



Michigan traffic fatalities reach 16-year high

Data shows increase in nearly every category of crash deaths during 2021

Michigan traffic deaths peaked above 1,100 according to recently released data from the Michigan State Police Criminal Justice Information Center. The 1,131 fatalities in 2021 marked the most traffic fatalities in Michigan since 1,129 deaths in 2005.

As traffic fatalities went up 4 percent in 2021 from 1,083 deaths in 2020, the number of total injuries, crashes, and suspected serious injuries also increased from the year before.

The percentage of alcohol-involved fatalities increased by 10 percent from 326 deaths in 2020 to 357 in 2021. This represents 31 percent of all traffic fatalities for the year.

“Unfortunately, there was a steady rise in traffic crashes and injuries during 2021, and we are determined to turn those numbers

Outcome

2020	2021	% increase
	Injuries	
60,986	71,246	17 percent
	Crashes	
245,432	282,640	15 percent
	Suspected serious injuries	
5,433	5,979	10 percent

Michigan Traffic Crashes

2021	2020	2019	2018
	Crashes		
282,640	245,432	314,377	312,798
	Injuries		
71,246	60,986	74,963	75,838
	Fatalities		
1,131	1,083	985	974

around and save more lives,” said Alicia Sledge, interim director of the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning (OHSP). “The OHSP is coordinating high-visibility enforcement campaigns this summer focusing on impaired driving, speed, and seat belt use to help reverse these disturbing trends.”

Bicycle fatalities dropped to 29 in 2021, down 24 percent, from 38 in 2020.

In nearly every other category, there were increases in fatalities:

- Motorcyclist fatalities increased from 152 in 2020 to 166 in 2021, up 9 percent.
- Pedestrian fatalities increased from 175 in 2020 to 183 in 2021, up 5 percent.
- Commercial motor vehicle-involved fatalities increased from 78 in 2020 to 103 in 2021, up 32 percent.
- Deer-involved fatalities increased from 5 in 2020 to 10 in 2021, up 100 percent.
- Construction zone fatalities increased from 14 in 2020 to 20 in 2021, up 43 percent.

NHTSA updates child safety seat testing policies

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) issued a final rule recently that updates testing requirements for child safety seats to improve the protection of children during side-impact crashes.

“By establishing more comprehensive testing requirements, we are advancing child passenger safety and assuring parents that the safety seat they choose for their child must meet the highest safety standards,” said Dr. Steven Cliff, NHTSA administrator.

This final rule amends Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 213, “Child restraint systems,” by adding side-impact performance requirements for child safety seats.

The current standard requires child seats to meet performance criteria in a test simulating a 30-mph frontal impact. The final rule establishes a side-impact test that replicates a 30-mph side collision, commonly known as a T-bone crash.

The test relies on a sliding vehicle seat mounted on rails—known as a sled—and a vehicle door mounted on the sled to resemble the vehicle, and simulates what happens to a child and child seat in a T-bone crash. Child seats will be evaluated using the newly developed Q3s side-impact test dummy representing a 3-year-old child, along with the well-established Child Restraint and Airbag Interaction 12-month-old child test dummy.

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Anchor Bay High School finishes first in teen safe-driving contest

Plymouth, Coldwater, Lake Shore, West Shore also recognized

Anchor Bay High School students in St. Clair County took top honors statewide in recognition of the school's *Strive for a Safer Drive (S4SD)* campaign.

The first-place selection recognizes the outstanding efforts of Anchor Bay students in educating their classmates and community about the dangers associated with winter driving in their [Take Our Advice, Be Careful on Snow and Ice!](#) campaign.

[Plymouth High School](#) in Wayne County finished second, while [Coldwater High School](#) in Branch County earned third place. [Lake Shore High School](#) in Macomb County took fourth place, and [West Shore ESD CTE Criminal Justice Program](#) in Mason County finished in fifth place.

As part of the *S4SD* program, the 38 participating schools each received \$1,000, which the students used to create a teen-led campaign to educate their peers and community about various traffic safety topics, including speeding; seat belts; pedestrian, bicyclist, and passenger safety; and impaired, distracted, nighttime, and winter driving. The students met in-person and virtually between January and April of this year to conduct activities before submitting a final report.

