



FEATURES

Safety in Numbers

NHTSA conducts observation survey



Administrator Nason gives OST's John Flaherty the thumbs up for properly wearing his safety belt.

As the sun breaks its way through the clouds on this seemingly calm morning, a group of spectators gathered at the Department of Transportation's garage entrances eyeballing employees, contractors, and visitors as they drove in, one by one. This group, clad in neon orange and yellow fishnet vests, peered into each and every vehicle, hoping to give a friendly nod of approval or looking to catch an unsuspecting person doing the unthinkable – not buckling up.

For the second consecutive year, NHTSA has conducted a safety belt check survey. This year, newly confirmed Administrator Nicole Nason teamed up with managers and

traffic safety staff to measure the belt use rate of everyone entering the Nassif building.

The survey, conducted in early June, took place in the morning and afternoon. A total of 1,289 vehicles were counted in this year's survey, compared to 1,146 last year. The good news is that this year's safety belt use rate of 91.0 percent showed an increase of 3 percentage points above last year's overall safety belt use rate of 88.0 percent. Though that's a lot to be proud of, there is still plenty of work to do.

NHTSA has long been concerned with the consequences of people not wearing safety belts and encourages everyone to buckle up correctly, on every trip, every

Continued on 2



Richard Holdcraft, OST; Nicole Nason; Sandy Sinclair, NHTSA; Marilena Amoni, NHTSA; Phil Gulak, NHTSA, await the next vehicle

Here's How We Measured Up

Safety Belt Use Rate	Category
90.0%	All Drivers
91.0%	All Passengers
93.0%	A.M. Drivers
87.0%	P.M. Drivers
88.0%	A.M. Passengers
93.0%	P.M. Passengers
92.0%	Female Drivers
90.0%	Male Drivers
90.0%	Cars/Minivans
92.0%	Sports Utility Vehicles
83.3%	Pickup Trucks
91.0%	Large Vans

Safety in Numbers

continued from 1



Brian McLaughlin, NHTSA; Linda Washington, OST; Richard Holdcraft, OST; security guard



Even the Associate Administrator of Research and Program Development, Marilena Amoni, was not spared the "look".

time. Research shows that improving safety belt use is the single most effective strategy the Nation can embrace in reducing fatalities and injuries when a motor vehicle crash occurs. However; changing behavior

among nonusers or those who use belts incorrectly is a challenging task. Recognizing this as a problem, NHTSA has made it one of the agency's highest priorities to increase the use of safety belts.★

Wearing a safety belt correctly is extremely important for a number of reasons:

Safety belts should be worn over the shoulder at all times. You can be seriously injured if you wear the shoulder belt under your arm. In a crash, your body would move too far forward, which would increase the chance of head and neck injury. In addition, the belt would apply too much force to the ribs, which aren't as strong as shoulder bones. You could also severely injure internal organs such as your liver or spleen.

Make sure the shoulder belt is not too loose. It won't give nearly as much protection this way. Again, you can be

seriously hurt because you would move forward too much, which could increase injury. The shoulder belt should fit against your body.

Remember, if the belt is buckled in the wrong place, that too poses danger. If there were a crash, the belt would go up over your abdomen. The belt forces would be at the abdomen and not at the pelvic bones. This could cause serious internal injuries. Therefore, always buckle your belt into the buckle nearest you.

Finally, make sure the belt isn't twisted across the body. In a crash, you wouldn't have the width of the belt to spread impact forces. If a belt is twisted, make it straight so it can work properly, or ask your dealer to fix it.★



National Labor Day Enforcement Crackdown

Drunk driving is one of America's deadliest crimes. In fact, during 2004 nearly 13,000 people were killed in highway crashes involving an impaired driver or motorcycle operator with an illegal blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 grams per deciliter or higher. The picture for motorcycle operators is particularly bleak. Forty-one percent of the 1,672 motorcycle operators who died in single-vehicle crashes in 2004 had BAC levels of .08 g/dL or higher.

That's why local law enforcement officials will be joining with thousands of other law enforcement and highway safety

agencies across the Nation during August and the Labor Day holiday to launch an aggressive new crackdown on impaired drivers called Drunk Driving, Over the Limit, Under Arrest.

