

2023

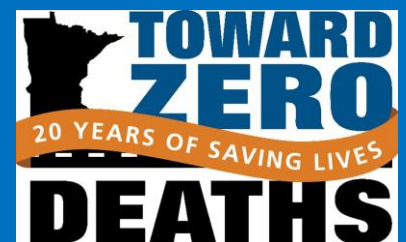
NORTHWEST TOWARD ZERO DEATHS REGION ANNUAL REPORT



Sue Johnson

MnDOT

10/25/2023



Northwest Region Annual Report

Mission

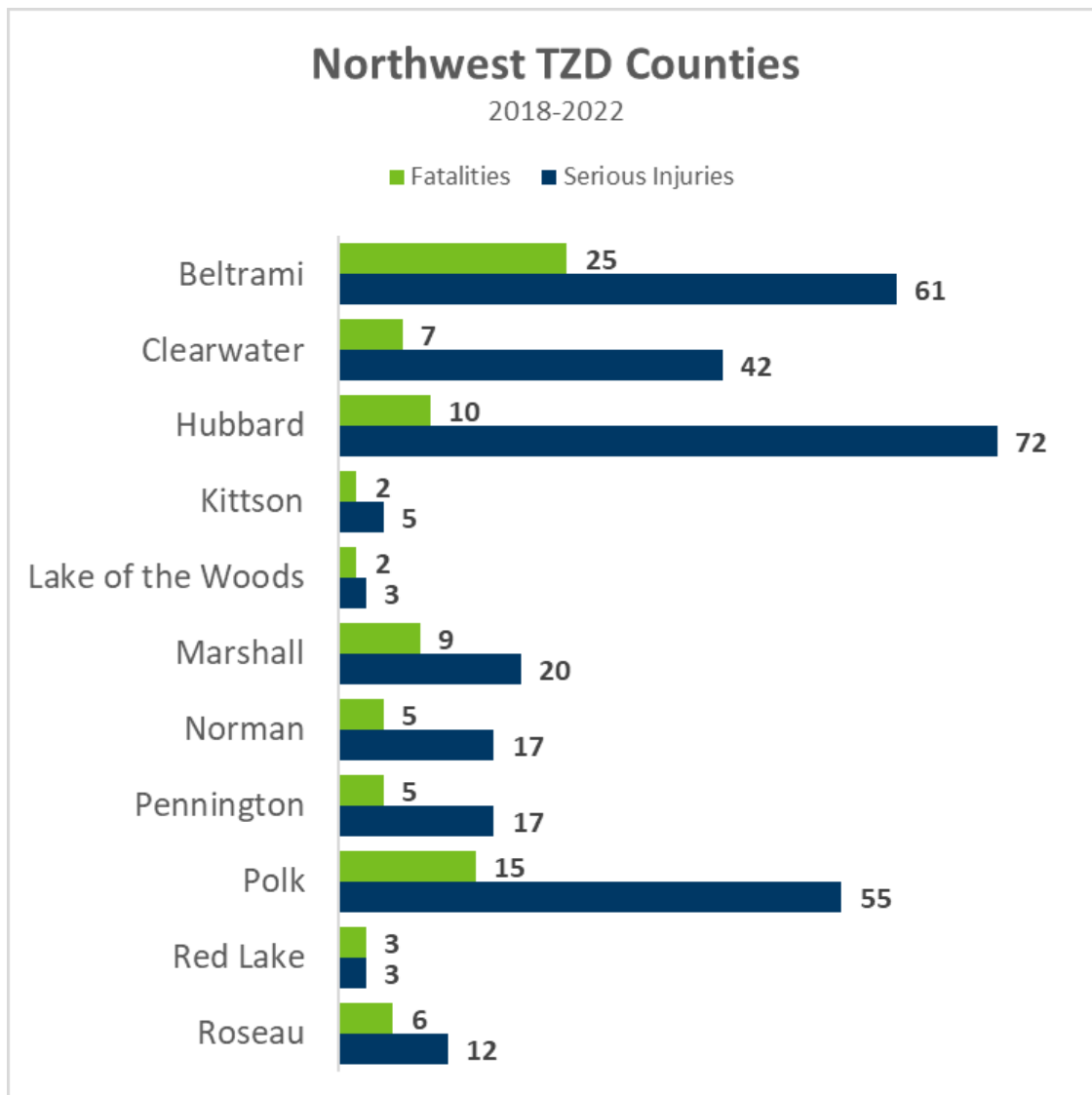
To move northwest Minnesota toward zero deaths on our roads, using education, enforcement, engineering, and emergency medical and trauma services.

We talk about the 4 E's and with the 5th E being Everyone. I would like to see us start using a 6th E which is Equity.

Background Regional Death Rates

Northwest Region

- There were nine traffic-related fatalities in 2022.
- We had four counties that had zero fatalities in 2022.
- Five-year average was 14.
- 2022 serious injuries were 67. 2021 serious injuries were 57.
- The five-year average was 61 serious injuries.



Northwest TZD Region

2018 to 2022 (preliminary 04/14/23) fatal and serious injury crashes on all Minnesota public roads

Goal 1: Reduce TZD Fatality and Serious Injuries

To continuously decrease traffic related fatalities and serious injuries in Northwest Minnesota from the past five year average of 18 fatalities and 61 serious injuries (2018-2022).

Five Year Averages: Northwest TZD Region

	Metric	Impaired	Speed	Distraction	Unbelted	Total
CRASHES	K Crashes	6	6	2	5	16
	A Crashes	17	13	8	9	48
	K+A Crashes	23	19	10	14	65
INJURIES	Fatalities	6	6	2	5	18
	A Injuires	20	17	11	12	61
	K+A Injuries	26	23	13	16	79

2022 Outcomes: Northwest TZD Region

	Metric	Impaired	Speed	Distraction	Unbelted	Total
CRASHES	K Crashes	4	3	0	3	8
	A Crashes	20	16	9	6	53
	K+A Crashes	24	19	9	9	61
INJURIES	Fatalities	4	3	0	3	9
	A Injuires	25	20	10	7	67
	K+A Injuries	29	23	10	10	76

Baseline Comparison

Metric	Total Count		Average	Avg. Annual Percent Change		
	2022	2018-2022	5-year Avg.	Region	Statewide	
CRASHES	K Crashes	8	82	16	-12.5%	+7.0%
	A Crashes	53	241	48	+6.1%	+5.2%
	K+A Crashes	61	323	65	+2.1%	+5.6%
INJURIES	Fatalities	9	89	18	-13.3%	+6.3%
	A Injuires	67	307	61	+4.4%	+4.2%
	K+A Injuries	76	396	79	+1.0%	+4.6%

Northwest TZD Region

2018 to 2022 (preliminary 04/18/23) fatal and serious injury crashes on all Minnesota public roads

General Traffic Safety Trends

	Metric	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	5-Year Trend
CRASHES	K Crashes	16	20	17	21	8	Decreasing
	A Crashes	39	50	50	49	53	Increasing*
	K+A Crashes	55	70	67	70	61	Increasing
FATALITIES	Total	18	23	17	22	9	Decreasing
	Pedestrian	0	1	1	4	0	Increasing
	Bicyclist	0	0	0	0	0	N/A
	Motorcyclist	1	2	3	1	1	Decreasing
	Unbelted	4	8	4	5	3	Decreasing
A INJURIES	Total	49	69	65	57	67	Increasing
	Pedestrian	5	2	2	2	4	Decreasing
	Bicyclist	0	2	3	2	0	No Change
	Motorcyclist	5	5	7	11	7	Increasing
	Unbelted	12	18	10	11	7	Decreasing

