

2007 AASHTO Safety Leadership Forum

Case Study – Safety Initiatives in Washington State

May 6, 2007

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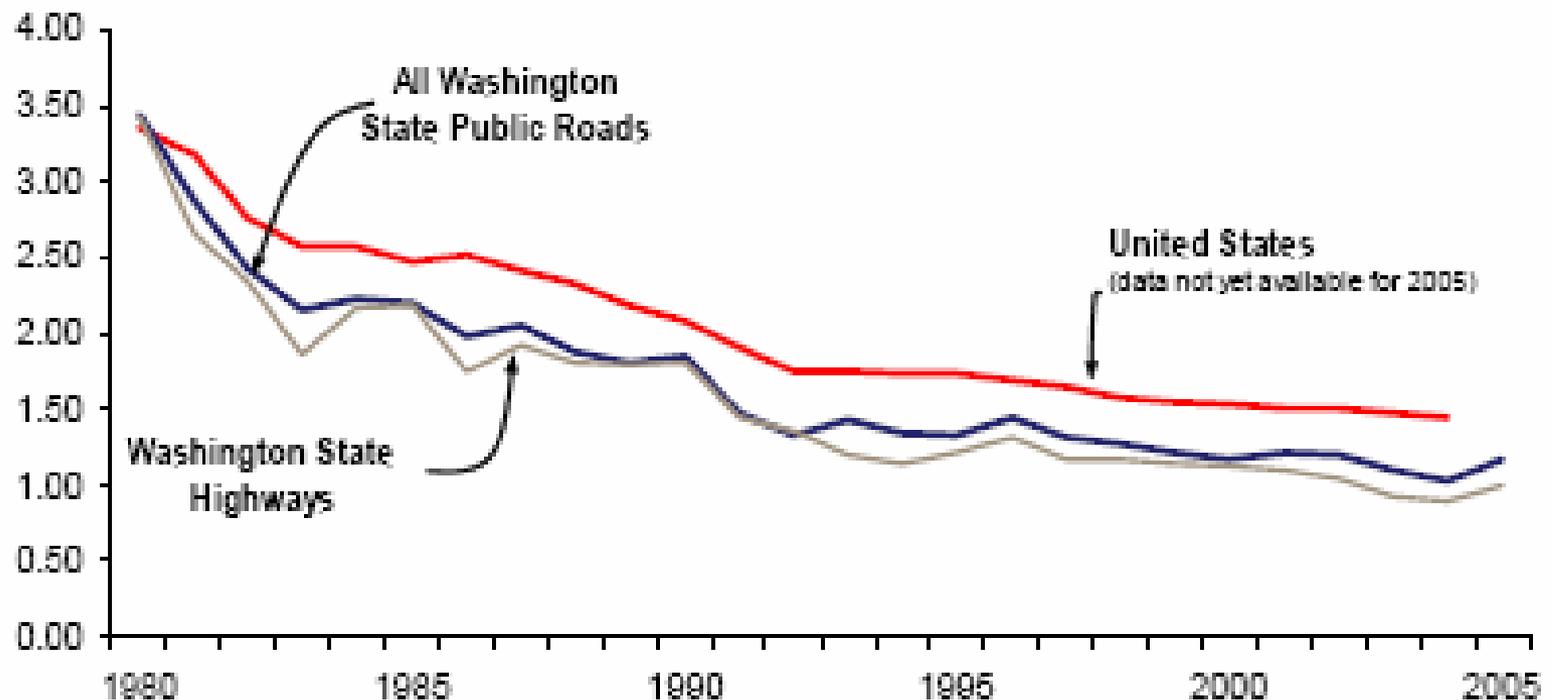
Assistant Secretary for
Engineering and Regional Operations



