



SAFETY Network

November 2013

www.michigan.gov/ohsp

TACT program launches in West Michigan

Law enforcement officers and members of the Michigan Trucking Association Western Safety Council rolled out Michigan's first Ticketing Aggressive Cars and Trucks (TACT) program in October with a press conference at Van's Delivery Service in Grand Rapids. In addition to interviewing representatives from law enforcement agencies and local trucking companies, media had the opportunity to ride with truck drivers.

on billboards and heard on west Michigan radio stations throughout October.

Officers from the Michigan State Police (MSP), Kent and Ottawa county sheriff offices, and Grand Rapids, Walker, and Wyoming police departments issued more than 1,300 citations in October. The majority of the tickets were for speeding and following too close. Approximately 20 percent of those cited were commercial motor vehicle drivers.



Officers from six West Michigan law enforcement agencies conducted TACT program enforcement on U.S. 131 and I-196 in Kent and Ottawa counties October 7-18. Officers focused on violations by both passenger vehicle and truck drivers such as improper lane use, careless and reckless driving, speeding, following too close, and failure to yield the right of way.

To help increase awareness and encourage compliance, TACT advertising was seen

In November, members of the MSP and Kent County Sheriff's Office joined Wal-Mart Stores, Inc., for a community safety event at the Wal-Mart Supercenter in Comstock Park. Visitors had the opportunity to sit in the driver's seat of a large truck and speak with law enforcement and trucking industry representatives. TACT enforcement took place November 4-15.

The final phase of TACT enforcement will take place December 2-13.

Michigan seat belt use holds steady at 93 percent in 2013

For the second year in a row, 93 percent of Michigan drivers and front seat passengers are buckling up, according to statewide observation surveys conducted this summer by the Wayne State University Transportation Research Group.

According to the findings, there was an overall marginal decrease of .6 percent from 2012 in the statewide seat belt use rate. Other things remained consistent: males, younger occupants, and those in pickup trucks continue to exhibit lower belt use rates.

Among the findings, sport utility vehicle occupants had the highest belt use at 94.3 percent and pickup truck occupants the lowest at 90 percent. Women buckled up 94.8 percent of the time compared to 92.1 percent for men. Seat belt use was highest for those 60 and older at 95.7 percent and lowest for those 0 to 15 at 91.2 percent.

The state's highest rate was 97.9 percent in 2009. While the state's seat belt use rate has declined since 2009, it is far higher than the 2012 national belt use rate of 86 percent.



SAFETY Network



Traffic law enforcement critical in keeping fatalities low

Michael L. Prince, Director, Office of Highway Safety Planning

Traffic law enforcement has long been considered a cornerstone in efforts to reduce traffic crashes, fatalities, and injuries, not only in Michigan but around the nation. The simple reality is that in order to achieve greater levels of public compliance with traffic laws (impaired driving, seat belts, speed), you need to change human behavior. The most effective way to accomplish this is through strict, but fair, and highly publicized traffic enforcement.

Unfortunately, based on multiple indicators, traffic enforcement and adjudication have suffered in recent years. A review of 2006-2012 citation adjudication data from the State Court Administrative Office indicates that speed citations adjudicated in Michigan courts have dropped from over 400,000 in 2006 to 117,000 in 2012. Similarly, seat belt citations adjudicated over the same time period have fallen from over 90,000 to less than 51,000. The latter is even more concerning considering that seat belt use has fallen in Michigan from a national record high of 97.9 percent in 2009 to 93 percent in 2013.

Another strong indicator of the overall decrease in traffic enforcement is that programs like the sheriff's Secondary Road Patrol Program, funded through a \$10 statutory assessment on all civil infraction traffic citations, has seen a reduction in funding from over \$13 million in 2007 to \$9 million in 2013.

Reduced numbers of law enforcement personnel at local, county, and state levels

and increased calls for service have been cited as major contributors to these reductions. Fewer officers equals fewer assets to respond to an increasing number of calls for service. Discretionary patrol time suffers and traffic enforcement becomes one of the casualties. We also hear through anecdotal comments from law enforcement executives at all levels that officers are less likely to issue traffic citations during difficult economic times.