The message is simple. No matter what you drive – a passenger car, pickup, sport utility vehicle, or motorcycle – if we catch you driving impaired, we will arrest you. No exceptions. No excuses. We will be out in force conducting sobriety checkpoints, saturation patrols, and using undercover officers to get more drunk drivers off the road. We want everyone to play it safe and always designate a sober driver or find a

different way home if they have been out drinking.

Driving with a BAC of .08 or higher is illegal in every State. Although drunk driving fatalities across the nation slightly declined in 2003 and 2004, these fatalities are projected to increase in 2005. Moreover, according to the FBI's Uniform Crime Report, more than 1.4 million people were arrested for driving under the influence during 2004.

Much of the tragedy from drunk driving can be prevented with a few simple precautions before going out to celebrate:

Continued on 3

National Labor Day

continued from 2

Whenever you plan on consuming alcohol, designate a sober driver before going out and give that person your keys;

- If you're impaired, call a taxi, use mass transit, or call a sober friend or family member to get you home safely;
- Use your community's Sober Rides program
- Promptly report drunk drivers you see on the roadways to law enforcement;
- Wearing your safety belt while in a car or using a helmet and protective gear when on a motorcycle is your best defense against an impaired driver;

And remember, Friends Don't Let Friends Drive Drunk. If you know some-

one who is about to drive or ride while impaired, take their keys and help them make other arrangements to get to where they are going safely.

Drunk driving is simply not worth the risk. Not only do you risk killing yourself or someone else, but the trauma and financial costs of a crash or an arrest for impaired driving can be significant. Violators often face jail time, the loss of their driver's license, higher insurance rates, attorney fees, time away from work, and dozens of other expenses. Don't take the chance. Drunk driving is a serious crime. Remember: Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest.

For more information, visit www.StopImpairedDriving.org.★

CYBER-NHTSA

Latest Information, Updates and Features on Our Site

- 7/19/06: NHTSA Administrator Nason's Congressional Testimony on Vehicle Technology and the Consumer (.pdf)
- 7/3/06: Graduated Driver Licensing Reduces Fatal Crashes by 11% for 16-Year-Old Drivers, Study Shows
- 7/3/06: National Evaluation of Graduated Driver Licensing Programs (large .pdf)

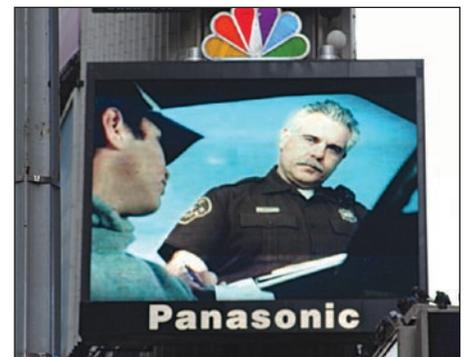
To download any of these stories please go to www.NHTSA.dot.gov

Getting the Message Out at America's Crossroads:

CLICK IT – OR – TICKET!

New York City, May 19 –

New York City's Times Square was once again the site for NHTSA's tri-state area *Click It or Ticket* kick-off event.



With TV cameras rolling, the New York State Police demonstrated the Safety Belt Convincer and Rollover Convincer to New Yorkers and tourists alike. "Saved by the Belt" survivors Ricky and Chelsea Rubenstein shared their story with print and TV reporters. Underneath the *Click It or Ticket* banner, representatives from the NYPD and the New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut State Police forces urged motorists to buckle up or face

the alternative – tickets and fines. Variable message signs along Broadway announced the upcoming mobilization effort. The speakers, troopers, and officers reflected the diversity of the region's population and enforcement community, and many were able to provide interviews for the Spanish-language papers and stations present.

Media coverage of the event was tremendous, with most of the tri-state area's largest media outlets covering the event as well

as the following Monday's early-morning safety belt checkpoints, staged on the first day of the mobilization at various points leading into and out of New York City.

Last, the famous "Astrovision" television screen high above Broadway and 42nd Street and visible to hundreds of thousands of people daily, displayed NHTSA's "seamless" ads throughout the event, and will continue to do so throughout the mobilization.★

IN THE NEWS

Federally Employed Women Chapter Start-up

DOT's Office of Civil Rights is exploring whether there is sufficient interest in developing a DOT chapter of Federally Employed Women (FEW).

