Winona.

The leading cause of traffic-related deaths and severe injuries in southeast Minnesota include:
- Lack of Seat Belt Use
- Speed and Aggressive Driving
- Alcohol

Southeast Minnesota Fatalities and Serious Injuries by County (2015-2019)

The leading type of crash resulting in deaths and severe injuries include:
- Run-off-Road
- Intersection-related

The Southeast Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths program is led by a Steering Committee comprised of the “4 Es:”
- Enforcement
- Engineering
- Education
- EMS/Emergency Medical & Trauma Services

Southeast Minnesota TZD Leadership Contacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Engineering</th>
<th>Enforcement</th>
<th>Education/EMS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mark Schoenfelder</td>
<td>Capt. Christina Bogojevic</td>
<td>Jessica Schleck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MnDOT District Engineer</td>
<td>Minnesota State Patrol</td>
<td>Regional TZD Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:mark.schoenfelder@state.mn.us">mark.schoenfelder@state.mn.us</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:christina.bogojevic@state.mn.us">christina.bogojevic@state.mn.us</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:jessica.schleck@state.mn.us">jessica.schleck@state.mn.us</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

www.minnesotatzd.org
Southeast Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths Regional Strategic Plan

Mission
To move southeast Minnesota toward zero deaths on our roads using education, enforcement, engineering, and emergency medical and trauma services.

Goal 1 – Reduce TZD Fatality and Serious Injuries
To continuously decrease traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries in southeast Minnesota from the past 5-year averages (2015-2019) of 44 fatalities and 165 serious injuries. Note: New injury definitions were introduced in 2016 and may have contributed to a higher reported number of serious injuries.

Objectives:

A. To continuously increase regional seat belt use rates.
   As of 2020, the seat belt compliance rate in southeast Minnesota was 87.4%. As a region, our long-term goal is to achieve 100% usage rate. Our short-term goal is to see a continuous increase in the usage rate each year.

B. To examine the characteristics of the unbelted fatalities and serious injuries. Calculation of seat belt use in fatal and serious crashes is possible with existing data.

C. To continuously decrease the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5-year averages (2015-2019) in the southeast region</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contributing factors:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatalities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatal Crashes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severe Injuries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severe Injury Crashes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: a crash may have more than one of the above listed or additional contributing factors.
Southeast Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths Regional Strategic Plan

Total Southeast Minnesota Region (2019 data)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fatalities</th>
<th>Fatal Crashes</th>
<th>Severe Injuries</th>
<th>Severe Injury Crashes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2019 Total</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-2019 Total</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>824</td>
<td>672</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Region Goal 2 – TZD Partnership Goals
To continuously increase TZD awareness and partnerships across southeast Minnesota for both the general public and traffic safety professionals

1. Establish the vision of TZD as a priority for all region, county, city (government agencies)
   A. Engage local government involvement in TZD steering committee and workshops
   B. Educate/promote traffic safety awareness of city/county officials
   C. Promote city/county employee education/policies that facilitate the TZD vision

Activities: Recruitment of city and county to attend TZD event, giving TZD presentations to boards/councils, mailings/connections to Network of Employers for Traffic Safety (NETS)

2. Create and strengthen partnerships in the region
   A. Engage stakeholders
   B. Develop networking relationships
   C. Recruit membership of the TZD partnership

Activities: EMS Conference booth/presentation, regional workshop, web, calendar, statistics, workshop, orientation

3. Promote and implement effective traffic safety initiatives in the region
   A. Develop and distribute resource materials
   B. Provide enforcement wave support in community
   C. Promote evidence-based countermeasures
   D. Collect data and statistics within region
   E. Implement best practices within region

Activities: web, brochure, one-pagers, presentations, news advisories, workshop, seat belt observational survey and omnibus survey, media messaging and media events, news releases regarding activities woven into existing messages, worksite education and policy development, parent component to driver education, sober cab development, youth enforcement and education
Goal 1 – Reduce Fatal and Serious Injuries

Regional Steering Committee

Background: In 2006, the southeast Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths Steering Committee developed the traffic safety mission and goals for the region in order to move toward zero deaths for traffic-related crashes.

Problem Statement: In 2006, there were 494 deaths on Minnesota roadways and 69 of these deaths occurred on southeast Minnesota roadways – an unacceptable number. Southeast Minnesota TZD includes partners from the 11-county area (Dodge, Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, Houston, Mower, Olmsted, Rice, Steele, Wabasha and Winona) who work together to create initiatives and programs to reduce traffic fatalities.

A regional strategic plan was developed in order to identify goals and strategies to accomplish the mission. In 2011, the data was reviewed and two of the three subcommittee goals had been met as well as nearly attaining the overall fatality reduction goal. As a result, a new strategic plan and new goals were set, beginning in 2012.

Mission: To move southeast Minnesota toward zero deaths on our roads using education, enforcement, engineering, and emergency medical and trauma services.