Fatal and Serious Injury Crashes by Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) Focus Areas

NOTE: number of crashes not people killed or seriously injured

	SHSP Focus Area	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	5-Year Trend
BEHAVIOR	Impairment	15	25	28	22	24	Increasing
	Speed	16	24	18	19	19	Increasing
	Unbelted	13	22	13	15	9	Decreasing
	Inattention	6	11	12	12	9	Increasing
MODE	Comm. Vehicle	10	8	6	4	5	Decreasing*
	Motorcycle	6	6	10	9	8	Increasing
	Pedestrian	5	3	3	6	4	Increasing
	Bicyclist	0	2	3	2	0	No Change
DRIVER	Unlicensed	11	18	12	18	18	Increasing
	Younger Driver	8	14	16	11	12	Increasing
	Older Driver	12	8	12	15	12	Increasing
ROADWAY	Intersection	26	25	28	19	24	Decreasing
	Run-off-Road	29	29	31	32	23	Decreasing
	Head-on	4	15	8	8	5	Decreasing
	Train	0	0	0	0	1	Increasing*
	Work Zone	0	1	1	0	0	Decreasing

* A 5-Year Trend with an asterisk implies a significant change ($\alpha=0.10$); trends without an asterisk do not have enough data to rule out zero change (i.e. no change).

2023 Northwest Seat Belt Survey

The 2023 observed seat belt usage in the Northwest Region was lower than in 2022. However, the recent survey added 13 sites and observed 78% more occupants resulting in a more precise estimate (i.e., a lower overall relative error).

Table 1: Observed Seat Belt Use across Northwest TZD Region

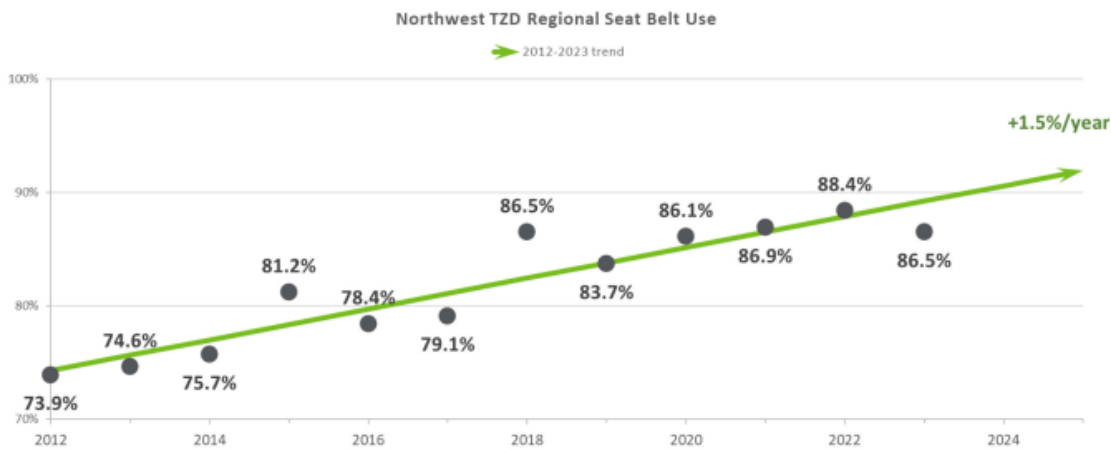
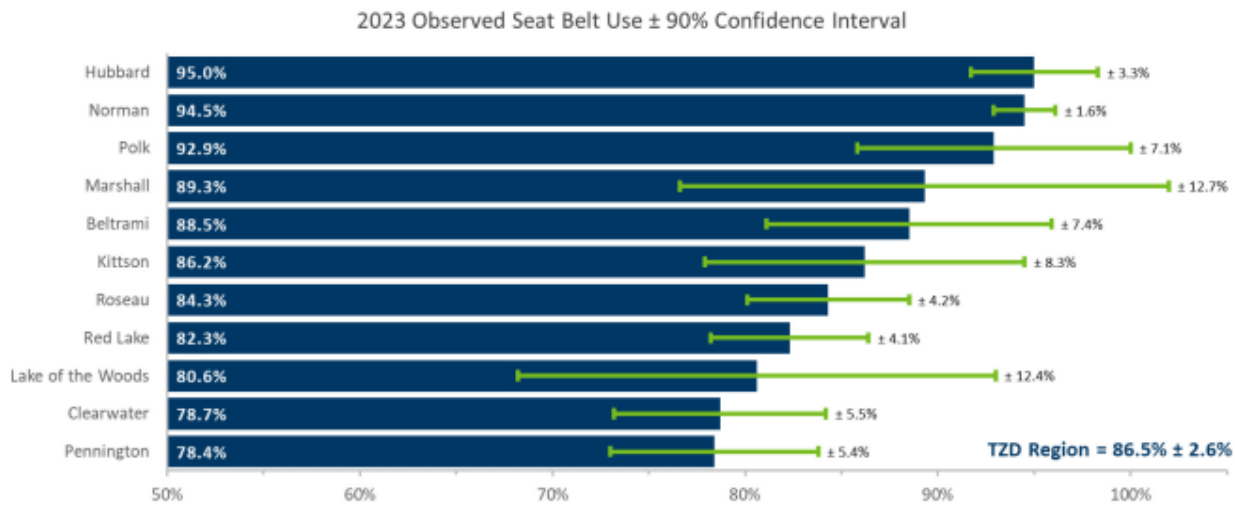
Year	Seat Belt Use Rate, %	Relative Error, %	Weighted Occupants
2023 Survey (n = 52)	86.5 ± 2.6	1.9	3,044
2022 Survey (n = 36)	88.4 ± 3.3	2.2	1,706

NOTE: Seat belt use reported with a 90% confidence band.

Results by County

Based on observed seat belt use and crash outcomes, six counties have the highest potential for additional seat belt programming: Clearwater, Hubbard, Lake of the Woods, Norman, Pennington, and Red Lake.

Figure 1: Observed Seat Belt Use by County



Regional Successes

- Lead Younger Driver State Action Team and implemented the Impact Teen Drivers program statewide. The education modules include traffic safety from a positive culture perspective and empowers younger drivers and passengers to make good decisions every time they drive or ride in a car. We are fortunate to partner with the Minnesota State Patrol on this initiative as enforcement is key to traffic safety success.
- Presented to three schools in 2023 and was well received! Three more are scheduled for the end of October, 2023.



- Completed quarterly reports and annual report for the NW region.
- 2023 Regional Workshop was on April 25, 2023. It was great to have an in-person workshop! We had 77 attendees and eight exhibitors. The most attended conference ever!
- Engaging younger drivers throughout the region is always energizing! We are always looking for additional ways to empower and impact them!
 - Thief River Falls Lincoln High School partnered with Goodridge High School for the 2023 TTZD Conference on April 26, 2023. The main focus was to bring traffic safety and mental health education to our youth and community.
 - Approximately 180 students and leaders attended. Five area schools participated.
 - The TTZD Conference is a younger driver traffic safety conference, but it also involves all the E's and is also a venue for a career expo. The 18 breakout sessions are presenters from engineering, EMS, enforcement, and education. The students are encouraged to ask whatever questions they have pertaining to these professions. This is the perfect opportunity for students to learn more about all the E's and what career opportunities are out there for them.
 - TTZD has social media posts, Tik Tok videos, and other social media and messaging that they do on a regular basis that focuses on traffic safety.