FEW, a private membership organization, has been working since 1968 as a constructive group to improve the status of women employed by the Federal Government. It is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization with more than 100 chapters in the United States and overseas, is dedicated to promoting equality for women, and addresses concerns of women in the Federal workforce.

FEW seeks to:

- encourage diversity and equality in the workplace;
- enhance opportunities for career advancement of women;
- seek to improve the quality of life for women;
- advocate fair application of EEO and personnel laws and policies;
- achieve a unified, diverse membership that values and capitalizes on similarities and differences at all levels of the organization; and,
- provide opportunities for professional growth through leadership development, education, mentoring, and networking.

FEW offers members a venue for professional growth by providing opportunities to develop and refine management and organizational skills. The members support one another – mentoring and motivating – daily through networking, training, and working on projects together. By participating in FEW's programs, the members gain experience that may translate into skills and abilities. Additional information is available on the FEW Web site at <http://www.few.org>.

FEW executives are coming to DOT later this summer to provide an overview and answer questions you may have. If you are interested and would like to be invited to learn more about FEW, please contact Faithia Robertson at 202-366-5963.

For more information, call Grace P. Waters, DOT's Federal Women's Program Manager, Departmental Office of Civil Rights, at 202-366-9361.

Please share this information with your colleagues and associates who might benefit from participating in a FEW organization.

NCSA Research Note "Driver Alcohol Involvement in Fatal Crashes by Age Group and Vehicle Type"

The National Center for Statistics and Analysis (NCSA) has recently published a Research Note titled "Driver Alcohol Involvement in Fatal Crashes by Age Group and Vehicle Type." This research note shows that while younger passenger vehicle driver age groups comprise the greatest proportion of alcohol involvement, the older passenger vehicle driver age groups tend to have higher median blood alcohol concentrations (BAC). Conversely, it shows that for motorcycle operators, the older age groups had the greatest proportions of alcohol involvement and these age groups also had higher median blood alcohol concentrations. In addition, it is shown that three-fourths of drivers with alcohol involved in fatal crashes had BAC values exceeding the legal limit of .08 in all 50 States, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Finally, one-fourth of drivers with alcohol in fatal crashes had BAC levels that were more than twice the legal limit in all 50 States, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

The direct link to the NCSA Research Note is: <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/pdf/nrd-30/NCSA/RNotes/2006/810598.pdf>.

OHR Announces Creation of New Training Web Site

NHTSA's Office of Human Resources announced the launching of the NHTSA Training Web site. From this Web site employees can view all common-needs training offered by NHTSA. Featured on the Web site is a section that

highlights monthly learning activities including training announcements; a NHTSA Training Calendar; NHTSA Training Council, Career Resource Center, internal and external training forms, training policies and procedures, along with many other features. Additionally, employees will be able to assess DOT's electronic Learning Management System (eLMS) and log in from the site.

To assess the Web site, please go to Webster and under the "Tools" category click on NHTSA Training Web Site link <http://webster.nhtsa.dot.gov/Nhtsa/admin/PolicyOperations/Administration/HR/training/index.htm>.

For additional information, contact the NHTSA Office of Human Resources Training Department or call Nadra Milan-Dunbar, training coordinator, at 202-366-2613.

The National Center for Statistics and Analysis has published a Technical Report titled "Recent Trends in Fatal Motorcycle Crashes: An Update."

In July 2001, NHTSA released a comprehensive report based on increases in motorcycle rider fatalities for two consecutive years (1998 and 1999). The latest 2004 data shows that motorcycle rider fatalities increased for the seventh year in a row since 1997. This report is an update to the 2001 report and was written to provide insight into the continued increasing trend in motorcycle rider fatalities in the recent years.