Technological improvements in vehicle safety and crash worthiness, along with advancements in emergency medicine, are certainly having positive effects and saving lives. But improvements in these areas cannot do it alone.

Case in point:

- >> Michigan speed-related fatalities have increased 5.6 percent since 2008 (National Fatality Analysis Reporting System)
- >> Traffic injuries, which were over 105,000 as recently as 2003, have plateaued for four years straight at around 70,000 (Michigan Traffic Crash Facts (MTCF))
- >> Alcohol-related fatal and incapacitating injuries were on the rebound in 2012 after nine straight years of decline (MTCF)
- >> Overall traffic fatalities, which were at a historical low of 871 in 2009, have been well above 900 two of the last three years (MTCF)

Clearly, there are many variables at play, including less traffic enforcement, the economy, weather, and exposure through changes in vehicle miles traveled. Changes in public policy are also having an impact. A 2013 analysis by the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute indicated that the reduction in motorcycle helmet use following the modification of the helmet law resulted in 24 additional fatalities in 2012. The cumulative effect of all of these variables has been lower seat belt use, lower helmet use, more fatalities, and more injuries.

Between 2008 and today's date, more than 5,439 people have been killed on Michigan roadways. As of the end of November, 847 people have died, and we still have a month to go. If we are going to meet our goal of lowering fatalities to 760 by 2016, we have a lot of work to do and not a lot of time to do it.

Intelligent Transportation Systems and higher levels of vehicle automation are going to have gradually increasing levels of impact. But completely removing the human element from driving is a long way off. And the only method that is scientifically proven to consistently change driver behavior is strict, highly visible traffic enforcement that sends a clear message to the public that dangerous driving behavior has no place on our roadways.

More than 40 schools to promote safe teen driving

For this school year, 43 schools in 15 counties signed up for Strive For A Safer Drive (S4SD), including 18 first-time participants.

S4SD provides funding and resources to help teens talk to other teens about safe driving. This public-private partnership between AAA Michigan, Ford Driving

Skills for Life, and the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning was created to help reduce teen traffic crashes which are the leading cause of death for teens in the United States. This is the third year for the program.



A list of participating schools is available at Michigan.gov/s4sd.

SAFETY Network

19TH ANNUAL MICHIGAN TRAFFIC SAFETY SUMMIT 2014



Registration now open, general session speakers announced for Michigan Traffic Safety Summit

Registration is now open for the Michigan Traffic Safety Summit. The conference is March 25–27, 2014, at the Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center in East Lansing.

The three-day conference will include more than 25 workshops on child passenger safety, commercial motor vehicle safety, impaired driving, motorcycle safety, traffic enforcement, vehicle and roadway engineering, and much more.

General session topics and speakers include:

- >> **You Can't Stop What You Don't Know: Underage Drinking and Drug Trends**, Jermaine Galloway, Tall Cop Says Stop, Boise, Idaho
- >> **Automated Vehicle Technology: The Future Driving Experience**, Dr. Jim Sayer, Research Scientist, Head of the Human Factors Group, University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute
Kirk T. Steudle, Director, Michigan Department of Transportation

- >> **Protecting Vulnerable Road Users**, David Zuby, Chief Research Officer, Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, Arlington, Virginia
 - >> **Female Drunk Drivers: Characteristics and Experiences in the System**, Robyn Robertson, President and CEO, Traffic Injury Research Foundation, Ottawa, Ontario
- Attendee and nonprofit exhibitor registration is \$85 on or before February 28 and \$125 after February 28. For-profit exhibitor registration is \$250 on or before February 28 and \$395 after February 28. Attendees and exhibitors must registration through Mi.train.org.

Attendees and exhibitors must make their own hotel reservations and are responsible for payment of their lodging. The Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center is the official hotel for the Michigan Traffic Safety Summit. Rooms are available for \$75 per night by using group code TSS032414. Reservation deadline is February 21.

For more information, visit Michigan.gov/ohsp.

550 responders attend 2013 U.P. EMS Conference

Nearly 550 emergency responders attended the 2013 Upper Peninsula (U.P.) Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Conference in September at Northern Michigan University.