Goal 1 – Reduce Fatal and Serious Injuries

To continuously decrease traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries in southeast Minnesota from the past 5-year average (2015-2019) of 44 fatalities and 164 serious injuries. Note: New injury definitions were introduced in 2016 and may have contributed to a higher reported number of serious injuries.
## Southeast TZD Region

2015 to 2019 fatal and serious injury crashes on all public roads

### General Traffic Safety Trends

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>5-Year Trend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K Crashes</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Decreasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Crashes</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>Increasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K+A Crashes</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>Increasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>Decreasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Decreasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicyclist</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Decreasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>Increasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Decreasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicyclist</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Decreasing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Prevalence of Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) Focus Areas

**NOTE:** Prevalence is percent of fatal and serious injury crashes involving each focus area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SHSP Focus Area</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>5-Year Trend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BEHAVIOR</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impairment</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>26.9%</td>
<td>25.8%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>Increasing*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speed</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
<td>25.6%</td>
<td>Increasing*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unbelted</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>Increasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inattention</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>Decreasing**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MODE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comm. Vehicle</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
<td>Increasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor Cycle</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
<td>Decreasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>Increasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicyclist</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>Decreasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DRIVER</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unlicensed</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
<td>Increasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Younger Driver</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
<td>Increasing*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older Driver</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>Increasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ROADWAY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intersection</td>
<td>35.3%</td>
<td>40.3%</td>
<td>45.6%</td>
<td>48.3%</td>
<td>45.2%</td>
<td>Increasing*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Run-off-Road</td>
<td>36.8%</td>
<td>32.9%</td>
<td>39.8%</td>
<td>38.2%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>Decreasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head-on</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>Decreasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Train</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>Increasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Zone</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>Decreasing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* A 5-Year Trend with an asterisk implies a significant change (alpha=0.10); trends without an asterisk do not have enough data to rule out zero change (i.e. no change).
Southeast Regional Summary
Fatal and Serious Injury Crashes, 2015-2019*
* 2019 data is preliminary as of March 9, 2020

The prevalence of each Strategic Highway Safety Plan focus area is based on the percent of fatal and serious injury crashes. The size of the words or phrases represent this prevalence.

Regional Focus Areas

Older Driver
Impairment
Intersection
Run-off-Road

Southeast Traffic Fatalities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>41</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>39</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The chart above shows trends in fatalities from 2011 to 2019 within the Southeast TZD Region. The green bars show the necessary progress required to meet our target goal of no more than 225 fatalities statewide in 2025. Statewide, this translates into 23 fewer traffic fatalities every year. The regional numbers are scaled based on the number of fatalities within the TZD Region from 2016-2018.

**Next steps:**
At the last Steering Committee meeting we discussed forming subcommittees that would focus on specific areas based on our regional crash data. The subcommittees would identify action-oriented strategies and would use the tactics outlined in the SHSP as a starting point to determine the best steps in moving forward. Regional Coordinator is currently participating in the Motorcycle Safety Advisory Task Force and Child Passenger Safety Task Force. Regional Coordinator has been asked to work on forming a Commercial Motor Vehicle Task Force as well as a Speed Task Force. In the process of identifying individuals to become champions.

**Challenges:**
This year has presented many COVID-related challenges. The Steering Committee was unable to meet in-person, but continued to meet regularly via Skype. The TZD Safe Roads Coordinators were assigned COVID-related duties, so were unable to participate in TZD activities from March-September, but we were able to schedule two Safe Roads Coordinator meetings via Skype. We were unable to schedule regular media events as the enforcement periods were postponed, but continued to work with partners to get our messages out via social media. The 16th annual workshop was canceled due to COVID, but in order to continue building partnerships, TZD updates were sent on a regular basis.
**Successes:**

- The Southeast Minnesota TZD program aims to create a collaborative, comprehensive, regional approach to reduce traffic-related deaths and severe injuries. As part of these efforts, an annual workshop is held to help facilitate the implementation of TZD in all southeast Minnesota communities. The 16th annual Southeast Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths Workshop was canceled due to COVID.

- Continued to develop partnerships with Wisconsin State Patrol, various law enforcement agencies from Wisconsin as well as the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. The 2nd annual MN/WI cross-border media event was canceled due to COVID, but partnered with Wisconsin for the annual fall “Flood Run” news release.

- Community outreach with events focused on:
  - Seat belts
  - Impaired Driving
  - Distracted Driving
  - Speed
  - Hands-free Law
  - Motorcycle Safety
  - Pedestrian Safety

- Completed monthly reports accurately and timely.

- 4-E coalitions continue to expand across the region in both funded and unfunded coalitions. All of the southeast counties now have an active Safe Roads Coalition as well as an active Fatal Review Committee.

- Continued partnership with Olmsted County Sheriff’s Office social media specialist to create numerous videos to coincide with enforcement periods.

  - Hands-Free
    https://www.facebook.com/OlmstedSheriff/videos/341541726864790/
    https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hwdzw4BrZR0

  - Impaired Driving
    https://www.facebook.com/OlmstedSheriff/videos/453381865369650/
    https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fsM4jTXS_Pc
    https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tuApv7wyKr8

  - Pedestrian Safety
    https://www.facebook.com/OlmstedSheriff/videos/2196034270542669/
• Represented TZD in the Highway 52 Advisory Committee meeting Feb. 25, 2020. This project will require working with many landowners and businesses regarding the planning and execution of a possible interchange and roadway modifications. TZD involvement was requested due to the closing of access points along the corridor due to safety improvements. The meeting included MnDOT, Goodhue County and township officials from Leon, Stanton, and Cannon Falls.

• Represented TZD in the Highway 14 Interchange Advisory Committee meeting. As the Dodge County TZD coordinator, I was involved in this discussion (known as the deadliest stretch of roadway) for than 12 years, so it was exciting to see that funding was secured. Construction began fall of 2019 and is scheduled to conclude in 2021.