The top schools were selected based on creativity, execution, and compliance with *S4SD* participation requirements. The top

five campaigns will receive a cash prize ranging from \$500 to \$1,500.

In its eleventh year, *S4SD* is a public-private partnership between Ford Motor Company Fund's Driving Skills for Life (FDSFL) and the OHSP, which provides funding and resources with the goal of reducing teen traffic crashes, injuries, and fatalities.

Students from participating schools also had the chance to attend a free, hands-on driving clinic with professional instructors on May 14-15 at the

Michigan State Police (MSP) drive track in Lansing. Parents and students were able to interact with MSP troopers and traffic safety experts from around the country. Under supervision, teens were able to take vehicles out on the drive track to expand their skills and receive feedback from trained instructors. Please find more information about the event on page 7.

For more information about FDSFL, visit www.drivingskillsforlife.com.

The OHSP partnered with the Transportation Improvement Association to help coordinate the activities of the program. For more information about the *S4SD* program and how to sign up a high school for next year's campaigns, please visit www.michigan.gov/s4sd.



Coldwater High School's logo for its "Alert Today, Alive Tomorrow" teen safe-driving campaign.



With the help of Click It the Cricket, Anchor Bay High School students traveled to local elementary schools to educate children about how to properly buckle their seat belts and how to be a good passenger.



Plymouth High School used a talking squirrel to lead its "Don't Drive Nuts" campaign.



Above, Lake Shore High School students educated their classmates using a traffic safety trivia game as part of its "Booze, Cruise, Lose" campaign. At left, West Shore CTE Criminal Justice students distributed materials at a traffic safety event during its "Don't Be Insane, Protect Your Brain" bicycle safety campaign.

An overview of the Drug Recognition Expert program

Drugged driving has long been identified as a significant traffic safety and public health concern throughout the United States. To address this issue, the OHSP implemented a special program in 2010 to train law enforcement officers to become Drug Recognition Experts (DREs). The program is called the Drug Evaluation and Classification (DEC) Program.

A DRE officer is trained to recognize impairment in drivers under the influence of drugs other than alcohol and to determine which category of drug is causing the impairment.¹ The International Association of Chiefs of Police coordinates the DEC Program with support from the NHTSA, an agency with the United States federal government.²

DRE officers follow a 12-step standardized and systematic process in determining whether a driver is under the influence of drugs.³ The process is standardized because it is conducted the same way by every DRE officer “‘for every suspect’ whenever possible.” Standardization makes officers better observers and helps minimize errors.⁴ The process is systematic because DRE officers rely on a set of signs and symptoms that are associated with drug impairment.⁵ A DRE bases his or her conclusion on whether a suspect is impaired on the entire process, or DRE evaluation, as it is commonly referred to.

DRE officers gather additional evidence in their investigations, similar to what a crash reconstruction would do in a case involving a collision. In most cases, the DRE officer is not the officer who makes the initial stop and conducts an Operating While Intoxicated (OWI) investigation at the roadside. A DRE usually gets involved in a case post-arrest at the request of the arresting officer. If the arresting officer suspects that drugs may be involved, the officer can request that a DRE officer also evaluate the suspect for additional evidence of drug impairment.

A DRE evaluation is usually conducted at the police station. During the 12-step process, the DRE officer aims to answer the following three questions: 1) is the suspect impaired; 2) if the suspect is impaired, is the impairment caused by a medical condition or drugs; and 3) if drugs, what category or combination

of categories of drugs is causing the impairment.⁶ A DRE officer will not identify the specific drug causing the impairment as any number of drugs within a category could be responsible.