Washington State
Department of Transportation

Traffic Fatality Rates in Washington Compared to the National Average

Fatalities Per 100 Million VMT: 1980-2005

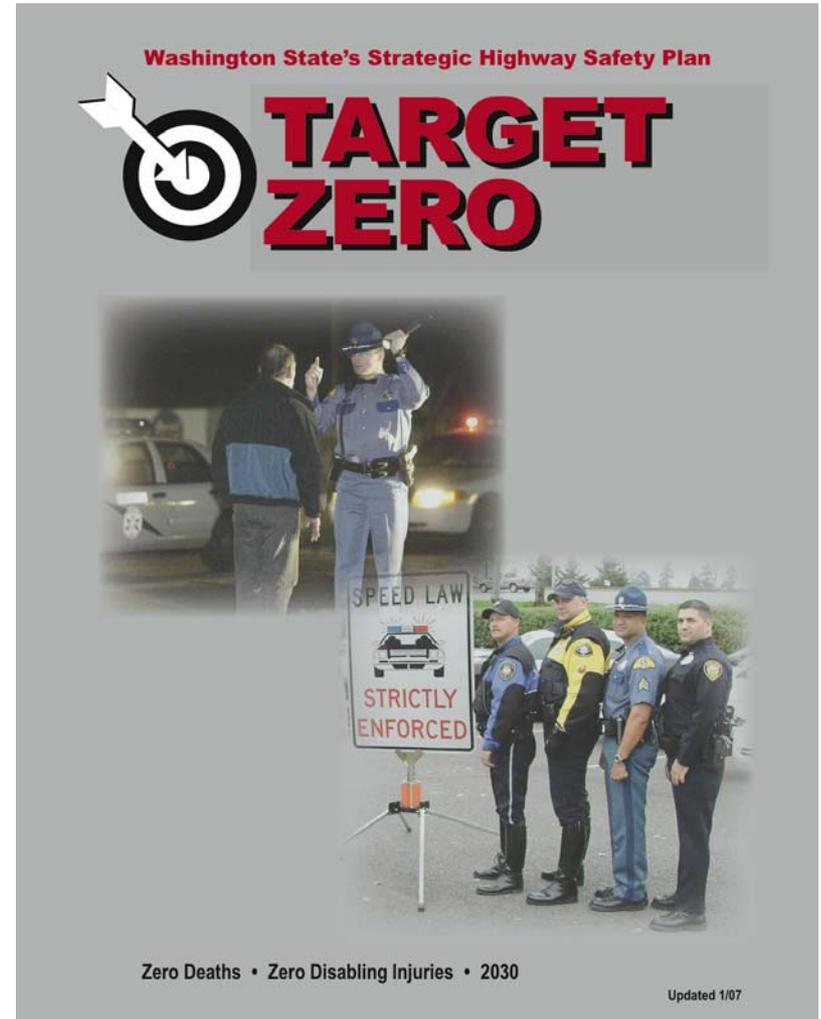


Provided by: WSDOT-TDO

Sources: US Fatalities/VMT: NHTSA Traffic Safety Facts; WA Fatalities: FARS; State Hwy y Fatalities: WSDOT-TDO; WA VMT: WSDOT-TDO

Target Zero

- State Highway Strategic Plan based on a Target Zero plan originally developed in 2000
- Aggressive goal of zero deaths by 2030
- Impaired Driving and Speed identified as the number one priority
- Program strategies are tied to the Target Zero goals
- Partnerships are a key Target Zero strategy



WTSC, WSDOT, WSP and Local Collaboration

- Washington Traffic Safety Commission (WTSC)
 - 10 member board chaired by the Governor – includes city and county representation, WSDOT, WSP and other State agencies
 - Structure facilitates access and collaboration among agencies
 - The WTSC relationships are key to the success of traffic safety programs
 - State agency accountability for safety results

WTSC, WSDOT, WSP and Local Collaboration

- Highway safety is WSDOT's primary focus and the Department is undertaking several different strategies to engineer safer highways to include low cost enhancements, *Target Zero* strategies, and photo enforcement
- WSDOT maintains state traffic records system and provides engineering and evaluation expertise
- WSDOT provides support for local projects and initiatives through Headquarters and the Regions in partnership with WSP and WTSC

WTSC, WSDOT, WSP and Local Collaboration

- WSP collaborates with county and city police as members of the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs to provide strong enforcement presence
- Long history of commitment to traffic safety by WSP, sheriffs and local police demonstrated by high seat belt use rate prior to primary seat belt law
- WSP evaluates individual performance of their District commanders in achieving safety objectives through “Accountability Driven Leadership” program.