• Participated in County Highway Safety Improvement planning in southeast counties. TZD traffic-safety culture, vision, mission and goals were presented at each meeting attended. This helped to build and maintain relationships with county agencies.

• Continued to develop relationships with local media. Media advisory, news release and all talking points were developed for events. Media packets were completed and distributed at each media event. KTTC-TV, KIMT-TV, KAAL-TV, WXOW-TV, FOX-29, Rochester Post-Bulletin, Dodge County Independent, Star Herald and KROC talk radio covered regional events.

• Worked with county engineers and southeast TZD law enforcement grantees to identify locations for replacement of the Safe & Sober signs. More than 50 Safe & Sober signs have been replaced with updated TZD signs in Dodge, Goodhue, Fillmore, Houston, Olmsted, Rice, Wabasha, Winona.

• Local government presentations included the TZD mission, vision and goals as well as updates on local efforts, successes and challenges. State and local TZD representatives from each of the 5 Es were invited.
  • Goodhue County Board
  • Rice County Board

• At least four presentations were postponed due to COVID.
  • Dundas
  • Northfield
  • Olmsted County
  • Rochester City Council
Active funded coalitions
Assisted and supported the funded TZD Safe Roads coordinators in various capacities throughout the year with supplies needed, assistance with events or directing to appropriate resources. It is important to note that many of the active funded coalition leaders were reassigned to COVID duties and were unable to work TZD efforts from March-September.

- Fillmore
- Houston
- Goodhue
- Olmsted
- Rice
- Wabasha
- Winona

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Mobilization Outreach REQUIRED</th>
<th>Distracted REQUIRED</th>
<th>OPTIONAL</th>
<th>PED SAFETY</th>
<th>NETS</th>
<th>SERVER</th>
<th>LOCAL GOV'T PRES</th>
<th>MC</th>
<th>CLINIC TEENS</th>
<th>SOBER CAB</th>
<th>IMPACT SPEAKER</th>
<th>POI</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fillmore County Public Health</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>Master Bartender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goodhue County Health &amp; Human Services</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Seat Belt Challenge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houston County Public Health &amp; Human Services</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olmsted County Public Health</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice County Public Health</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wabasha County Public Health</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Flood Run (MC Safety)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winona County Health &amp; Human Services</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Active unfunded coalitions
Assisted and supported the unfunded Freeborn County TZD Safe Roads coordinator in various capacities throughout the year with supplies needed, assistance with events, or directing to appropriate resources.

Facilitated the Dodge, Mower and Steele County Safe Roads coalitions. Was responsible for maintaining the coalition networks, meeting agendas, minutes and all activities and events as requested.

- Dodge County
- Freeborn County
- Mower County
- Steele County
Regional Workshop – Canceled
Southeast Minnesota TZD Workshop
May 6, 2020

The 16th annual Southeast Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths Workshop was scheduled to be held May 6 in Rochester. More than 200 traffic safety professionals attend each year, representing 11 counties. The agenda was complete and Save the Dates were distributed, but it was ultimately canceled due to COVID.

The Southeast Minnesota TZD program aims to create a collaborative, comprehensive and regional approach to reduce traffic deaths and severe injuries. As part of these efforts, an annual workshop is held to help facilitate the implementation of TZD in all southeast Minnesota communities. Encouraged to attend are law enforcement, engineers, educators, emergency medical services, local policymakers and other traffic safety advocates.

The workshop participants are surveyed annually and each year the survey respondents rate the workshop with high marks and urge the planning team to continue to have the workshop annually. Anecdotally, the networking and forming relationships across the “4 E” boundaries continues in southeast Minnesota.
Toward Zero Deaths
Southeast Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths
16th Annual Regional Workshop Agenda
International Event Center
7333 Airport View Drive SW, Rochester
May 6, 2020

8 a.m. Registration and Continental Breakfast

8:30 a.m. Welcome
Mark Schoenfelder, District Engineer, MnDOT District 6; Capt. Christina Bogojevic, State Patrol Commander, District 2100; Jessica Schleck, Southeast Minnesota TZD Regional Coordinator

9 a.m. TZD 2.0
State TZD co-chairs
As we enter the 17th year of TZD, what’s next? Hear from the state TZD co-chair team about the upcoming TZD “remodel” and how that will move Minnesota closer toward zero deaths.

9:15 a.m. What is Traffic Safety Culture and How will it Change Minnesota TZD?
Kristine Hernandez, Statewide Toward Zero Deaths Program Coordinator
Park Rapids engaged in a 3-year pilot project aimed at growing a positive traffic safety culture. This session will provide an overview of the project and reveal lessons learned to apply to future initiatives to improve traffic safety culture.

9:30 a.m. The Results Are In!
The Strategic Highway Safety Plan is a policy plan that sets an overall direction for future safety strategies and presents the framework for selecting strategies. Stakeholder input was collected last year and now the results are in and NEW strategies and tactics are ready to review. Collaborate and provide input for the direction of the TZD regional action plan.

10:30 a.m. Break and Exhibits

10:45 a.m. Drugs, Drivers, and Damage on our Roads
Lt. Dan Morose, Standardized Field Sobriety Testing and Drug Recognition Evaluator Coordinator, Minnesota State Patrol
Drugged driving is on the rise throughout the country, and Minnesota is not immune from the issue of high drivers on our roadways. This trend has resulted in more crashes, deaths and injuries on Minnesota roads. Hear about the increase in incidents of drugged driving in Minnesota and throughout the U.S., what law enforcement and prosecutors are doing to combat the issue, and the challenges in arresting and charging these extremely dangerous drivers. This presentation will also highlight the need for action now to reverse this trend and keep drugged driving from moving beyond our grasp.