The DEC Program uses a drug classification system based on the premise that each drug within a category produces similar signs and symptoms.⁷ The primary drugs of abuse have been placed into the following seven drug categories:

- Central Nervous System (CNS) Depressants (e.g., alcohol, GHB, anti-anxiety tranquilizers such as Valium, Xanax, Prozac);
- CNS Stimulants (e.g., cocaine, methamphetamine, amphetamine);
- Hallucinogens (e.g., LSD, peyote, ecstasy);
- Dissociative Anesthetics (e.g., PCP, ketamine, dextromethorphan);
- Narcotics Analgesics (e.g., opium, codeine, heroin, morphine, methadone, suboxone, fentanyl);
- Inhalants (e.g., rubber cement, glue, paint thinner); and
- Cannabis (e.g., THC, dronabinol).⁸

As of July 2022, there are 106 active DRE officers in Michigan and 18 more are expected to undergo the rigorous training at the next two-week DRE School in September 2022. More than 60 prosecutors have also audited the training with the goal of better understanding what DRE officers do so they can more effectively prosecute these cases in court.

Convicting the drugged-impaired driver is much more difficult without the proper training and resources available to law enforcement officers responsible for keeping our roads safe. While DRE officers cannot prevent these crimes from occurring, their training can help minimize this growing public safety threat.

For more information about Michigan’s DRE Program, contact DRE State Coordinator Mike Harris at harrism13@michigan.gov.

Views expressed in this article are solely those of the authors. Please consult your prosecutor, local counsel, or commanding officers if you need any further guidance on anything discussed in this case or before changing procedure based on this article.

For more information on the PAAM Traffic Safety Training Program, please contact Ken Stecker or Kinga Canike at steckerk@michigan.gov or canikek@michigan.gov.



Ken Stecker is a graduate of Loyola Marymount University and the University of Detroit School of Law. He has run the Traffic Safety Training Program for the Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan (PAAM) since 2008. Prior to working as a traffic safety training prosecutor, Ken served more than 11 years as an assistant prosecuting attorney in Kalamazoo and Branch Counties and eight years as the Branch County chief assistant prosecuting attorney.



Kinga Canike became Michigan’s second traffic safety resource prosecutor in 2014. Prior to joining the PAAM, she worked at the Wayne County Prosecutor’s Office for more than ten years. Kinga earned a bachelor of science in journalism from Michigan State University and her law degree from Wayne State University Law School.



¹ <https://bit.ly/3ywckER>

² Id.

³ Id.

⁴ Id.

⁵ Id.

⁶ Id.

⁷ Id.

⁸ Id.

GTSAC honors nine for their efforts to improve traffic safety

The Governor's Traffic Safety Advisory Commission (GTSAC) honored nine organizations, programs, or individuals for outstanding involvement in traffic safety during the Traffic Safety Awards Virtual Ceremony, via Microsoft Teams, May 24.

The awards were presented to:

Richard H. Austin Long-Term Service Award

■ Tpr. Russell Bawks of the MSP Niles Post for his exceptionally high level of traffic enforcement patrol activity.

■ Tpr. Eric T. Desch of the MSP Wayland Post for his efforts and impact addressing and combating hazardous driving in Allegan County.

■ Tpr. Brandon Oaks of the MSP Marshall Post for his knowledge and impact on statewide OWI investigations.

Outstanding Traffic Safety Achievement Award

■ Rana Abbas Taylor of Northville for successfully building support among numerous groups, including the public, policymakers, and auto industry, to have drunk-driving prevention technology installed in new vehicles.

■ MC Ofcr. Mickey Parling of the MSP Lakeview Post, Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Division, for unparalleled patrol



activities, as well as his mentoring and mask initiatives.

■ The ARC Automotive Airbag Defect Investigation Team—Dep. Hans Tolkkinen, Houghton County Sheriff's Office; Spl/Sgt. Daniel Verlin, MSP Eighth District Headquarters; and Tpr. Steven Wallenius, MSP Gladstone Post—for investigating a fatal crash, discovering details that led to an airbag recall, and findings that have the potential to save countless lives.

■ The MSP Third District's Impaired Driving Action Team—Sgt. Ken Campbell, Tpr. Corbin Holt, Tpr.

Dennis Lapan, and Tpr. Blake Bitner—and the team's founder, Sgt. Troy Meder, for addressing and reducing the number of alcohol- and drug-impaired driving crashes in the district.

■ The Michigan Crash Analysis Tool, which was developed by the MSP Traffic Crash Reporting Unit, allows users to visualize and analyze traffic crash data.