Northwest Steering Committee

The Northwest TZD steering committee held three meetings this past year. We opted for an “in-person” only meeting in March and was very well attended with 29 attendees. We continue to have roundtable discussions about the region and ask ourselves “who is not at the table and should be?”, “how do we engage more of our political, education, and other leaders in our region.

2023 NW Regional Workshop

This past year, the NW region held their workshop on April 25, 2023. We had the highest attendance ever with a whopping 77 attendees and eight vendor booths. We had phenomenal speakers, good discussions, and overall, a successful workshop. Agenda and pictures can be found later in the report.

Regional Seat Belt Efforts

Seat belt use has been a consistent concern in the Northwest region. We continue to bring awareness through education, media, enforcement, and community engagement and events. We utilize the seat belt convincer, seat belt persuader, and driving simulator to educate all ages on the importance of seat belt use. TZD and MnDOT met with LOW County Commissioners at their board meeting at the high school where we shared TZD county and regional data and stressed the importance of wearing seat belts.

Regional Distracted Driving Efforts

We have been utilizing our driving simulator, hands-free and buckle-up stencils, Distract a Match, and TZD banners through outreach events within our communities. We continue to do messaging throughout the communities via digital boards, radio, table tents, enforcement waves, and social media.

Regional Impaired Efforts

The TZD equipment has been instrumental in helping with education on impaired driving and has provided an opportunity to build relationships with the regional traffic safety partners. The driving simulators have impaired driving simulation and has been used in several driver’s education classes. Along with the bean bag toss, Jenga, Fatal Vision, Drowsy Goggles, Pedal Karts, and other hand/eye coordination activities to effectively demonstrate how your driving is affected by being impaired. We hope to continue to utilize this equipment to educate and inform that if you feel impaired you drive impaired.

Regional Speed Efforts

Those speed related deaths have decreased since last year, speed continues to be an issue within our region and entire state. In all our education efforts, we continue to stress SLOW DOWN and focus on driving. Extra enforcement, media pleas and messaging and digital boards are a few of the major initiatives to decrease driver behavior.

Other Efforts

Continue to explore all avenues on how to interject TZD into each county in the NW region. We have built a relationship with the NW Regional Development Center and are partnering to bring TZD to counties without a coalition. They are excited to head up the coalition and would like to apply for a Safe Roads Grant in 2024.

I continue to look for creative ways to gain some presence in each county.

- Teen TZD – Younger Driver
 - With the statewide implementation of the Impact Teen Drivers program, we hope to bring these educational modules to all the schools in the NW region.
 - I have started a conversation with Leech Lake/Cass Lake High School principal on initiating a Teen TZD in their school.
 - Continue to look for opportunities to work with colleges on younger driver safe driving initiatives.

- Continue to work with SRTS grantees in the Northwest area to partner on bike and pedestrian safety efforts, specifically their Safety Around the School initiative.
- Continue to work with BikeMN / TRF on bicycle safe community initiatives and efforts.
- Continue to work with county commissioner boards to share the TZD message, data, and to encourage TZD efforts in their county.
- Trainings – Attended numerous webinars and virtual presentations regarding seat belt usage, speed, distraction, Impaired, safe systems, tribal communities, diversity and equity, and mental health. These are some of the highlights of some of the training webinars that I recently attended:
 - 2023 Lifesavers National Conference on Highway Safety Priorities in Seattle, WA on April 2-4, 2023.
 - Teen TZD Conference – April 26, 2023
 - Attended other Regional TZD Workshops to support and learn from the other TZD coordinators.
 - State Action Team planning – Continue to build and enhance the Teen TZD State Action team along with Scot Edgeworth and Kat Vue. A huge win for the State Action Team is the implementation of the Impact Teen Drivers program.
- Building Relationships both internally and externally by:
 - Participated in local and state meetings regarding all means of road safety and assist by providing educational resources.
 - Attended and participate in TZD regional and leadership meetings, TZD stakeholder Hotdish meetings, TZD statewide calls, D2 leadership calls, WESTAC meetings, and county TZD coalition meetings.
 - Participate in the Drug-Free Coalition meetings.
 - Participate in the NW Traffic Advisory Council meetings.
 - Participated in BikeMN Bicycle Friendly Community meetings.
 - Participate and attend the Western Regional Trauma Advisory (WESTAC) committee.
 - Participate and attend the Safe Kids Pedestrian and Wheeled Sports committee.
 - Continue to participate in traffic meetings with Red Lake and Leech Lake Tribal communities.
 - Provided traffic safety educational and marketing materials to Leech Lake Justice Center.

Gaps and Challenges

- Continue to work on recruiting all the E's from every county on the Northwest Steering Committee.
- Getting the buy-in from communities. They are already dealing with staffing issues, so how do we market ourselves to encourage them to partner and give their time, talents, and efforts?
- Marketing and messaging to be quick, fun, eye-catching, and current event specific. Such as concerts in town, Vikings games, etc. Can there be a library of messaging to be pushed out within a 24-hour timeframe rather than weeks or months.
- The continual acknowledgement and updating of positions throughout the region and their contact information.
- Continue to recruit traffic safety partners in counties and communities that TZD does not have a presence.
- Support from political partners such as county commissioners, state

Media and Outreach Events

Without any major media platforms in the Northwest, we continue to share our message through radio interviews, local newspapers, changeable message boards, table tents, and social media. I have noted those previously above and here are a few more below.

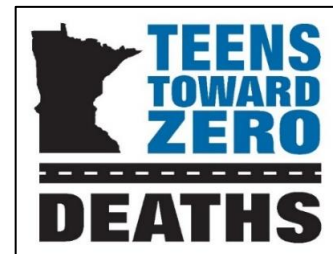
2023 Teen TZD Conference



On 5-25-23, I presented Teen TZD seniors with a certificate of excellence for all the work they have done to promote TTZD and the TZD Conference that was held on April 26, 2023.



Several students from Lincoln High School were recognized for their outstanding work with Teens Toward Zero Deaths. Those students included Booklyn Bakke, Ali Yuska, Natalie Novak, Kendal Rantanen, and Abigayle Bieganeck. The students were recognized for their hard work at the Lincoln High School Recognition Assembly on May 25.