11:45 a.m. Drugged Driving Case Study or Impacts Crashes Have on Responders
(Waiting on the case to close)
12 p.m.  Lunch (Provided) and Visit Exhibits

12:45 p.m.  When You Can’t Control the Situation – Control How You Respond
Donelle Hintermeister, Training and Development Specialist, Minnesota State Patrol
Are you unknowingly carrying your own accelerant in to conversations? One of the keys to de-escalating a situation is how we respond to the other person’s behavior. Identify behaviors that turn conversations into confrontations and explore verbal and non-verbal de-escalation techniques to improve communication.

1:30 p.m.  Break

1:45 p.m.  Drone Use in 2020
Alex Peterson, Media Communications Specialist & Emergency Manager, City of Marshall
Hear rules, tips and tricks for using Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) in your department with a focus on flight activities that support the mission of TZD – like mapping and videos of scenes. The DJI Matrice 210 with the Zenmuse XT2 640 and the Zenmuse Z30 cameras, DJI Mavic 2 Enterprise Dual, and the DJI Mavic Air will be on display.

2:15 p.m.  Crash Facts are Only as Accurate as the Reporting
Chelsea Palmateer, Research Analysis Specialist, Office of Traffic Safety
OTS researchers produce a detailed annual report summarizing a variety of information related to crashes: who, what, where, when and why. Although, the report is only as accurate as the information entered into their system. Hear how they use this data and why it is crucial that the appropriate boxes are checked when writing a crash reports.

2:30 p.m.  Statewide Pedestrian Campaign
Michelle Pooler, Safety Education Coordinator, Pedestrian and Bicycle Section, MnDOT Office of Transit and Active Transportation
A new statewide pedestrian campaign will kick off in 2020. Hear how communities can get involved.

2:45 p.m.  Door Prizes and Adjourn

Please take time throughout the day to visit the traffic safety exhibit tables for reference materials and ideas to implement in your communities.
Regional Seat Belt Survey Results
The Southeast Minnesota TZD Steering Committee wanted to show the regional trends in the area, and therefore, began collecting their regional data beginning in 2006, enlisting the help of DPS OTS evaluators to set up a scientifically significant survey. The 2006-2020 results are shown below. As of April 2020, the seat belt compliance rate in southeast Minnesota was 87.4 percent. Should be noted that the survey was done during COVID. As a region, our long-term goal is to achieve 100 percent usage rate. Our short-term goal is to see a continuous increase in the usage rate each year.

The seat belt efforts focused this past year on educational activities, such as partnering with law enforcement on a regional level with the various mobilizations, as well as educating citizens in southeast Minnesota and state lawmakers. Focus for the upcoming year will continue with educational efforts, combined with law enforcement mobilizations, educating parents through driver education and worksites throughout the region.

Regional Seat Belt Efforts

- **Regional Seat Belt Challenge/Championship**
  Students from each county planned to participate in a Regional Seat Belt Championship. Students would have been timed on how quickly they could move to each seating position in a car and buckle up. Each school would have crowned a champion in early May. The winning school would have received a traveling trophy and banner to display at their school. The winning team from each school would have competed for the overall championship on May 21. The event was canceled due to COVID.
• **Regional Seat Belt news conference**  
  Canceled due to COVID.

• **Regional TZD Seat Belt event at the Rochester Honkers**  
  Canceled due to COVID.

• **Seat Belt Demonstration at the Kasson Police Department**  
  Partnered with Kasson Police and Kasson Fire at their open house to emphasize that seat belts can save lives. We used the State Patrol rollover simulator to engage the community and demonstrate the importance of seat belt use. We also distributed traffic safety materials. More than 300 people attended the event.

• **Dodge County Seat Belt Project**  
  As a county-wide project, law enforcement officers across Dodge County rewarded students and school staff at all three high schools for making the life-saving choice to buckle up. Dodge County law enforcement distributed free fountain drink coupons and buckle up wrist bands to high school students and staff who are wearing their seat belts. This event was a great reminder to all motorists that seat belts save lives. See pages 34-35 for media coverage.
• **Education and Public Engagement in Schools**
  Partnered with regional Safe Roads coordinators to provide educational events at local high schools. Events including seat belt stenciling and seat belt checks were completed through March. Many spring events were canceled due to COVID.

**Regional Distracted Driving Efforts**

• **Augmented Reality Distracted Driving Education Simulator (ARDDES)**
  Participated in Mayo High School media event with ARDDES. Participants in ARDDES simulations sit in the driver’s seat of an immobile vehicle with key function features including the steering wheel, turn signals and pedals while wearing a Meta2 head-mounted augmented reality display that presents them with realistic scenarios. See page 31 for media coverage.