Local Program Initiative

Community Traffic Safety Task Forces

- 23 Task Forces in 39 counties serve over 85% of the State's population
- Technical support is provided by a dedicated WTSC Program Manager
- Local manager is funded by the State with a required local match
- Provides long-term partnership to implement State-sponsored traffic safety strategies
- Coordinates local enforcement activity and supports statewide mobilization activity
- Active in many local community traffic safety programs

Funding

- 2003 and 2005 Gas Tax increases including major safety projects
- WTSC works with Legislature to fund and implement data and research-driven programs
- For 2007-09, budget increases funding for low-cost enhancements, a tow incentive program, and a signal timing program expansion to address safety and mobility projects, to reduce clearance times and congestion associated with traffic incidents.

Highway Safety Improvement Subprogram

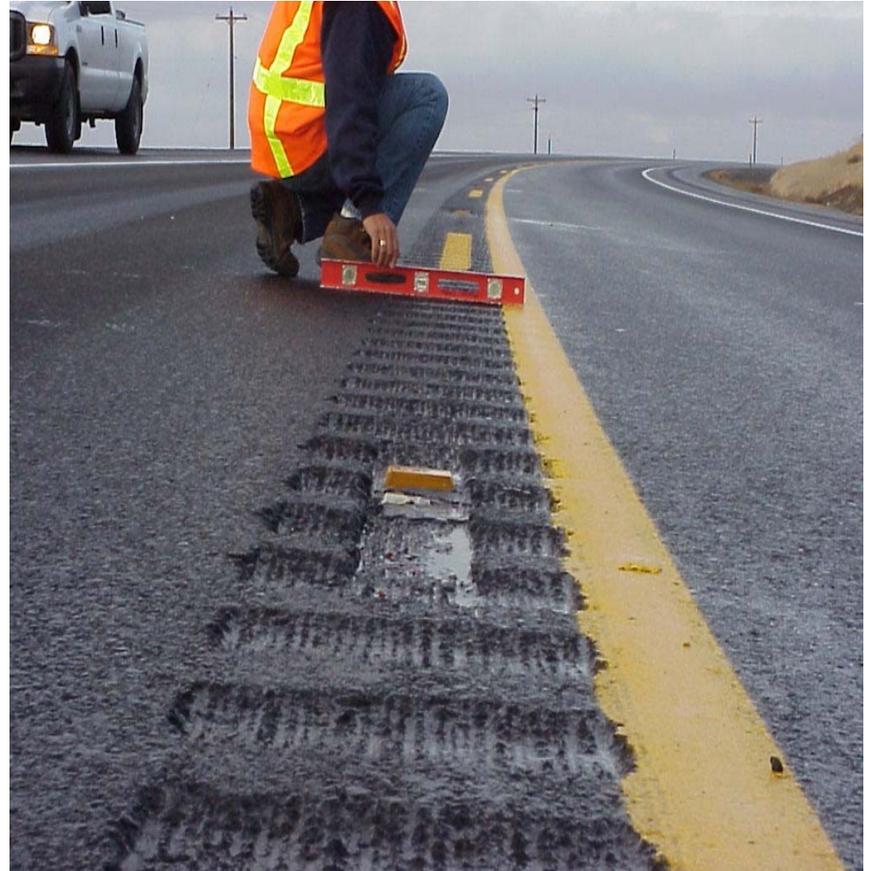
- WSDOT uses a process to improve the existing state highway system, based primarily on traffic congestion, delay and accidents
- The objectives of the Highway Safety Improvements subprogram are to provide the safest possible highways with available resources and to improve pedestrian safety. The program is segregated into two categories, collision reduction and collision prevention
- Collision reduction focuses on identifying locations with existing accidents and developing projects to reduce the number and severity of accidents
- Collision prevention focuses on preventing accidents before they occur