2023 NW Regional TZD Workshop





**Northwest Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths
Regional Workshop
Legacy Event Center
16458 160th Ave. NE, Thief River Falls
April 25, 2023
8:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.**

Agenda

- 8:30 a.m. Registration and Continental Breakfast**
- 9 a.m. Welcome to 20th Anniversary of TZD!**
J.T. Anderson, district engineer, MnDOT District 2, and northwest Minnesota TZD regional co-chair and Sue Johnson, northwest Minnesota TZD regional coordinator
- 9:15 a.m. Traffic Safety Culture: Minnesota updates & What are other states doing?**
Kristine Hernandez, statewide TZD program coordinator, MnDOT Office of Traffic Engineering
- 9:30 a.m. Crash Data Presentation: What's the data telling us?**
Derek Leuer, State Traffic Safety Engineer, MnDOT Office of Traffic Engineering
Recent trends in traffic fatalities and serious injuries statewide are concerning. Are there certain crash types that have contributed to this rise? Were the past years a brief spike or are we seeing a new trajectory? Review regional crash trends with an eye towards the Strategic Highway Safety Plan and potential opportunities for future strategies.
- 9:45 a.m. Minnesota Edibles and Traffic Safety**
Sgt. Aaron Bommersbach, DRE coordinator, Minnesota State Patrol
With the potential legalization of cannabis, what are the facts and myths? This Cannabis 101 session will provide education on cannabis and how it affects traffic safety.
- 10:45 a.m. Break – Exhibits & Refreshments**
- 11:00 a.m. School Bus Stop Arm Camera Grant Program**
Rahya Geisler, program coordinator, Dept. of Public Safety Office of Traffic Safety
Lt. Brian Reu, District 4700, state director of Pupil Transportation
Local law enforcement representative (TBD)
School bus stop arm cameras have been installed in school buses across the region to keep students safe as they get on and off them. The cameras provided through the project help schools and law enforcement find the violators and hold them accountable. Hear how the program works, along with the successes and challenges.
- 11:30 p.m. Aftermath of a DWI Crash: An Officer's Comeback Story**
Samantha Strandberg, patrol officer, Lakeville Police Department
When Officer Samantha Strandberg signed on for her shift on July 31, 2021, her plan was to aggressively seek out impaired drivers as she had done on so many shifts in the city of Lakeville. Unfortunately, it was the impaired driver who found her first – by crashing into her patrol car and sending her to the hospital as a result of this serious injury crash. Hear about Officer Strandberg's story of recovery and her long journey back to full duty as a police officer – including the lasting impact of her traumatic brain injury and how it's impacted both her personal and professional life.

12 p.m. **Lunch, Exhibits, & Networking**

12:45 p.m. **Focusing on What Matters**

Amber Peterson, managing partner, Peterson & Perme Associates

Quite often, people feel overly impacted by their environment and helpless to change what's going on in their own mind. Yet, our mindset (attitude and beliefs) is greatly impacted by what we choose to focus on. Who do we surround ourselves with? What is important that we should focus our energy? What boundaries should we hold around our values? This session will guide participants to examine what they are focusing on in their lives, decide if it's what they truly want, and empower them to make the changes they see they need to live a more fulfilled and satisfied life.

1:45 p.m.

What's our goal for 2023 and beyond?

Lt. Brad Norland, Minnesota State Patrol, District 3200

We have a goal of no more than 225 fatalities by 2025 and eventually zero fatalities.

- What can you do in your communities to get to zero?
- What is working, what isn't?
- What do you see as opportunities?
- What do you see as challenges?

2:45 p.m.

Wrap up

Capt. Mike Wedlin, Minnesota State Patrol, District 3200 and northwest Minnesota TZD regional co-chair; Lt. Brad Norland, Minnesota State Patrol, District 3200

3 p.m.

Adjourn

Please take time throughout the day to visit the traffic-safety exhibit tables for reference materials and ideas to implement in your community.

- **Bemidji State/NTC All Campus Health Fair on October 5, 2022.** Living Well Working Well Committee healthyliving@bemidjistate.edu. More than a few hundred students attended the event and learned about traffic safety.



- **Beltrami County's** quarterly traffic safety table tents that are distributed throughout the businesses in the Bemidji and surrounding area. They also put messages on the Bemidji digital billboard regarding traffic messaging.



- **Stephen/Argyle High School's** Ag Leadership Class held their first "Awareness Week" on November 14-18, 2022 which focused on Traffic Safety. They had various activities scheduled for the whole week. Lt Brad Norland presented "Life Without Logan" educational video to them at the end of the week. Toward Zero Deaths provided posters, pledge cards, decals, and many other educational materials.

The Ag Leadership class also enjoyed creating materials for the week to hang up throughout the school as well as learn about safe driving / TZD themselves. They put hours and hours into designing this week and they all highly enjoyed making an impact on their peers. Out of the 115 students that participated in the anonymous quiz the class made, we were able to get an evaluation on student driving behavior in our school.



• **BSU Anglers Learn from Local Pros at Ice Fishing Seminar Jan. 18**

Bemidji State University’s angling aficionados were schooled by local fishing experts, law enforcement and search and rescue agencies at an ice fishing seminar at BSU’s Lakeside Food Court on January 18. Local fishing experts Dick Beardsley, Bryan Sathre, Bob Strand and Will Pappenfus taught attendees how to catch more fish on Lake Bemidji and other Bemidji-area lakes during hourly seminars. Students also learned ice safety, fishing regulations, common fishing equipment and ways to reduce their impact on wildlife and the natural environment while in the outdoors.

The event was sponsored by Clam Outdoors, Strikemaster, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Toward Zero Deaths, Northwoods Bait & Tackle and BSU’s Outdoor Program Center, Sustainability Office, Student Center for Health & Counseling and the Lifestyle Educators Student Organization.



Ice Fishing 101: Safety & Success

WEDNESDAY, JAN 18 from 11-2:30 PM
 SCANDINAVIAN ROOM LOWER LAKESIDE FOOD COURT
 BEMIDJI STATE UNIVERSITY



Giveaways Include:

- Clam Pro Tackle
- Clam decals
- Lead Free Jigs

FISHING PRO'S DEMONSTRATION

11 AM Fishing Lake Bemidji for walleyes, perch, and tullibeas with Dick Beardsley
12 PM Fishing the North Country with Bryan-Beef Sathre
1 PM Burbot Fishing Techniques - with Bob Strand
2 PM Using Electronics to Target Panfish - with Will Pappenfus

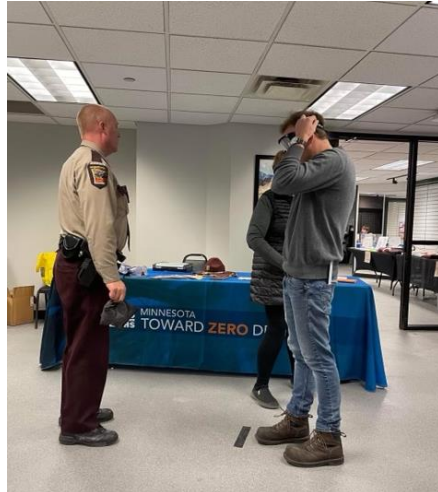
Sponsors: Clam Outdoors, Strikemaster, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
 Towards Zero Death, Northwoods Bait

If you need an accommodation for this event, please contact Accessibility Services office at (218) 755-3865. If an interpreter is needed, two weeks notice is required. A member of the college and employees of Minnesota State, Bemidji State University is an affirmative action, equal opportunity educator and employer.

- **Textron/Arctic Cat Corporation** Health & Wellness event was held on November 17, 2022 with 27 community vendors representing all areas of good health which included: medical, chiropractic, rehab, financial, exercise, home, traffic safety, mind, EMS, city police, state patrol, nutrition, and all areas of health of your mind, body, and soul.

Textron employees over 800 employees in Thief River Falls and approximately 33,000 worldwide. The impaired goggles were the big attraction for the employees as they tried to dunk the bean bags while wearing the goggles. The goggles created visual impairment with the level of goggles ranging from just under the legal limit of BAC .07 (.08 is legal limit) to BAC of .25 which would be over three times the legal limit.