The analysis was based on 1995-2004 data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System along with data from the Motorcycle Industry Council, Federal Highway Administration, and the United States Census Bureau. The direct link to the 2006 updated report is: <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/pdf/nrd-30/NCSA/Rpts/2006/810606.pdf>

More data and publications on motorcycles can be found on the main NCSA Web page under "In the News." NCSA Motorcycle Publications: <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/departments/nrd-30/ncsa/>★

NHTSA OHR Presents:

Topical Informational Program Sessions (T.I.P.S.)

The NHTSA OHR is pleased to present Topical Informational Program Sessions or T.I.P.S. to NHTSA staff. These brown-bag sessions are designed with the NHTSA employee in mind who has a limited amount of

time to attend a workshop, but who is looking for informative, enriching, interactive professional developmental activities.

T.I.P.S. are mini informational sessions, designed to be no more than an hour in

length, that will provide a powerhouse of information and knowledge that may enhance staff professional growth.

COURSE TITLE: Introduction to American Sign Language (eight-part series)

COURSE DATES & HOURS:

Introduction to American Sign Language Series

Workshop	Date	Presenter	Time & Location
Introduction to American Sign Language	July 11, 2006	Kevin Ball	12 p.m. – 1 p.m. Nassif Bldg, Room 4236
	July 25, 2006		12 p.m. – 1 p.m. Nassif Bldg, Room 7234
	August 1, 2006		12 p.m. – 1 p.m. Nassif Bldg, Room 4236
	August 8, 2006		12 p.m. – 1 p.m. Nassif Bldg, Room 3246
	August 15, 2006		12 p.m. – 1 p.m. Nassif Bldg, Room 3646
	August 29, 2006		12 p.m. – 1 p.m. Nassif Bldg, Room 3246A
	September 5, 2006		12 p.m. – 1 p.m. Nassif Bldg, Room 3246A
	September 12, 2006		12 p.m. – 1 p.m. Nassif Bldg, Room 4236

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Interested in learning basic American Sign Language? This eight-part series is designed for people with little to no experience with signing. For those who are more experienced with signing, this series can serve as a refresher. This interactive course will entail learning the history of sign language and deaf culture, vocabulary, grammar and syntax, and work-related signs. The use of space, facial/body expressions, gestures, and sign classifiers will be incorporated into each class.

The series will be taught by Kevin Ball, supervisory IT specialist in the NHTSA Office of the CIO and a graduate of Gallaudet University.

PLEASE NOTE: In training workshop rooms, it is often too cold for some and too warm for others; therefore, we recommend that you wear clothing in layers so that you can adjust to the temperature in the room.

Questions about this notice may be directed to Ivonne Rodriguez at x62605 or Nadra Milan-Dunbar at x62613.

DISABILITY IDENTIFICATION: If you have a disability and require special accommodations, please notify NHTSA OHR Training with your request no later than 72 hours prior to each event.

Please mark your calendar, bring your lunch, and plan to be engaged in an informative one-hour discussion about this most important topic.

AROUND THE REGION

And the Survey Says: Teens participate in safety belt use surveys across Washington State

Kirk Gillett,
Pacific Northwest Region

Prior to the 2006 May Mobilization for *Click It or Ticket*, the Washington Traffic Safety Commission (WTSC) conducted a series of intercept surveys across Washington State at local high schools in Yakima County, Spokane County, King County, and Whatcom County. The 663 teens who participated in the surveys ranged in from 15 to 18 years old; 57 percent were male and 42 percent were female.

Teens were asked a series of 25 questions about safe driving issues. One such question was, "Do you wear your safety belt?" Ninety-eight percent responded "yes." Of those who said "yes," 78 percent said that they wore their safety belts "all the time, religiously," while 21 percent wore their safety belts "most of the time," leaving 1 percent who said they wore their safety belts "occasionally." Of the 663 students surveyed,



NHTSA's Kirk Gillett, regional program manager for Washington, Pacific Northwest Region, took a turn conducting market research as part of a traffic safety survey of 100 teens conducted May 16, 2006. Here, Kirk is conducting an intercept survey with reporter Dean Wong of the Ballard News Tribune.

only 19 said they didn't wear a safety belt at all or only wore it occasionally.

