

We Encourage Passengers to Speak Up!

U. S. Roadway deaths continue at an alarming rate. People are still driving recklessly. Drunk, drugged, and distracted driving are on the rise. Just telling people to drive safely isn't enough. **We need to do more.** We can do more! Passengers need to play a more active role in their own safety and that of others.

That is why We Save Lives and the National Road Safety Foundation launched **The National Passenger Safety Campaign**, bringing together 60+ other organizations that believe that it's time to **focus** on the **passenger**, and not just the driver. The goal is to promote safe driving practices and prevent unsafe ones by empowering passengers to **SPEAK UP** when their lives are in danger due to a reckless driver.

In 2023, the National Highway Traffic Safety Association (NHTSA) added the campaign to their national calendar. National Passenger Safety Week is now an ongoing event in January every year.

Statistics show...

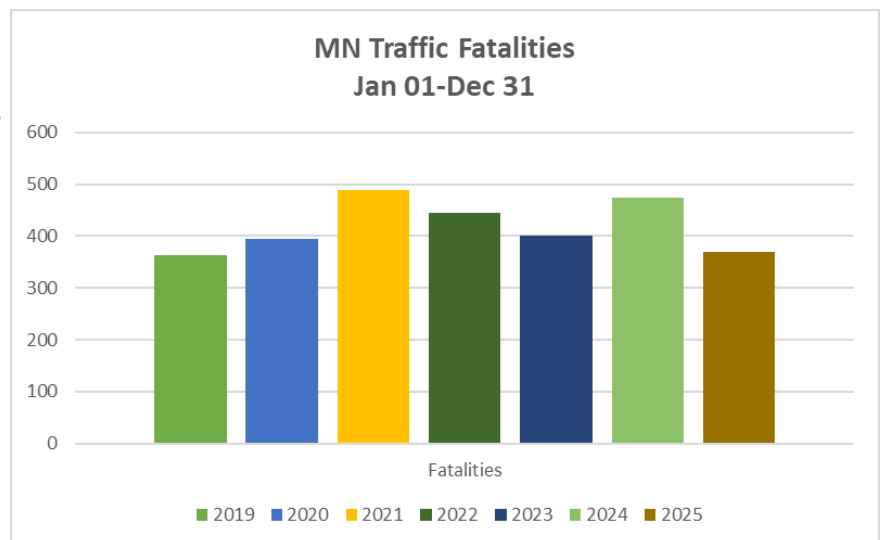
- 40,901 motor-vehicle fatalities in the US in 2023 according to NHTSA. Of those fatalities, "passenger occupants" numbers 24,238 in 2023. Roughly 59% of all traffic fatalities were passengers.
- Per NHTSA, in 2023, among the 604 fatalities of passengers of teen drivers (ages 15-18), 377 were other teens riding with another teen.
- In 2023, nearly 50% of those passenger-vehicle occupants killed were unrestrained (not wearing a seat belt).

Passengers can make a difference.

Celebrate Big Wins!

The year 2025 ended with 125 fewer fatalities (370) than in 2024 (475)! This is 22 percent less than 2024 and the lowest since 2019. Unbelted deaths (70) were 31 percent less than in 2024 (101) and the lowest in the last seven years. Distraction-related deaths (21) were 30 percent less than in 2024 (30) and the lowest in the past seven years.

Celebrate and take it all in. And then continue the good work. There is a lot of work to be done to get to zero.



Enforcement Update:

- DWI (Optional) Feb 7-8, 2026—Super Bowl
- DWI (optional) Mar 17, 2026—St. Patrick's Day
- Distracted: April 1-30, 2026

**TOWARD
ZERO
DEATHS**

SAVE THE DATE!

NW MN TZD Regional Workshop
April 30, 2026 | Thief River Falls, MN

Are You Prepared For The Super Bowl?

On Super Bowl Sunday, and every day, play it smart by having a winning game plan in place to not drink and drive. We will all win if we follow these keys to the game:

Know the Rules

It's illegal to drive with a blood alcohol concentration of .08 or higher. When it comes to drinking and driving, law enforcement doesn't throw a yellow flag; they throw the playbook at you. You'll get pulled over, arrested, and prosecuted. Your wallet takes a big hit, too: the average DUI court case costs about \$10,000.

Play It Safe

Defense wins championships; your best defense is to plan for a sober ride. From taxis and ride shares to public transportation and designated drivers, run the play that will score you home safely.

Be a Party MVP

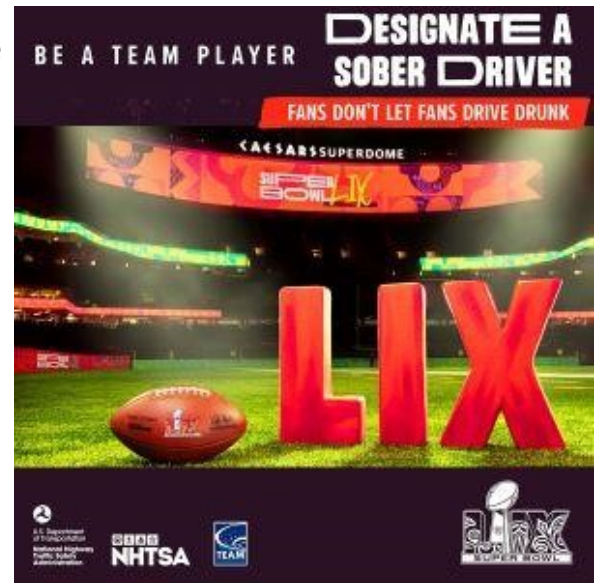
Volunteer to be a designated driver. Let your team know that you'll be there for them when the party's over with a safe and sober ride home.

Be the Head Coach When Hosting

Take care of the designated drivers and provide plenty of food and non-alcoholic drinks. Most importantly, make the game-winning call: intercept their keys before they drink.

We all have the same game plan when it comes to preventing drunk driving. And always buckle up. Your seat belt is your best defense if you're in a crash.

Enjoy Super Bowl LIX — safely. Remember: *Fans Don't Let Fans Drive Drunk*



Mark your 2026 Calendars

- January 19-26, 2026- National Passenger Safety Week
- April—National Distracted Driving Awareness Month
- Apr 29, 2026—Teen TZD Conference—Evangelical Free Church in TRF
- April 30, 2026—NW Regional Workshop—Thief River Falls Legacy Center

Toward Zero Deaths Northwest Regional Newsletter

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