- **Digi-Key Corporation** held their Health and Safety Event on June 14, 2023. Over 1,000 employees scanned their badges as they walked through the event.



- **Central Boiler** held their Health & Safety event on September 19 & 20, 2023



- Continue building relationships with Drug-Free Community grantees to enhance teen safety and community safe roads education and involvement:
 - Lake of the Woods (I am on their DFC coalition)
 - Hubbard (I am on their DFC coalition)
 - Roseau (I will keep trying to get in the door somewhere in Roseau County)
- TZD Coalitions in the regions:
 - Beltrami (unfunded)
 - Hubbard (unfunded)
 - Pennington County (funded)
 - Polk (unfunded)

Media and Community Events

- Participated in several county fairs, businesses Health and Wellness events, schools, community events, and other outreach events using TZD equipment to educate community on traffic safety.
- National Night Out in Beltrami County, East Grand Forks Showcase, Pennington County, and Lake of the Woods utilized TZD equipment. These events reached thousands of people in the NW region.
- NewFest on September 9, 2023 in Marshall County.



- **Blackduck and Bemidji schools** participated in traffic safety messaging contests. The focus was seat belts and distracted. Some of the winners are below.

Don't Drink and Drive, and You'll Stay Alive!



- **Walk and Bike to School events**

- October 5, 2022 – Bike to school day enticed many young bikers to ride to school. 😊
- May 4, 2023 was a BEAUTIFUL morning for the Bike to School event! Three schools attended in the TRF School District. The city police department helped with the traffic and we had over 60 kids and several volunteers take part in the event. We handed out reflective wrist bracelets and Snap-On lights for their bikes and backpacks.
- Minnesota Winter Walk to School Day was February 1, 2023. The idea is to go for a walk outdoors for at least 15 minutes and don't let the weather discourage you.
- In 2023, participated in many Safety Around the School education which focused on bus, car, pedestrian, and bike safety.



- Bike TRF

- There were pub crawls and events throughout the year. They also put up a few bicycle fix-it stations around TRF. They recently applied for a Bike Friendly Community status and are waiting to hear back if they have been accepted. There were over 40 signed up for the Rosewood Gramble. Some as far as 350+ miles away. The ride consisted of a 8, 16 , 32, and 64-mile route.
- Bike TRF also participated in the Winterfest 2023 on February 11, 2023. There were several bikers that rode bike in the winter weather that took them throughout the town, on the river, and a few other paths. Pictures are below in the media section.



- Continue to send weekly traffic safety messaging to a defined list of traffic safety partners. Messages include Monday Message, National Traffic Safety weeks, enforcement calendar promotions, and other traffic safety campaigns statewide and nationally.
- Annual bike education and exchange and give-a-way on June 7 & 8, 2023.



- Child Passenger Safety

Car Seat Checkup Event

4 out of 5 car seats are used incorrectly! Don't let yours be one of them!

Thursday, June 16, 2023 | 3:00—6:00 PM

By Appointment—Call 701.780.1489

Beltrami County Fairgrounds Bemidji

Have your car seat questions answered by a professional

Get your car seat checked for recalls and proper fit

FREE event! Open to the public

SAFE KIDS GRAND FORKS | OFFICE OF TRAFFIC SAFETY | SANFORD HEALTH | TOWARD ZERO DEATHS

Car Seat Checkup Event

4 out of 5 car seats are used incorrectly! Don't let yours be one of them!

Thursday, June 29, 2023 | 3:30—5:30 PM

By Appointment—Call 701.780.1489

Beltrami County Fairgrounds Bemidji

Have your car seat questions answered by a professional

Get your car seat checked for recalls and proper fit

FREE event! Open to the public

SAFE KIDS GRAND FORKS | OFFICE OF TRAFFIC SAFETY | SANFORD HEALTH | TOWARD ZERO DEATHS

- Monthly Spin TZD newsletter. The TZD Monthly Spin is a two-page news publication that is sent out each month showcasing TZD community efforts, enforcement calendar, upcoming dates and events, and other TZD related information and material. The Monthly Spin has been sent out to our Safe Roads partners since April 2020. Below is the October Monthly Spin as an example. Sharing of this newsletter is encouraged!



TZD Monthly Spin NW Region September 2023

Impact Teen Drivers

Training for the Impact Teen Drivers program was held on August 24, 2023 at MnDOT Headquarters in St. Cloud. Toward Zero Deaths is partnering with Minnesota State Patrol to bring teen traffic safety education to our Minnesota schools. Impact Teen Drivers engages, educates, and empowers teens and their influencers to see that reckless and distracted driving crashes are 100% preventable.

This program develops, promotes and facilitates evidence-based education to stop the #1 killer of teens—car crashes! National Teen Driver Safety Week is October 15-21, 2023.



Walk, Bike, & Roll to School

Start the new school year with a healthy new habit!

Walk & Roll to school is scheduled for October 4, 2023. If you haven't started planning, it's not too late.

This is a great opportunity to encourage kids to walk, bike, or roll to school. Enjoy the beautiful weather and outdoors. It will be a fantastic start to their day!

THIEF RIVER FALLS BIKE TO SCHOOL DAY

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 4TH, 2023

Free bike safety items for Participants

Students who want to bike to Challenger, St. Bernards and Franklin Middle School can meet in the Greenwood Trail parking lot at 7:30 am. Bike Train volunteers will leave for school at 7:45 am. Please be safe and wear a helmet!

Walk and Bike To School Days at St. Bernards!

WEDNESDAYS: SEPT. 20TH, 27TH AND OCT. 4TH

Students can meet in the Greenwood Trail parking lot starting at 7:30 am. Volunteers will leave for school with the kids at 7:45 am. Please be safe and wear a bike helmet!

Parents: Feel free to walk with us!

Enforcement Update:

- Seat belts and child restraints: Sept 17-23, 2023
- DWI (optional): Oct. 27 -28; Oct. 31; 2023 - Halloween
- DWI (optional): Nov. 2 -4; 2023 - Deer hunting opener
- DWI: Nov. 22 -25; Nov. 30 -Dec. 2; 7 -9; 14 -16; 21-23; 28 -31, 2023

Weekly Traffic Fatality Update

- Through Sept 3rd, there were 260 traffic-related deaths on Minnesota roadways. This is 11% less than there were at this time last year (292).
- Motorcycle deaths are 16% less than at this time last year.
- Speed-related deaths are 20% less than last year.
- Unbelted deaths are 8% lower than last year.

Child Passenger Safety Week

During the week of September 17-23, 2023. Car crashes are the leading cause of death for children. Child passenger safety is a top goal of the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Decades of research and data tell us that the best way for parents and caregivers to keep children safe in vehicles is to correctly use the right car seats (rear-facing car seats, forward-facing car seats, or booster seats) or seat belts for their children's ages and sizes.



Mark your Calendars!

2023

- Child Passenger Safety Week—September 17-23, 2023
- TZD Traffic Safety Hotdish—October 17, 2023—Register @ [TZD Traffic Safety Hotdish | Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths \(minnesotatzd.org\)](https://www.tzd.org/minnesota-toward-zero-deaths)
- National Teen Driver Safety Week—October 15-21, 2023
- TZD State Conference - November 14-15, 2023 (T-W), Mayo Civic Center, Rochester

*If you have traffic safety events in your community, please send me pictures so I can showcase the great work you are doing!