• **Education and Public Engagement in Schools**
  Worked with regional Safe Roads coordinators to provide education at regional high schools and businesses. Events including the distracted driving simulator, Wheel of Distraction, Snapchat obstacle courses and pledging to *Never Drive Distracted* were completed throughout the year. Regional coordinator organized and executed the following:
  - Rochester Community and Technical College
  - Kasson-Mantorville High School

*Distracted Driving Event at Kasson-Mantorville High School*
Regional Impaired Driving Education Efforts

- **Holiday Impaired Driving kickoff**
  Two full-time dedicated DWI officers were introduced at the DWI enforcement kickoff at the Olmsted County Government Center. Speakers included; Chief Jim Franklin, Rochester Police Department; Sheriff Kevin Torgerson, Olmsted County Sheriff’s Office; Jessica Schleck, Southeast Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths Regional Coordinator and Capt. Bogojevic, Minnesota State Patrol. See pages 32-34 for media coverage.

- **Impaired Driving event at Rochester Community and Technical College**
  Partnered with the Rochester Police Department, the Olmsted County Sheriff’s Office, State Patrol and the RCTC basketball team to host an impaired driving event during Student Success Day. Students and staff had the opportunity to shoot baskets and throw bean bags wearing impaired driving goggles. More than 300 students participated in the event.
• **Voluntary Preliminary Breath Testing (PBT)**
  TZD partnered with the Rochester Police Department and Olmsted County Sheriff’s Office to offer voluntary Preliminary Breath Testing (PBT) to community members at three *Thursdays Downtown* events in Rochester. The monthly events were canceled due to COVID.

• **Responsible Beverage Server Training**
  Regional Responsible Beverage Server training was offered in Dodge, Olmsted, Wabasha, Winona, Fillmore and Houston counties.

• **Education and Public Engagement in Schools**
  Partnered with regional Safe Roads coordinators to provide education at regional high schools. Events including the DWI obstacle course and various drunk goggle activities were completed throughout the year, although any scheduled from March - June were canceled due to COVID.

• **DWI Crash Car**
  Coordinated the DWI crash car calendar. The car was scheduled to be used at numerous festivals and high schools across the region to remind the community of the dangers of driving impaired, March - September events were canceled due to COVID.

  ▪ Kasson-Mantorville High School
  ▪ Pine Island High School
  ▪ Zumbrota High School
  ▪ Kasson Police/Fire Open House
  ▪ South Central College

*South Central College – Rice County  Kasson-Mantorville Homecoming Parade*
Regional Speed Efforts

- **Annual Speed Poster**
  Once a year, regional traffic safety stakeholders pose for a regional Speed photo to use with local news releases to distribute in their communities. In previous years, the event was held in Lanesboro, Northfield, Owatonna, Red Wing, Rochester, Winona, Kasson, Lake City, Albert Lea, Austin, Rochester, and Owatonna and most recently in Winona. The photo shoot is used to recognize the 4Es. TZD uses an interdisciplinary approach pairing education, enforcement, engineering, and emergency medical and trauma services. This photo has occurred for many years and has rotated through the 11 counties. This group has expanded to include other “E”s such as ambulance, snow plows and sometimes crash cars to show the unity of TZD and that we all work together. The poster helps to shows the partnership, and more importantly, helps with relationship building amongst the groups. Unfortunately, this event was canceled due to COVID, but we were able to schedule a fall photo without a media event.

The picture reached more than 30,000 people and had nearly 7500 engagements in the first 12 hours

Hamilton Boat Launch in Winona County
• **Border-to-Border Speed Saturation**

Border-to-Border multiagency Speed enforcement was coordinated along Highway 14 through five southeast counties on July 3, 2020. Southeast TZD partnered with the Southern Minnesota Law Enforcement Liaison and local law enforcement to incorporate regional educational outreach.

**Results of the Multiagency Speed Enforcement Saturation:**
The multiagency Speed enforcement resulted in **338 stops** and **124 speed citations** issued on Friday, July 6. A media advisory with information regarding the saturation was distributed prior to the event as well as a news release following the event. Electronic messaging boards were deployed displaying the enforcement message.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Traffic Stops</th>
<th>Speed Citations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kasson Police Department</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota State Patrol</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dodge County Sheriff’s Office</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steele County Sheriff’s Office</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lewiston Police Department</td>
<td>No report</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Crescent Police Department</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olmsted County Sheriff’s Office</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winona County Sheriff’s Office</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owatonna Police Department</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Charles Police Department</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rochester Police Department</td>
<td>No report</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Regional Motorcycle Safety Efforts

- **Spring Flood Run MN/WI Cross-Border Media Event**
  Canceled due to COVID.

- **Fall Flood Run MN/WI Cross-Border Media Advisory**
  Partnered with Wisconsin State Patrol and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to remind the public that law enforcement from both sides of the river will be out in full force.

- **Motorcycle Safety to Motorcycle Dealerships**
  Partnered with State Patrol to meet with local motorcycle dealers. We spoke with them about the importance of working with their customers to buy appropriate sized motorcycles, encouraging customers to wear safety gear and to register for the motorcycle skills courses. They were given handouts to distribute to customers.

Regional Pedestrian Safety Efforts

- **Pedestrian Yard Signs**
  Pedestrian yard signs were displayed in six counties including; Dodge, Fillmore, Houston, Rice, Wabasha and Olmsted County.

- **Pedestrian Safety Video**
  Partnered with the Olmsted County Sheriff’s Office to develop a pedestrian safety video. It was viewed more than 2,000 times.
**Region Goal 2 – TZD Partnership Goals**

To continuously increase TZD awareness and partnerships across southeast Minnesota for both the general public and traffic safety professionals.

**Building Relationships within the Region**

Relationships continue to be reinforced and formed through traffic safety advocates participating in the monthly Steering Committee meetings, regional activities and news conferences and the Southeast Minnesota TZD annual workshop.