Low Cost Enhancements

- Low cost enhancements are small projects targeted at problem areas identified as part of the priority programming process as well as by citizens and elected officials
- Focus areas include roadway improvements that improve safety and reduce congestion on state highways
- Post project studies show significant performance results

Rumble Strips

- Centerline crossovers account for about 20% of all fatal collisions, and the rumble strip is another cost effective countermeasure for reducing these collisions.
- Rumble strips are grooves or rows of raised pavement markers placed perpendicular to the direction of travel to alert inattentive drivers.
- WSDOT found a 38% reduction in the frequency of centerline crossover collisions with rumble strips.



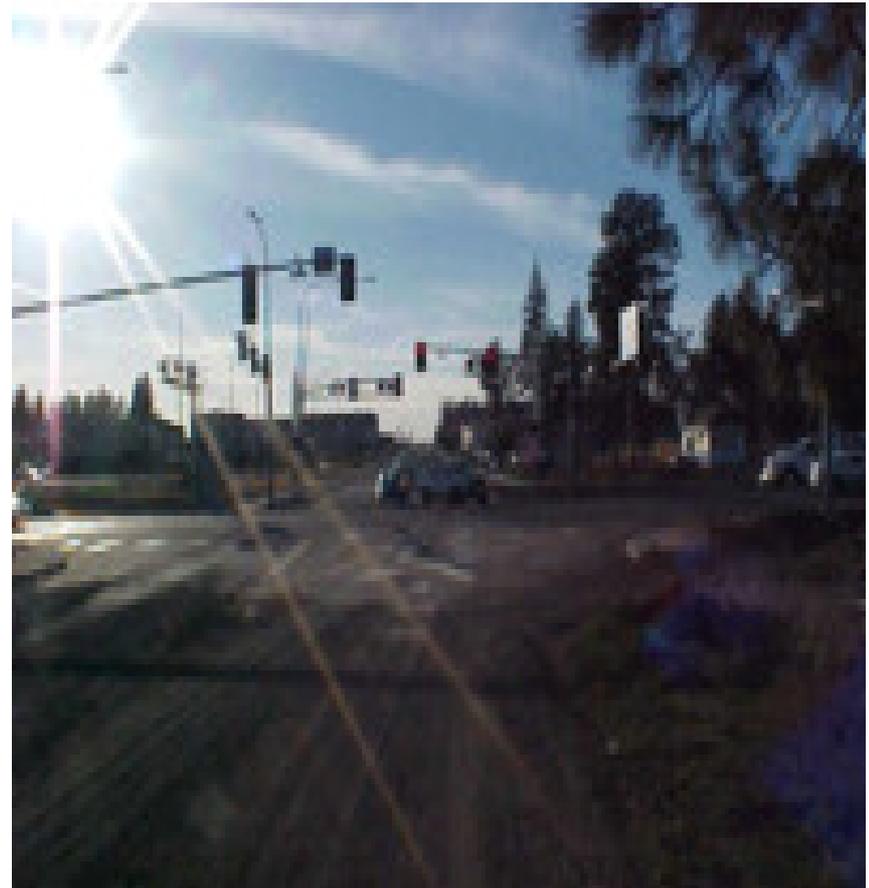
Traffic Barriers

- Traffic barriers are safety devices installed to reduce the severity of crashes that result when vehicles leave the roadway.
- WSDOT uses three main types of barriers: concrete barrier, beam guardrail, and cable barrier.
- The percentage of median crashes that result in injury or death is significantly lower for cable barriers (21%) than for concrete barrier (39%) or W-beam guardrail (38%).