Toward Zero Deaths Northwest Regional Newsletter

Sue Johnson, Towards Zero Deaths Coordinator – NW Region

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Thief River Falls, MN 56701

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State Toward Zero Deaths Conference 2022

The Lincoln High School Teen TZD and students from the Shreya R. Dixit Foundation presented at the concurrent session “Teens Teaming Up for Safer Minnesota Roads”. The interns from the Foundation shared their research on younger driver programs and the LHS students shared how taking a positive social norming approach to influence peers is effective rather than scare tactics. Though the students still want parents and teachers to be *real* with them, they are encouraged and empowered to make good decisions when driving or being a passenger.

- The TZD State Conference had 806 people attend. (728 in-person and 78 virtual).
- There were 40 sessions that were offered. Check out the teen session #25 evaluation below. The students were amazing and did such a fabulous job!
- The Teen Driver Safety session is #6 of the most requested topics!

October 13, 2022, 9:15am-10:30am

Session 25: Teens Teaming Up for Safer Minnesota Roads

Number of Evaluations Received: 8

Number of Attendees at Session: 58 In-person + 24 Virtual = 82 Total

Content	Average Response (out of 4.0)
Technical content of the session was appropriate and helpful	4.00

Presenter	Average Response (out of 4.0)
Presenter was knowledgeable and had a good presentation style	4.00

Zoom	Average Response (out of 4.0)
Zoom Webinar was user friendly and easy to navigate	4.00

Comments on this session:

- Wonderful to hear how teens are engaged and reaching out to their communities to keep communities safer! Great job!
- Wow! The kids were amazing! I am so excited to get programs started in my schools!
- The students and speakers were amazing!
- Teens were amazing! Programs were amazing.
- The teen presentations were my favorite of the entire conference! It was enlightening to hear about all of the great work being done by teens across the state and to gain their perspectives of how to engage youth at the local level. Would recommend having more teen presentations next year!
- Very impressive presentation by all of those involved. It was informative, engaging and inspiring.
- Very good presentation, specific information was so helpful!

In relation to this session, what topics should be covered during future conference sessions?

- Follow up on IMPACT and where that's headed. Follow up on video contest - how much it grew in Year 2. Follow up on Teens TZD in general





- More Pictures and Articles to Share

Teens want zero deaths

by David Hill
Editor

Students from throughout the region attended a Teens Toward Zero Deaths conference in Thief River Falls on Wednesday, April 26. The event, held at Evangelical Free Church in Thief River Falls, emphasized driving safety and what students can do to improve safety among students their own age and in their communities.

Toward Zero Deaths is the state's cornerstone traffic safety program. It employs an interdisciplinary approach to reducing traffic crashes. Its mission is to create a culture for which traffic fatalities are no longer acceptable. Teens Toward Zero Deaths is an off-shoot of the organization.

Students from Lincoln High School have played an integral role in the development of TTZD. Wednesday, local organizers said the purpose of the conference was to provide students with an opportunity to see career opportunities, encourage safe driving, provide coping mechanisms for mental health, and encourage students to share what they learned with students from their schools.

A number of other organizations, such as EMS Sanford, Air Med Sanford, Northland Community and Technical College, Violence

Intervention Project, Austin's Hope and Alluma, from throughout northwestern Minnesota, sent representatives to the conference to highlight services they provide.

Adult and student organizers of TZD often refer to



Lt. Brad Norland of the Minnesota State Patrol told students that he tells his officers in his District to focus on distracted driving, speeding, impaired driving and seat belts.

what they call the four Es. The Es stand for Education, Enforcement, Engineering and EMS. But there was one other they were talking about on Wednesday - Everyone, an effort to engage students and adults in the discussion.

When asked why TZD, Sue Johnson, regional coordinator, said because one fatality is one too many.

Lt. Brad Norland of the Minnesota State Patrol, described the emotional (Continued on Page 12)



Students want zero deaths/Continued

(Continued from Page 1) impact of having to share bad news of a fatality with loved ones. "It's life changing," he said.

He also shared that he tells his troopers to focus on distracted driving, speeding, impaired driving and seat belts. He told students that it's vitally important they take driving and safety precautions seriously.

Melora Bergee, Lincoln High School counselor, focused on a new component

to the conference - mental health.

Bergee shared a personal story about how she was driving her car and ended up in a ditch. She said her anger that day drove her actions.

Mental health, she said, has an influence on actions and reactions and is becoming an important focus of discussions.

Sgt. Jesse Grabow of the Minnesota State Patrol is a father of three boys, two of

whom are now teenagers. He's also a coach, and Scout leader. He said he understands busy and how the mind gets busy.

Grabow also discussed aggressive driving and played a video that displayed road rage. Most people are good human beings, he said, but sometimes the kindest, gentlest people can lose control. He encouraged students not to engage or lower themselves to the level of angry drivers. Doing

so can result in poor outcomes.

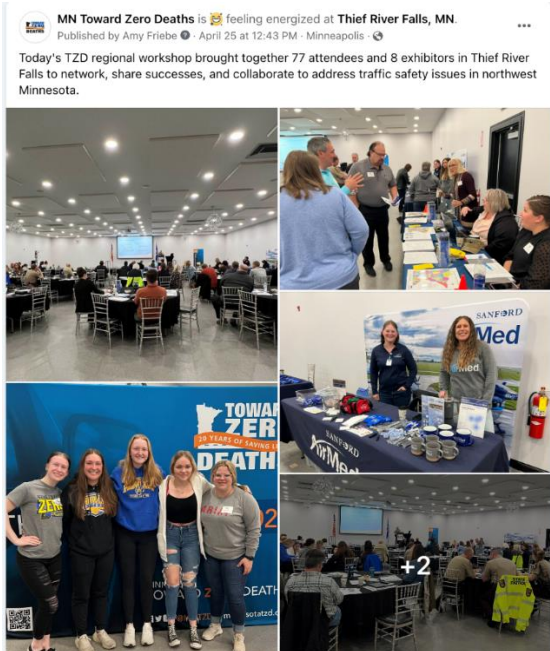
TTZD is becoming increasingly popular. Its popularity may be driven by the fact it is allowing students to make major contributions, encouraging recruitment, and allowing students to showcase their culture, values and vision. It may also be said that participating in TTZD has become fun and exciting for students. That was clearly on display Wednesday.



Sue Johnson, regional coordinator for Toward Zero Deaths, which covers 11 counties, visited with students attending a Teens Toward Zero Deaths conference, which was held Wednesday, April 26, at Evangelical Free Church in Thief River Falls. Johnson emphasized that even one death is too many, and expanded on the organizations four E's: Education, Enforcement, Engineering and EMS. She added a fifth E - Everyone. Johnson is flanked in the picture by Lt. Brad Norland of the Minnesota State Patrol, and Melora Bergee, counselor at Lincoln High School.



Minnesota State Patrol officer Lt. Jesse Grabow spoke with students about aggressive or angry driving. TTZD is a subgroup of Towards Zero Deaths, the state's cornerstone traffic safety program that employs an inter-disciplinary approach to reducing traffic crashes.



Mission:

To create a culture in which traffic fatalities and serious injuries are no longer acceptable through the integrated application of education, engineering, enforcement and emergency medical and trauma services. These efforts will be driven by data, best practices and research.