Ballard High School in Seattle was one of seven, 100-student survey sites conducted throughout the State to bring media attention to the May Mobilization effort. The



Surveyors conducting surveys of teens at Ballard High School in King County. One in four teenagers surveyed in the Seattle area said they send text messages on their cell phones while they drive, and 70 percent of respondents said they often talk on the cell phone while driving.

surveys were successful and provided the WTSC with useful information about teens and their thoughts on traffic safety. In addition, more than 50 media outlets wrote about or televised the mobilization effort as a result of the teen surveys.★

A Meeting of the Minds

DOT Modes and Southeastern States Collaborate on Strategic Highway Safety Plans

**Miguel Torres and
Belinda M. Jackson**

With the passage of SAFETEA-LU (Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act - A Legacy for Users), Congress challenged the States by calling for the development of comprehensive Strategic Highway Safety Plans (SHSP) aimed at reducing deaths and injuries associated with traffic crashes. The goal: move the numbers. The strategy: bring the four components of safety (enforcement, engineering, education, and EMS) together in each State to imple-

ment the comprehensive, strategic plans.

In mid-June, NHTSA's Southeast Region Office, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the Federal Motor Carrier Administration hosted a one-day conference with State and DOT Safety Offices, to discuss joint efforts in developing State strategic highway safety plans.



The Region IV Safety Summit, held at the Marriot Marquis Hotel in Atlanta, provided
Continued on 7

Meeting of the Minds

continued from 6

a forum for State and Federal partners to discuss each State's progress in developing strategic plans as well as an opportunity to share new ideas on ways to reduce motor vehicle crash-related injuries and deaths. The 60 participants included representatives from each of the Region IV States (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee).

Terry Schiavone, administrator for the NHTSA Southeast Region, presented a representative case study of a successful SHSP effort in Minnesota that resulted in a remarkable 13.4-percent reduction in traf-

The goal:
move the
numbers.

fic fatalities between 2003 and 2004, which was sustained in 2005. Minnesota's success validates the value of the strategic approach to planning as outlined in SAFETEA-LU.

Throughout the day, leadership from each mode shared its perspectives on safety

planning, crash statistics, collaboration with law enforcement and/or other stakeholders, and public support, and expressed the need to continue dialogue and information-sharing on strategic plans.

In view of the success of this first summit, the Southeast regional directors will look for opportunities to host additional regional safety summits in the future.★

Torres is a Senior Field Services Advisor for FHWA Director of Field Services South. He served as a co-facilitator and recorder for the meeting. Jackson is a Regional Program Manager for NHTSA's Southeast Region.

INS AND OUTS

Welcome Aboard

Organization	Name	Position	Location
NPO-131	Roth, Jonathan R.	Mathematician	Washington, D.C.
NPO-530	Larkins, Tarziah S.	Multimedia Specialist	Washington, D.C.
NTI-290	Wilson, Ingrid T.	Secretary (OA)	San Francisco, CA
NTI-200	Fitten, Timothy E., II	Program Analyst	Washington, D.C.
NTI-131	Percer, Jennifer M.	Research Psychologist	Washington, D.C.
NPO-401	Randazzo, Mark S.	IT Specialist	Washington, D.C.
NTI-120	Yearry, Jessica E.	Office Automation Clerk	Washington, D.C.
NOA-010	Nason, Nicole R.	Administrator	Washington, D.C.
NPO-012	Moore, Maria C.	Human Resource Specialist	Washington, D.C.
NTI-131	Colcombe, Angela M.	Research Psychologist	Washington, D.C.
NVS-210	Lessard, Scott D.	Safety Defects Assistant	Washington, D.C.

Fair Winds

Retirements

Organization	Name	Date
NPO-210	Branick, Williams G.	5/3/2006
NPO-210	Duffy, Francis X.	5/3/2006
NPO-530	Cummings, Catha P.	5/3/2006
NTI-132	Onder, James J.	6/9/2006



NHTSA Now is an official publication of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Office of Communications and Consumer Information.

Patricia Oladeinde, Editor

Contributors: Miguel Torres, FHWA South Region; Belinda M. Jackson, Southeast Region; Kirk Gillett, Pacific Northwest Region

If you would like to submit articles or photographs, please email them to patricia.oladeinde@dot.gov or mail them to:

400 7th Street SW., Suite 5236
Washington, DC 20590.