Student Award

■ Quan Nguyen, a senior at Michigan State University, for his exceptional contribution to the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) Traffic Signing Unit.

For more information about each award winner, please visit the [GTSAC Media page](#).

Traffic safety briefs

Nearly 1,000 speeding citations issued during safety campaign

The OHSP and NHTSA's Region 5 Office once again partnered on a regional traffic safety campaign, "Great Lakes, High Stakes," which focused on speeding drivers between June 18 and 26.

This year, municipal, county, and MSP law enforcement agencies across Michigan made 1,365 traffic stops, issuing 992 speeding citations and 328 verbal warnings. Officers also made 30 OWI arrests as well as issuing 30 citations for those not wearing seat belts.

Nationally, in 2020, 11,258 traffic fatalities involved crashes in which one or more drivers were speeding, an increase of 18 percent over 2019 (9,478 fatalities).

Dawes honored for service to traffic safety

Garrett Dawes, former chair of the Northern Lower Traffic Safety Network (TSN) was recognized for his dedication

and service to traffic safety at the group's June 8 meeting in Gaylord.

At right, Gary Bubar of AAA Michigan, left, and Mike Harris, DRE program coordinator for the OHSP, right, presented the award of recognition to Dawes for his eight years of service as chair of the Northern Lower TSN.



MADD recognizes MSP members for combating impaired driving

Several MSP members were recently recognized by Mothers Against Drunk Driving with 2021 Lifesaver Awards for making a difference in the areas of education, prevention, policy, or enforcement that helped reduce impaired-driving deaths and injuries.

■ The Third District Impaired Driving Action Team was recognized for its efforts

to reduce the number of traffic crashes involving alcohol- and drug-impaired driving through focused and directed patrols, resulting in 403 drunk/drugged driving arrests in 2021.

■ Tpr. Kevin Lee with the Niles Post was recognized for his efforts to educate troopers and other agencies on the importance of impaired driving enforcement, as well as serving as an expert witness for two county courts due to his knowledge of OWI law and procedures.

For a complete list of 2021 MADD Lifesaver Award winners, see page 8.

Camp 911 teaches young students how to handle emergencies

Delta County program engages fifth- and sixth-graders with hands-on learning

Escanaba Daily Press

The Camp 911 Delta County program launched June 14 with 50 fifth- and sixth-grade students from across the county gathering to engage in hands-on learning about emergency services and response efforts.

The two-day program not only introduced participants to several emergency agencies in the area, such as the Michigan State Police Bomb Squad and Delta County Search and Rescue, but it also prepared them to assist in providing emergency care through one-on-one work with industry professionals. Organizers hope to make the camp an annual event.

Camp 911 has a rich history, originating in the Lower Peninsula a few decades ago in response to the lack of manpower in emergency services. In the 1990s, the program made its way to the Keeweenaw Peninsula, where hundreds of youth from Houghton and Keeweenaw Counties have participated over the course of 20 years. Camp 911 has seen success in sparking career interests of students, with some becoming nurses, police officers, and paramedics.

“The really rewarding part is when you see some kids come through and they say ‘Yeah, I was a camper, and now I am a state trooper.’ It is cool to see,” said Ann Clancy, Camp 911 event organizer in Houghton.

Modeled after its Houghton predecessor, Camp 911 Delta County was made possible by a grant award from OSF St. Francis Hospital. The hospital then collaborated with Bay College and Guardian Flight and AirMedCare Network to orchestrate the event. Additional funding from local organizations, businesses, and restaurants enabled the program to be free for all participants.

Camp 911 aims to familiarize attendees with a variety of emergency scenarios and how to handle them. Through the training, the young students learn how to contact 911 and provide assistance while waiting for emergency personnel. They also learn how to prevent accidents and injuries from occurring in the first place. Additionally, Camp 911 intends to reduce high-risk behaviors by showing kids the consequences of poor decision-making, such as impaired driving or riding a bike without a helmet.