Values:

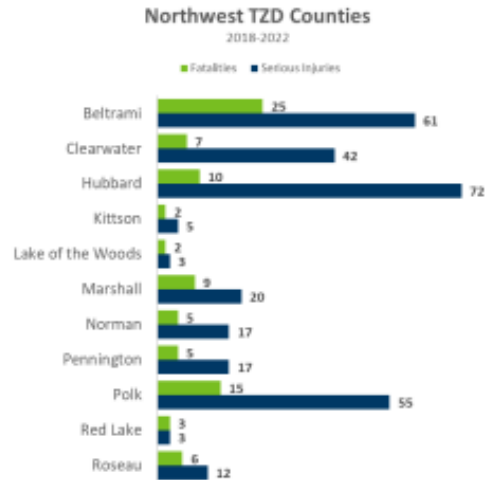
- ❖ Continuous improvements,
- ❖ Engage partners and
- ❖ Evidence-based approaches.



The Northwest Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) program began in 2008. The counties involved include: Beltrami, Clearwater, Hubbard, Kittson, Lake of the Woods, Marshall, Norman, Pennington, Polk, Red Lake, and Roseau.

The leading cause of deaths and severe injuries in northwest Minnesota include:

- ❖ **Alcohol,**
- ❖ **Distraction,**
- ❖ **Speed** and
- ❖ **Lack of Seatbelt** use.



The leading factors in crashes resulting in deaths and severe injuries include:

- ❖ **Careless/reckless driving**
- ❖ **Failure to keep in proper lane**

The Northwest Minnesota TZD program is led by a steering committee comprised of the "4 Es:"

- ❖ Enforcement
- ❖ Engineering
- ❖ Education
- ❖ Emergency Medical and Trauma Services.

Northwest Minnesota TZD Leadership Contacts

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Enforcement

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Northwest Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths Regional Strategic Plan

Mission

To move northwest Minnesota toward zero deaths on our roads, using education, enforcement, engineering, and emergency medical and trauma services.

Goal 1 – TZD Fatality and Serious Injury Goals

To continuously decrease traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries in northwest Minnesota from the past 5-year averages (2018-2022) of 21 fatalities and 64 serious injuries (preliminary). Note: New injury definitions were introduced in 2016 and may have contributed to a higher reported number of serious injuries.

Objectives

- A. To continuously increase regional seatbelt use rates.
 The statewide average was **92.4% in 2021**. The regional seat belt rate was **88.4% in 2022**. The last survey finding of 86.9%, was in 2021. **As a region our long term goal is to achieve 100% usage rate. Our short-term goal is to see continuous increase in the usage rate each year.**

- B. To examine the characteristics of the unbelted fatalities and serious injuries.
 Calculation of seat belt use in fatal and serious crashes is possible with existing data.

- C. To continuously decrease the following:

5 year averages 2018-2022 in NW Region

Contributing Factors:

<i>Average Annual number of:</i>	Impaired	Speed	Distraction	Total
Fatalities	6	6	2	14
Fatal Crashes	6	6	2	14
Severe Injuries	20	17	11	48
Severe Injury Crashes	17	13	8	38

Note: a crash may have more than one of the above listed or additional contributing factors



Northwest Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths Regional Strategic Plan

Total Northwestern Region – Baseline (Preliminary Data)

	Fatalities	Fatal Crashes	Severe Injuries	Severe Injury Crashes
2020 Totals	17	17	66	51
2016-2020	103	95	320	248

Region Goal 2 –TZD Partnership Goals

To continuously increase TZD awareness and partnerships across Northwest Minnesota for both the general public and traffic safety professionals

1. Establish the vision of NW TZD as a priority for all region, county, city (government agencies)
 - A. Engage local government involvement in TZD steering committee and workshops
 - B. Educate/promote traffic safety awareness of city/county officials
 - C. Promote City/county employee education/policies that facilitate the TZD vision

[Activities: Recruitment of city and county to attend TZD event, giving TZD presentations to boards/councils, mailings/connections to Network of Employers for Traffic Safety (NETS)]

2. Create and strengthen partnerships in the region
 - A. Engage stakeholders
 - B. Develop networking relationships
 - C. Recruit membership of the TZD partnership

(Activities: EMS Conference booth/presentation, regional workshop, web, calendar, statistics, workshop, orientation)

3. Promote and implement effective traffic safety initiatives in the region
 - A. Develop and distribute resource materials
 - B. Provide enforcement wave support in community
 - C. Promote evidence based countermeasures
 - D. Collect data and statistics within region
 - E. Implement best practices within region

(Activities: web, brochure, 1-pagers, presentations, news advisories, workshop, seatbelt observational survey and omnibus survey, media messaging and media events, news releases re: activities woven into existing messages, worksite education and policy development, parent component to drivers education, sober cab development, youth enforcement and education activities)

- **Interesting Young Driver Data**

Fatal and Serious Injury Motor Vehicle Crashes:

Younger Driver Crashes

On Minnesota roadways, there were 1,425 crashes involving a younger driver resulting in fatality or serious injury between 2018 and 2022. This is an average of 285 crashes per year and accounted for 16% of all the fatal and serious injury crashes in this period.

Younger Drivers are a Strategic Focus Area. The strategic focus areas are emerging priorities. They are rising in importance due to factors such as changes in prevalence, public/stakeholder perception, and demographics. Strategies and tactics are available in the 2020-2024 Strategic Highway Safety Plan. (www.mndot.gov/trafficeng/safety/shsp/index.html)

Focus Area definitions are published in the SHSP Technical Report. (www.mndot.gov/trafficeng/safety/shsp/technical-report.pdf)

Distribution of Younger Driver Crashes by Roadway Jurisdiction

	Rural		Urban		Total	
Trunk Highway	158	14%	113	10%	271	24%
County	248	22%	180	16%	428	38%
City	17	2%	281	25%	298	27%
Township	93	8%	0	0%	93	8%
Other	9	1%	12	1%	22	2%
Total	525	47%	586	53%	1,112	100%

Crashes involving a younger driver occur most frequently on the county system.

Rural is defined as a population less than 5,000, per Crash Facts; crashes that are not geolocated are included in total but not rural/urban columns.

Distribution of Younger Driver Crashes by TZD Region

	Rural		Urban		Total	
Northeast	40	63%	24	38%	64	100%
Northwest	43	88%	6	12%	49	100%
East Central	121	75%	41	25%	162	100%
West Central	53	85%	9	15%	62	100%
Southeast	72	65%	39	35%	111	100%
South Central	65	81%	15	19%	80	100%
Southwest	61	79%	16	21%	77	100%
Metro	70	14%	436	86%	507	100%
Total	525	47%	586	53%	1,112	100%

Crashes involving a younger driver occur most frequently in urban areas.

54% of these crashes occurred in Greater Minnesota.

Rural is defined as a population less than 5,000, per Crash Facts; crashes that are not geolocated are included in total but not rural/urban columns.