Although this is not quantitative data analysis, the Steering Committee stakeholders believe that all of the regional initiatives are successful because of the networking/connections that have been made in the region as well as statewide.

**Building Relationships – TZD Website**

Efforts were made to ensure that all Southeast Minnesota TZD workshop materials, presentations, crash maps and media stories were updated on the regional website.

**Building Relationships – Southeast Minnesota TZD end-of-year report**

In addition to creating the end-of-year report for grant purposes, the regional report is also distributed to all of the District’s state and federal legislators in the MnDOT District 6 Legislative Report. The District Engineer meets annually with all legislators and the TZD report is included in this discussion and booklet. The end-of-year report is also posted online and distributed to the Southeast Minnesota Steering Committee.

**Building internal and external relationships:**

- Participated in TZD enforcement award presentations as able
- Participated in quarterly Stakeholder Breakfast
- Participated in TZD Leadership meetings
- Partnered with State Patrol to meet with local motorcycle dealers. Spoke with them about the importance of working with their customers to buy appropriate sized motorcycles, encouraging their customers to wear safety gear and to register for the motorcycle skills courses. They were given handouts to distribute to customers. Followed up throughout the year to update handouts and to continue developing relationships with owners and staff.
- Bi-monthly Steering Committee meetings
- Participation in quarterly regional Fatal and Serious Injury Review committees
  - Facilitated all Dodge, Mower and Steele County meetings
- Participation in bi-monthly regional TZD Safe Roads coalition meeting
  - Facilitated all Dodge, Mower and Steele County meetings
- Hosted quarterly TZD Safe Roads coordinator meetings for regional Safe Roads coordinators
- Attend Southern Minnesota Regional Trauma Advisory (SMRTAC) meetings when possible
- Minnesota State Patrol – New TZD Sgt. presentation
- TZD vision, mission, goals presentation to 4 county boards throughout the region
- Developed partnership with the Vice President of Community and Economic Development for Southeast Minnesota
- Developed partnership with a member of the Railway Safety Committee
- Joined the MN Motorcycle Safety Advisory Task Force, meeting postponed due to COVID
- Participated in the MN Child Passenger Safety Advisory Task Force
- Participated in the Southern MN Pedestrian Safety Summit - TZD/Pedestrian Safety presentation was completed
- Participated in TZD website resign
- Participated in Multimodal Research Council meetings
- Participated in out-of-state traffic-safety conferences including; FHWA, Utah, AASHTO GHSA, the Columbia Center for Injury Science and Prevention and Lifesavers
- Scheduled to participate in State Patrol Oral Boards for trooper selection – Canceled
- TZD presentation to D6 District employees – Canceled
- Planned to attend the Regional EMS Conference – Canceled
- Planned to attend the Dodge County Business Expo – Canceled

Region Goal 2 – TZD Partnership Goals
Engineering

Low cost, high benefit engineering safety improvements continue on both state and local roadways. The district and each county are implementing safety plans to further reduce crashes. Although many factors affect traffic-related fatalities – including the economy, driver behavior and weather – the fact remains that many traffic safety professionals continue to look at proactive and systematic ways to reduce fatalities and serious injuries due to crashes.

County engineers continue to implement safety projects that were identified in the county highway safety plans. District 6 county engineers are collaborating and applying for Highway Safety Improvement Program grants together to make roadway improvements proactively and systematically. The direction was to identify low cost, high benefit safety initiatives, e.g. rumble strips/rumble stripes, curve delineation, improved edge lines, intersection lighting and intersection signing improvements on the county system.
County Safety Projects – 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>Dollar amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Freeborn County
CSAH 48: FROM FARIBAULT COUNTY LN TO CSAH 8- 2' SHOULDER WIDENING WITH SAFETY WEDGE & RUMBLE STRIPS | $135,185      |
| Goodhue County
INSTALL INTERSECTION LIGHTING AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS THROUGHOUT GOODHUE COUNTY   | $66,000       |
| Goodhue County
INSTALLATION OF CHEVRONS, ARROW BOARDS, CURVE WARNINGS & DELINEATORS AT 27 PRIORITY LOCATIONS | $595,580   |
| Goodhue County
MIN 57: AT MN 80 IN WANNAMINGO - CONSTRUCT ROUNDABOUT, MILLING, BIT & CONCRETE SURFACING, ADA & LIGHTING | $1,050,000 |
| Rice County
FARIBAULT, CONSTRUCT 3/4 INTERSECTION CURB & GUTTER, ADA IMP, STORM SEWER & LIGHTING | $508,703     |
| Waseca County
INSTALL ENHANCED EDGELINE PAVEMENT MARKINGS COUNTYWIDE                              | $294,571      |
| Waseca County
CSAH 4 & CSAH 27: AT INTERSECTION WITH MN 42                                      | $1,820,000    |

Building internal and external relationships – Engineering

- Was actively involved in Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) discussion
- Participated in the Highway 14 Advisory Committee
- Participated in the Highway 14 groundbreaking ceremony
- Participated in County Highway Safety Plan updates in southeast counties
- Participated in the Red Wing bridge ceremony
- Continued to represent TZD in the Highway 52 Goodhue County Improvement Planning Project
- Participated in Coffee and Conversation in Kasson to discuss Dodge County transportation projects, issues & ideas
- Served as a resource to all city, county and state engineers as requested
Media Advisory

Local Law Enforcement Agencies Team up to Eliminate Impaired Driving

Extra DWI Enforcement Nov. 27 – Dec. 28

What: Olmsted County is proud of those who live and serve in our community. The county is a terrific place to raise a family, but one thing law enforcement is not proud of is being on the list of the state’s top 20 most dangerous counties in regards to alcohol-related fatal and serious injury crashes.