The two-day event included 30 sessions, including four sessions sponsored by the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning (OHSP) about:

- >> New vehicle designs, construction, and dangers
- >> Assessment, management, and treatment of motorcycle crash victims
- >> Techniques for the effective management of major crash incidents on rural roadways
- >> Care and handling of children involved in crashes

Hands-on activities were offered including how to safely remove a motorcycle helmet from a crash victim, how to correctly transport a child in a car seat to the hospital, and how to locate and disconnect power sources in electric and hybrid vehicles. Local dealerships provided vehicles for use during the training sessions.

OHSP also sponsored the attendance for several U.P. EMS responders.





SAFETY Network

Traffic deaths up nationally in 2012

The U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration recently released 2012 Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) data indicating that highway deaths increased to 33,561 in 2012, which is 1,082 more fatalities than in 2011. The majority of the increase in deaths, 72 percent, occurred in the first quarter of the year. Most of those involved were motorcyclists and pedestrians.

While this marks the first increase since 2005, highway deaths over the past five years continue to remain at historic lows. Fatalities in 2011 were at the lowest level since 1949 and even with this slight increase in 2012, this is still the lowest death rate since 1950. Early estimates on national crash fatalities for the first half of 2013 indicate a decrease in deaths compared to the same timeframe in 2012.

While Americans drove approximately the same amount of miles in 2012 as in the previous year, FARS data showed a 3.3 percent increase in fatalities from the previous year.

Other key 2012 statistics include:

- >> Fatalities among pedestrians increased for the third consecutive year (6.4 percent increase over 2011). The data showed that the large majority of pedestrian deaths occurred in urban areas, at non-intersections and at night, and many involved alcohol.

- >> Motorcycle rider fatalities increased for the third consecutive year (a 7.1 percent increase over 2011). Ten times as many riders died not wearing a helmet in states without a universal helmet law than in states with such laws.
- >> Large-truck occupant fatalities increased for the third consecutive year (8.9 percent over 2011).
- >> Fatalities increased among bicyclists (6.5 percent increase over 2011) and reached the highest level in six years. Most of the bicyclist fatalities occurred in urban environments and at non-intersections.
- >> Deaths in crashes involving drunk drivers increased 4.6 percent in 2012, taking 10,322 lives compared to 9,865 in 2011. The majority of those crashes involved drivers with a blood alcohol concentration of .15 or higher—nearly double the legal limit.
- >> The number of people killed in distraction-affected crashes decreased slightly from 3,360 in 2011 to 3,328, while an estimated 421,000 people were injured, a 9 percent increase from the estimated 387,000 people injured in 2011.
- >> Nighttime seat belt use continues to be a challenge. In nighttime crashes in 2012, almost two-thirds of the people that died were unrestrained.

OHSP welcomes Ruis as its new accountant



The Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning (OHSP) recently welcomed Heidi Ruis as an accountant in its Financial Section.

Prior to coming to OHSP, Ruis worked as an accountant for the Michigan Department of Community Health where she spent three years working with state and federal contracts. Before attending Lansing Community College as part of a program geared toward individuals looking to become employed in the accounting field, Ruis served as a legislative assistant for four years to a state representative.

Ruis holds a bachelor’s degree in public policy with a minor in economics from Michigan State University. She also has an associate’s degree in business from Lansing Community College.

An animal lover, Ruis is the proud owner of two Pugs, Rolly and Ralphie. In her spare time she enjoys volunteering with the Michigan Pug Rescue and the Capital Area Humane Society.

What’s Ahead

DECEMBER

National Drunk & Drugged Driving Prevention Month

nhtsa.gov/stopimpaireddriving

- 13-1/1 **Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over national drunk driving crackdown**
nhtsa.gov/stopimpaireddriving

JANUARY

- 9 **Senior Mobility and Safety Action Team meeting**, Horatio S. Earle Learning Center, 7575 Crowner Drive, Dimondale, Lake Superior Room, 1:30 p.m.
- 14 **Pedestrian & Bicycle Safety Action Team meeting**, Michigan State Police Headquarters, 333 South Grand Avenue, Lansing, 1970s Room, 9 a.m.
- 15 **Impaired Driving Action Team meeting**, Michigan State Police Headquarters, 333 South Grand Avenue, Lansing, 1920s Room, 10 a.m.
- 16 **Motorcycle Safety Action Team meeting**, Horatio S. Earle Learning Center, 7575 Crowner Drive, Dimondale, Lake Huron Room, 9 a.m.
- 16 **Traffic Records & Information Systems Action team meeting**, Michigan State Police Headquarters, 333 South Grand Avenue, Lansing, 1920s Room, 10 a.m.
- 21 **Distracted Driving Action Team meeting**, Michigan State Police Headquarters, 333 South Grand Avenue, Lansing, 1920s Room, 1 p.m.