The first day of the Camp 911 Delta County program introduced students to an abundance of information regarding safety and accident prevention, including hands-on skill stations that



Photo courtesy of Escanaba Daily Press

Medical educators from Bay College’s emergency medical technician program demonstrate how to safely handle individuals who are injured. The presentation was part of Camp 911, a Delta County program dedicated to teaching students the importance of emergency care and response services.

allowed them to participate in lifesaving emergency care. On the second day, participants put their newly acquired skills to the test in a series of interactive crash simulations. After applying what they had learned, the students evaluated how they reacted and how they could improve their skills.

In addition, attendees explored many different emergency vehicles and accompanying equipment within the Delta County area and learned the functions of the Michigan State Bomb Squad, Dive Team, and K-9 Unit. The students also witnessed a “brain drop,” a Jello mold of a brain being dropped to simulate how the human brain reacts to harsh impact, which stressed the importance of wearing a helmet when operating ATVs, bicycles, and scooters. The 906 Adventure Team, a local nonprofit organization, provided a lesson on the proper fit of a bike helmet, and all campers were then given a bicycle helmet to take home.

At the conclusion, students received a certificate of completion and bystander care kit to signify their new emergency service skills. The event was made possible through support from dozens of local agencies, medical educators, and volunteers.

Camp 911 began as OHSP grant project

Jamie Dolan, Upper Peninsula programs coordinator:

“This article is a great example of the positive impact federal funding, distributed through the OHSP, can have on local communities — long after we think the project is over.

The Camp 911 program began in Kalamazoo in the

mid-1990 as an OHSP grant project using EMS/injury prevention funding. A few years later, Upper Peninsula first responders saw the value of the program and began requesting the materials and technical assistance needed to establish the camps. The fact that 25-plus years later this is STILL going on AND continues to expand as an annual collaborative community event (with local financial support) is just amazing.”

INSIDE THE OHSP

STAFF PROFILE

Emily Shinevar

VULNERABLE ROADWAY USERS PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Emily has been at the OHSP for more than five years and with the State of Michigan (SOM) nearly 12 years. She is married and has a one-year-old daughter and two dogs (Whip-pets).

What do you like most about your job?

Finding creative solutions.



What are you most proud of at work?

Collaborations—any successful project I've been a part of at work is because of a diverse team of great people.

What are your interests or hobbies?

Traveling, visiting lighthouses, crafting, snowmobiling, walking my dogs, and spending time with family.

What personal achievement are you most proud of?

Staying connected with my foreign exchange sister from Germany. She lived with our family for a year when I was in high school, and we've been close ever since.

What's your favorite vacation spot?

My go-to vacation spot is Gaylord, Michigan, at any time of year.

What's something people don't know about you?

I don't like bacon.

OHSP VIDEO FILES



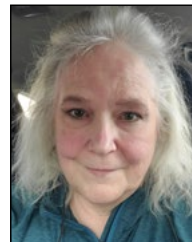
The annual *Click It or Ticket* enforcement concluded in June.

The OHSP advertising strategy was designed to increase awareness of the *CIOT* safety belt enforcement period and highlight the dangers of not wearing a seat belt. The OHSP produced two new commercials, "[Perfect World.](#)" above, and "[Something Stops You.](#)" left, for the 2022 outreach.

OHSP WELCOMES

Sandra Enness comes to the OHSP Communications Section from a lengthy public health education and outreach career. Her experience comes from nearly a decade working in academia at Michigan State University in food safety and toxicology, food fraud, and environmental public health. Enness has also worked in state government in communications and outreach in the areas of communicable disease and environmental public health.

She earned a master of public health degree from Michigan State University and a master of liberal



studies degree from the University of North Carolina—Greensboro. She also earned her bachelor of arts degree from Siena Heights University, also in liberal studies.

Sandy has been married for 33 years and has two adult children and two grandchildren. The Enness household mostly belongs to Elmer the Newfoundland, Lily the Saint Bernard, Ike the yellow lab, and Sally the beagle.

The family enjoys fishing, college football (Go Irish!), college basketball (Go Zags!), and shooting sports in their spare time.

OHSP ON THE ROAD

As temperatures increased across Michigan, so did the OHSP's outreach. We participated in events focused on reaching teen drivers and their parents, as well as motorcyclists, utilizing safe-driving messages and hands-on learning techniques.