Southeast Minnesota is expected to see significant snow fall today and continuing into Wednesday, one of the heaviest drinking days of the year. Snow and ice make driving conditions challenging enough. Drivers who consume even one drink can experience delayed reaction times. That’s why drivers should line up a sober ride any time they decide to drink alcohol.

The county has seen too many drunk driving-related deaths. There were 52 from 2013-2017 and this community doesn’t want to see another tragedy, especially around the holidays. That is why law enforcement across the county will join more than 300 agencies throughout the state for extra holiday DWI enforcement starting Nov. 27 and running through weekends until Dec. 28.

When: Wednesday, Nov. 27, 10 a.m.

Where: Olmsted County Government Center Board Room - 151 4th St SE, Rochester

Who:

- Director Mike Hanson, Office of Traffic Safety
- Sheriff Kevin Torgerson, Olmsted County Sheriff’s Office
- Chief Jim Franklin, Rochester Police Department
- Capt. Christina Bogojevic, Minnesota State Patrol

Why: Two full-time dedicated DWI officers will now be patrolling the Olmsted County area and Rochester city limits during peak times when drinking and driving occurs. The Rochester Police Department is one of 18 law enforcement agencies across the state to receive funds for a dedicated DWI officer from the Office of Traffic Safety, a division of the Minnesota Department of Public Safety. The Olmsted County Sheriff’s Office was one of 12 agencies that received the grant when the program began in 2015.

- In the past five years (2014 – 2018), over 126,000 people have been arrested for DWI. That’s approximately 25,000 DWI arrests each year. That alarming number averages nearly three DWI arrests per hour.
- During the last five years (2013-2017), more than 12,000 people were arrested for a DWI from the day before Thanksgiving through Dec. 30.

The Southeast Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths program brings area law enforcement, public health educators, engineers and emergency medical and trauma services together to reduce the number of traffic fatalities and severe injuries to zero in southeast Minnesota. The 11-county area encompasses: Dodge, Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, Houston, Mower, Olmsted, Rice, Steele, Wabasha and Winona counties.

---

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
Media Advisory
Sept. 28, 2020

Dodge County Law Enforcement Rewards Students and School Staff for Buckling Up

The events encourage community members to prioritize safety in making decisions.

What: Law enforcement officers across Dodge County will reward students and school staff for making the life-saving choice to buckle up.

To remind motorists that seat belts save lives, Dodge County law enforcement will be distributing free fountain drink coupons and buckle up wrist bands to high school students and staff who are wearing their seat belts.

Dodge County is participating with more than 300 agencies in the statewide Click It or Ticket enforcement and awareness campaign that kicked off Sept. 18. The campaign that enforces the life-saving seat belt law and reminds motorists to drive smart is coordinated by the Minnesota Department of Public Safety’s Office of Traffic Safety and runs through Sept. 30.

When: Wednesday, Sept. 30, 3 p.m.

Where:
- Kasson-Mantorville High School: 101 16th St NE, Kasson
- Triton High School: 813 West Highway Street, Dodge Center
- Hayfield High School: 9 Sixth Ave. SE, Hayfield

Who:
- Deputy Mark Dyshaw, Dodge County Sheriff’s Office
- Deputy Dave Skadson, Dodge County Sheriff’s Office
- Officer Jesse Kasel, Kasson Police Department

Why:
- In 2019, 73 unbelted motorists lost their lives on Minnesota roads.
- In 2019, 77 percent of the unbelted deaths occurred in greater Minnesota.
- The Toward Zero Deaths approach is based on the belief that even one traffic-related death on our roads is unacceptable.

The Southeast Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths program brings area law enforcement, public health educators, engineers, emergency medical and trauma services and everyone together to reduce the number of traffic fatalities and severe injuries to zero in southeast Minnesota. The 11 county area encompasses: Dodge, Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, Houston, Mower, Olmsted, Rice, Steele, Wabasha and Winona counties.

###
Distracted driving simulator visits Mayo High School

By: Jaclyn Harold


(ABC 6 News) -- The hands-free law went into effect on August 1, but it seems that some drivers across the state of Minnesota still haven't adjusted to the new conditions, and for young drivers, the law is even stricter. To clear up any confusion of the way the current hands-free law applies, Minnesota State Patrol posted to their Facebook a reminder of how the law affects teen drivers.

"If you have a provisional driver's license or a driver's permit then you cannot use your phone at all, so it just has to be totally hands-free," said Sergeant Troy Christianson of Minnesota State Patrol. Coincidentally, the day officials put out a reminder, Mayo High school got a visit from a traveling simulator that also stresses the dangers of texting and driving.