SAFETY Network



Campaign reminds U.P. motorists to *Drive Slow on Ice and Snow*

In advance of what the Farmer’s Almanac predicts will be a “biting cold and snowy” winter in Michigan, a traffic safety campaign encouraging Upper Peninsula (U.P.) drivers to slow down on snowy or icy driving conditions is in its second year.

The *Drive Slow On Ice and Snow* campaign is intended to help reduce weather-related crashes, injuries, and traffic deaths. The effort is being focused in the U.P. because this area experiences the longest and harshest winter driving conditions in the state.

Produced by the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning, the effort is supported with federal traffic safety funds. The campaign includes radio and TV public service announcements and flyers.

The majority of winter driving crashes can be attributed to drivers going too fast for the roadway conditions. When this happens, drivers can lose control and begin to leave the roadway.

A five-year review of U.P. crash statistics indicated:

>> Men and women are equally involved in winter weather crashes

- >> Most crashes involve drivers 41 and older
- >> Weather-related crashes are focused in Marquette, Houghton, Chippewa, and Alger counties
- >> Most weather-related crashes occur in December and January

The campaign’s TV ads can be viewed at Youtube.com/ohsp. In addition to the ads, weather-related informational flyers are being distributed throughout the U.P.

Action Teams establish plans through 2016



The Governor’s Traffic Safety Advisory Commission (GTSAC) Action Teams provide targeted guidance for each emphasis area in the Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP). Each action team recently completed an action plan which outlines short-, mid-, and long-term goals for strategies in the SHSP.

There are 11 action teams addressing commercial vehicle safety, distracted driv-

ing, drivers under age 24, impaired driving, motorcycle safety, occupant protection, pedestrian and bicyclist safety, senior mobility and safety, traffic incident management, traffic records and information systems, and traffic safety engineering.

Team members represent a variety of traffic safety areas including law enforcement, engineering, education, medicine, and research, as well as public and private organizations. The plans are available on the GTSAC Web site, Michigan.gov/GTSAC.





SAFETY Network

Kent County Deputy Forman named Secondary Road Patrol Deputy of the Year

Kent County Deputy Dan Forman has been named the 2013 Secondary Road Patrol (SRP) Deputy of the Year. The SRP award is presented to deputies or sergeants who show initiative, display a positive image of the sheriff's office, and demonstrate outstanding work performance.

The award, sponsored by the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning (OHSP) in partnership with the Michigan Sheriffs' Association (MSA), was presented October 13 at MSA's Fall Training Conference at the Lansing Center.

Forman was noted for his productivity, making more than 300 traffic stops and issuing 361 citations in an eight-month period while logging more than 194 hours on fatal and injury crash reconstructions.

A highly regarded crash reconstructionist, Forman is recognized as an expert witness by the court and regularly contacted by other departments for

guidance in crash reconstructions. He was recently asked to serve as a traffic and crash instructor at the Grand Valley State University Police Academy for Military Veterans.



Kent County Sheriff's Deputy Dan Forman (l.) was presented the SRP Deputy of the Year award by Michael L. Prince, director of the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning.

Forman has worked with the SRP program for more than nine years. In addition to his road patrol duties, he is a police

motorcycle instructor and an on-call firefighter for the Cutlerville Fire Department.

He is actively involved with the MSA's STOPPED (Sheriffs Telling Our Parents and Promoting Educated Drivers) program and often participates in school career days.