Corridor Safety Program

- The program is designed to reduce collisions using low-cost, near term solutions that focus on education, enforcement, and engineering
- 23 projects across the state
- Results
 - 6% collision reduction
 - 19% decrease in alcohol related collisions
 - 33% reduction in fatal & disabling injuries



Safety Performance Reporting

From the 22nd
Gray Notebook:
Highway Safety
Annual Update

Current Combined Fatal and Disabling Accident Rate on State Highways by County*

Average Annual Fatality Rate per 100 Million VMT Traveled on Non-Interstate Routes, 2004-2005

Total Number of Accidents Shown in Parenthesis*

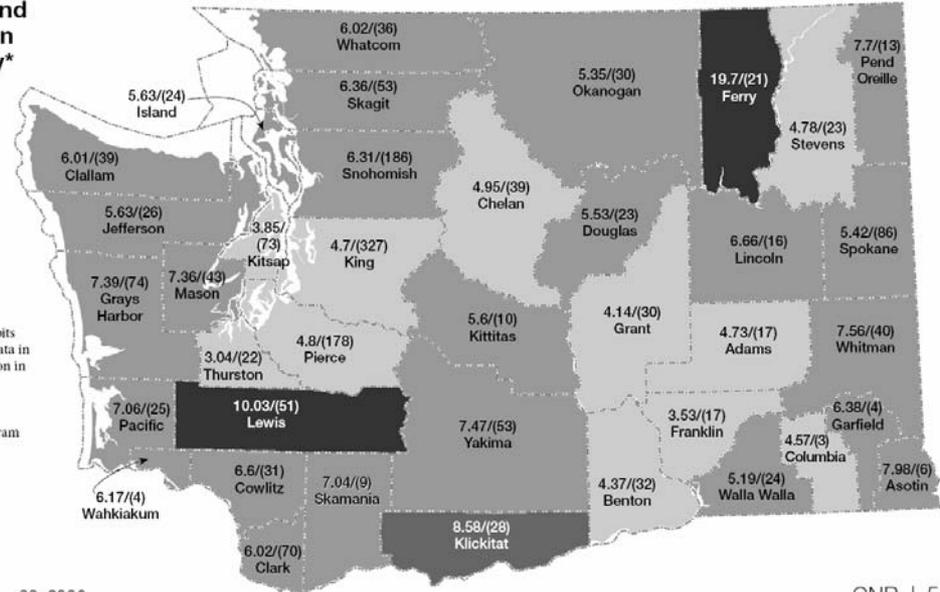
Fatal/Disabling Accident Rate

- < 5
- 5 - 8
- 8 - 10
- > 10

* Note: Combined, Rural, and Urban Rates do not include Interstate.

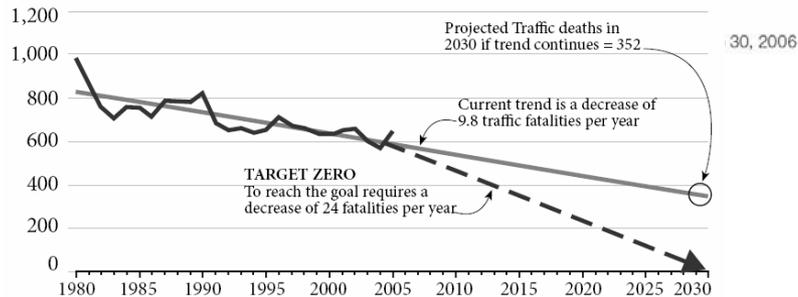
Federal Law Title 23 U.S. Code Section 409 prohibits the discovery or admission into evidence of this data in Federal or State Court proceedings or consideration in any action for damages.

Source: WSDOT Transportation Data Office
Provided by: WSDOT Systems Analysis and Program Development



Target Zero: Traffic Deaths in Washington State

1980-2005 Actual, 2006-2030 Projected



Source of data for actual traffic deaths: Fatal Accident Reporting System (FARS)
Provided by: Washington State Traffic Commission

Washington State Traffic Fatalities, 2000-05

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
631	649	659	600	567	649 (Preliminary data) ¹

Source: Fatal Accident Reporting System (FARS)

¹WSDOT counts an additional 6 deaths for 2005. See gray box to the right.



WASHINGTON
Traffic Safety
COMMISSION



Government Management,
Accountability and Performance

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TRAFFIC SAFETY

Fatalities

Speed

Impaired Driving

Motorcycles