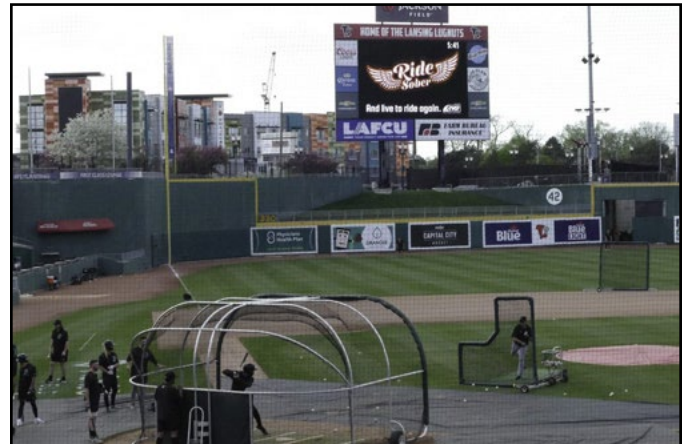
Ford Driving Skills for Life

Students from participating S4SD high schools participated in a free, hands-on driving clinic with professional instructors on May 14-15 at the MSP drive track in Lansing. Under professional supervision, teens were able to take vehicles out on the drive track, as well as learn about the dangers of driving impaired by wearing goggles that simulate driving drunk.

Biker Night at Lansing Lugnuts baseball game



"Ride Sober" was the message during Biker Night at the May 13 minor league baseball game at Jackson Field in Lansing. Troopers and other law enforcement officers were on hand to educate fans about motorcycle safety.



MHSAA Championships at MSU

The OHSP also had a booth at the Michigan High School Athletic Association Championships over a three-day period in June at Michigan State University to educate teens and their parents about traffic safety issues and challenges faced by student-age drivers.



Michigan officers recognized by MADD with Lifesaver Awards

OUTSTANDING DEPUTY

Kent County – Deputy Ryan Gerke
 Berrien County Sheriff’s Office – Deputy Nathan Withington
 Washtenaw County Sheriff’s Office – Deputy Jeremy Yono
 Grand Traverse County Sheriff’s Office – Deputy Mitchell Hoffman
 Monroe County Sheriff’s Office – Deputy Bilal Bazzi



The Third District Impaired Driving Action Team was recently recognized by MADD for its efforts to reduce the number of traffic crashes involving alcohol- and drug-impaired driving through focused and directed patrols that resulted in 403 drunk/drugged driving arrests in 2021.

RECOGNITION OF EXCELLENCE

Michigan State Police-Niles Post – Trooper Kevin A. Lee
 Boyne City PD – Officer Michael Frazee
 Washtenaw County Sheriff’s Office – Deputy Brian Webb
 Michigan State Police – IMPACT Team

OUTSTANDING TROOPER

Metro North Post – Trooper Matthew Okaiye
 Calumet Post – Trooper Peter DeKryger
 Flint Post – Trooper Travis Fountain
 Iron Mountain Post – Trooper Tyler Varney
 Metro North Post – Trooper Roger Lee-Scott



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Deputy Thomas Randell
 Michigan State Police-Paw Paw Post – Trooper Maxwell Miniati
 Auburn Hills PD – Officer Joshua Jackson

OUTSTANDING OFFICER

Holly PD – Officer Brandon DeVita
 Fowlerville PD – Officer David Richmond
 Farmington Hills PD – Officer Tim

Sjostrom
 Mt. Pleasant PD – Officer Shane Waskevich
 Garden City PD – Officer Jacob Minch

OUTSTANDING AGENCY

Grand Blanc Twp PD
 Monroe County Sheriff’s Office
 MSP Flint Post

OUTSTANDING ROOKIE

Baraga County Sheriff’s Office –

SCHIEBER AWARD

John Dewane

OHSP COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGNS

July 1-31	Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over
Aug. 7-13	Bicycle Safety Enforcement
Aug. 12-Sept. 5	Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over
Sept. 18-24	Child Passenger Safety Week

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