Many of the students shared that even though they know distracted driving is dangerous, the simulator was still very important to experience because, for some, this reality may take more time to set in. "Teens mostly feel invincible like they can do whatever they want, we're young but actually bringing this here sort of puts us in the shoes of someone who is in the situation," said Isaac Ackerman, who is a student at Mayo High school. Ackerman says even though he doesn't drive yet, he already has ways to prevent himself from falling into distractions. Other students agree that the selfies can wait. "It's really not cool because you're putting everyone in your car and everyone around you in danger," said Audrey Van-Brunt, who was one of the first students in her class to try the simulator. It's not real, but it's real enough for students to see the damage that a few seconds on your phone can cause. "The kids sit down in the car, in the driver's seat of the car and we'll have them get their speed up to 30, and then we'll have them get on their cell phones and we're trying to distract them to show them how quickly things can go wrong once they're distracted," said Julie Piotrowski, one of the 3 Brand Ambassadors from the PEERS Foundation in Grand Rapids, MI.

The simulator travels state to state on grants, allowing students to see what real-life scenarios can occur because distracted driving happens everywhere. "It's just, it's getting so bad out there. It's become so normalized for people to be on their cell phones while they're driving," said Piotrowski.

"The simulation proves how difficult it is to be distracted, to be on your phone while you're driving," said Van-Brunt."
(ABC 6 News) -- The Wednesday before Thanksgiving is one of the heaviest drinking days of the year. "From this time frame through Christmas and New Year’s there’s more DUI drivers on the road every night," said Officer Eric Christenson with the Rochester Police Department. Several local law enforcement agencies are teaming up to fight impaired driving with extra enforcement from now until December 28th. "Olmsted County is ranked one of the worst counties for DWIs in the state. The county has seen too many drunk driving related deaths. 52 from 2013 to 2017," said Olmsted County Sheriff Kevin Torgerson.

It’s been four years since the Olmsted County Sheriff’s Office assigned a deputy to focus specifically on DWI enforcement. Last month, the Rochester Police Department followed suit, assigning Officer Eric Christenson to the task. "It's one of those ways you can do it without even anybody ever knowing. It's just that silent person out there keeping everybody safe," said Christenson. Lt. Tom Faudskar said since Christenson started in October, he’s made a huge difference. "I see the reports that come in and it’s just about every night Officer Christenson works he's able to make a DUI arrest and that's obviously making a huge difference on the safety of our roads," he said. The Rochester Police Department is one of 18 law enforcement agencies across the state to receive funding for a dedicated DWI officer from the Office of Traffic Safety. The Olmsted County Sheriff’s Office received the same grant when the program began in 2015. "I believe this is a great step from Rochester Police Department to show our dedication to keep the roadways safe and keep impaired drivers off our roadways,” said Christenson. Making the holidays a little safer for everyone.
Extra holiday season DWI enforcement begins day before Thanksgiving

By: Annalise Johnson

Link: https://www.kimt.com/content/news/Extra-holiday-season-DWI-enforcement-begins-day-before-Thanksgiving-565550731.html

ROCHESTER, Minn. - The day before Thanksgiving is one of the biggest nights for drinking of the whole year. From November 27th to December 28th, Minnesota law enforcement is stepping up DWI enforcement. This time of year, college students are home for the holidays and more people are attending holiday parties. Two full-time dedicated DWI officers will be patrolling Olmsted County during peak drinking and driving times. The Rochester Police Department is one of 18 Minnesota law enforcement agencies to receive funds for a dedicated DWI officer from the Office of Traffic Safety. KIMT News 3's Annalise Johnson rode along with Minnesota State Patrol Trooper Mitch Elzen to see what a weekend overnight shift is like for a trooper. "My only goal is to remove drunk drivers or drugged drivers, impaired drivers," says Trooper Elzen. Getting drunk drivers off the road is a mission close to his heart. In 1982, his father was violently struck by a drunk driver. His injuries affect him to this day. To date, he's had 25 surgeries and 7 hip replacement related to his collision, walks with a cane, and his back and ankle are fused. "I don't think people really think about the consequences that come along with those decisions," explains Elzen. "You cause that crash, now you have consequences coming down the line the rest of your life, so it's very important to get them off the road before they crash and hurt themselves or hurt another family."

Elzen arrested 150 people for driving impaired in 2018. In the past 5 years, 126,000 people have been arrested for DWI in Minnesota. 12,000 of those happened during the holiday season.
KIMT-TV
01.03.2020

Preliminary data shows 364 traffic deaths in Minnesota in 2019
By: Annalise Johnson


KIMT NEWS 3 - According to the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, preliminary reports show there were 364 traffic deaths on Minnesota roads in 2019. There were 381 in 2018.
At least 27 of these deaths were distraction-related, 71 were speed-related, at least 102 were alcohol-related, and 72 were not wearing seatbelts.
44 were motorcyclists, 11 were bicyclists, and 50 were pedestrians.

KAAL-TV
09.30.20

Local law enforcement challenge seat belt safety


(ABC 6 News) - Two-hundred eighty five people have died on Minnesota roads so far this year.
According to preliminary reports from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, nearly a quarter of those deaths were people not wearing seatbelts.
In 2019, 73 unbelted motorists lost their lives on Minnesota roads. In an effort to try and cut down on those kind of fatalities and to educate young drivers, the group Towards Zero Deaths teamed up with local law enforcement to challenge kids to buckle up.

"We see a lot of traffic fatalities throughout Minnesota, a lot of them due to not wearing a seat belt. So just one of those things, if we can encourage kids, if we can get them to start driving and learning that behavior, it's going to be easier in the long run when they start early," says Jesse Kasel, Kasson Police Department.

Students and staff at Kasson-Mantorville, Triton and Hayfield High schools were all a part of the challenge.