The SRP and Traffic Accident Prevention program was created by Public Act 416 of 1978. The program is often referred to as the SRP or 416 program. This state grant program provides county sheriff offices with funding to patrol county and local roads outside the corporate limits of cities and villages. The program, managed by OHSP, has the legislated primary responsibility of traffic enforcement and traffic crash prevention.

Deputies funded under the SRP program are responsible for traffic enforcement, traffic crash prevention and investigation, criminal law enforcement, and emergency assistance.

Flegel named GTSAC designee for MSP



F/Lt. Jim Flegel, commander of the Michigan State Police (MSP) Traffic Services Section, was recently named as MSP's designee on the Governor's Traffic Safety Advisory Commission.

F/Lieutenant Flegel joined the MSP in 1993 as a graduate of the 108th MSP Trooper Recruit School. After graduation he was assigned to

the Hastings Post where he served until being promoted to sergeant in the Precision Driving Unit in 2000. When he earned the rank of lieutenant he was placed in charge of the state's annual Police Vehicle Evaluation.

In 2013 he became assistant post commander at MSP's Lansing Post before being promoted to first lieutenant and commander of the Traffic Services Section.

New seat belt rule announced for motorcoaches

The U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) recently issued a final rule requiring lap and shoulder seat belts for each passenger and driver seat on new motorcoaches and other large buses.

On average, 21 motorcoach and large bus occupants are killed and 7,934 are injured annually in crashes, according to NHTSA data. Requiring seat belts could reduce fatalities by up to 44 percent and reduce the number of moderate to severe injuries by up to 45 percent.

The final rule, which amends Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 208, applies to new over-the-road buses and to other types of new buses with a gross vehicle weight rating greater than 11,793 kilograms (26,000 pounds), except transit buses and school buses.

SAFETY Network



OHSP Staff:

Contact	Program Area	Phone	E-mail
Michael L. Prince	Director	(517) 241-1512	princem@michigan.gov
Janet Hengesbach	Executive Secretary	(517) 241-1512	hengsbachj2@michigan.gov
SAFETY PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION			
Kathy Farnum	Senior Section Chief	(517) 241-2528	farnumk@michigan.gov
Linda Fech	Seniors/Teens	(517) 241-2533	fechl@michigan.gov
Charlotte Kilvington	Analysis & Evaluation	(517) 241-2582	kilvingtonc@michigan.gov
Alicia Sledge	Traffic Records	(517) 241-1505	sledgea@michigan.gov
COMMUNICATIONS			
Anne Readett	Section Chief	(517) 241-2569	readetta@michigan.gov
Jonathan Benallack	Graphic Designer	(517) 241-2571	benallackj1@michigan.gov
Melody Kindraka	Public Information	(517) 241-1522	kindrakam@michigan.gov
Lynn Sutfin	Public Information	(517) 241-1513	sutfinl@michigan.gov
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT			
Spencer Simmons	Section Chief	(517) 241-2556	simmonss6@michigan.gov
Susan Bishop	Administrative Assistant	(517) 241-2520	bishops2@michigan.gov
Julie Roth	Secondary Road Patrol	(517) 241-2572	rothj3@michigan.gov
Heidi Ruis	Accountant	(517) 241-2584	ruish@michigan.gov
Jean Shattuck	Accounting Technician	(517) 241-2544	shattuckj@michigan.gov
PROGRAM MANAGEMENT			
Jason Hamblen	Section Chief	(517) 241-2578	hamblenj@michigan.gov
Jamie Dolan	Northern Michigan	(906) 225-7036	dolanj@michigan.gov
Pat Eliason	Police Traffic Services	(517) 241-2498	eliasonp@michigan.gov
Michael Harris	Law Enforcement Liaison/State DRE Coordinator	(517) 241-2536	harrism13@michigan.gov
Alyson Kechkaylo	Occupant Protection	(517) 241-2546	kechkayloa@michigan.gov
Dianne Perukel	Alcohol	(517) 241-2565	perukeld@michigan.gov
Chad Teachout	Motorcycle	(517) 241-2579	teachoutc@michigan.gov

Safety Network is published by the
Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning
Editor: Lynn Sutfin
Designer: Jon Benallack
Office of Highway Safety Planning
P.O. Box 30634
Lansing, MI 48909
(517) 241-2500