Light Conditions

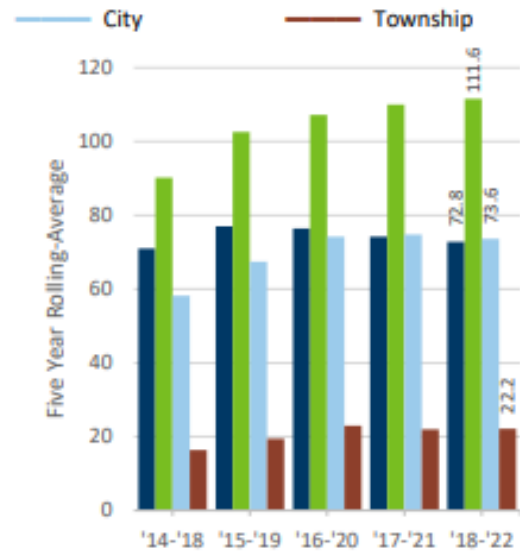
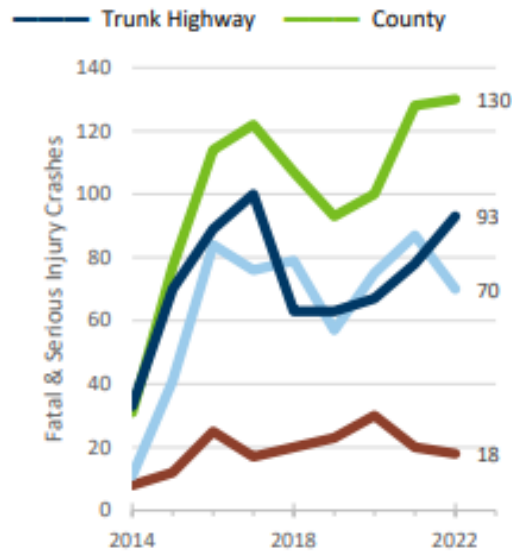
	Focus Area	All KA
Daylight	56.6%	58.9%
Sunrise/Sunset	6.2%	6.1%
Night/Dark	37.1%	34.5%
Street Lights On	20.6%	18.9%
Street Lights Off	0.9%	0.9%
Unknown/No Lighting	15.6%	14.8%
Other/Unknown	0.1%	0.5%

Roadway Conditions

	Focus Area	All KA
Dry	75.9%	78.1%
Wet	8.5%	9.3%
Snow/Slush/Ice	9.9%	8.9%
Other	5.7%	3.8%

Trends in Younger Driver Crashes

Statewide, the percent of all fatal and serious injury crashes involving a younger driver is increasing.



NOTE: In 2016, Minnesota modified the injury severity definitions to align with Federal Standards. This change resulted in an 80% increase in reported serious injury crashes.

Interaction with other Strategic Highway Safety Plan focus areas

Focus Area	Younger Driver Crashes		All K+A Crash Types		Difference		Rank*
Speed	427	30.0%	2,089	23.3%	+ 6.6%	↑	#1
Intersection	777	54.5%	4,397	49.1%	+ 5.4%	↑	#2
Head-on	200	14.0%	1,022	11.4%	+ 2.6%	↑	#3
Inattentive Driver	153	10.7%	747	8.3%	+ 2.4%	—	—
Unbelted Occupant	232	16.3%	1,335	14.9%	+ 1.4%	—	—
Work Zone	30	2.1%	199	2.2%	- 0.1%	—	—
Train	1	0.1%	20	0.2%	- 0.2%	—	—
Unlicensed Driver	268	18.8%	1,805	20.2%	- 1.3%	—	—
Bicyclist	31	2.2%	339	3.8%	- 1.6%	—	—
Single Veh. Run-off-road	408	28.6%	2,851	31.8%	- 3.2%	↓	—
Commercial Vehicle	76	5.3%	782	8.7%	- 3.4%	↓	—
Pedestrian	113	7.9%	1,049	11.7%	- 3.8%	↓	—
Impaired User	304	21.3%	2,520	28.1%	- 6.8%	↓	—
Motorcycle	138	9.7%	1,515	16.9%	- 7.2%	↓	—
Older Driver	155	10.9%	1,651	18.4%	- 7.6%	↓	—
Younger Driver	1,425	100.0%	1,425	15.9%	N/A		N/A

* Rankings shows areas with greatest overrepresentation compared to all fatal and serious injury crashes.

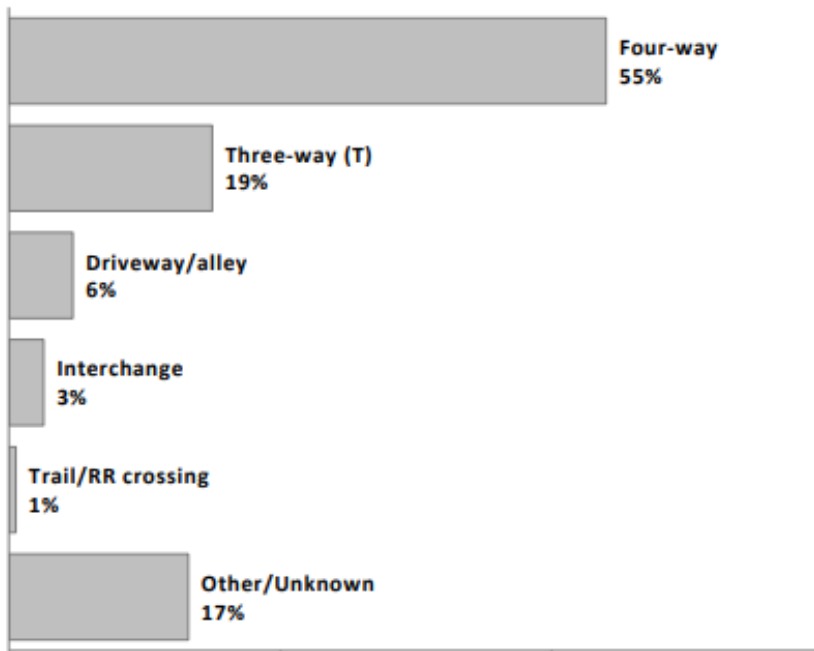
Compared to all fatal and serious injury crashes, the Speed, Intersection and Head-on focus areas are over-represented in crashes involving a younger driver. These focus areas may present unique challenges and opportunities for reducing Younger Driver Crashes in Minnesota.

Seasonality of Younger Driver Crashes

	3 AM to 6 AM	6 AM to 9 AM	9 AM to 12 PM	12 PM to 3 PM	3 PM to 6 PM	6 PM to 9 PM	9 PM to 12 AM	12 AM to 3 AM	Σ
January	0.1%	0.5%	0.5%	0.6%	0.8%	1.0%	0.7%	0.2%	4%
February	0.2%	0.8%	0.6%	0.8%	0.8%	0.9%	0.8%	0.7%	6%
March	0.3%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	1.4%	0.3%	1.3%	0.5%	6%
April	0.4%	0.4%	0.6%	0.7%	1.9%	1.3%	1.0%	0.4%	7%
May	0.5%	0.6%	0.5%	1.1%	2.0%	2.0%	1.3%	0.6%	9%
June	0.6%	0.8%	0.6%	1.6%	2.3%	1.4%	2.1%	0.8%	10%
July	0.1%	0.3%	1.1%	2.6%	2.7%	2.5%	1.5%	1.2%	12%
August	0.6%	1.1%	1.1%	2.1%	2.1%	2.4%	2.1%	1.1%	13%
September	0.3%	1.0%	1.1%	2.2%	2.2%	1.5%	1.1%	0.8%	10%
October	0.5%	1.1%	0.4%	0.9%	2.2%	1.8%	1.1%	0.8%	9%
November	0.2%	0.8%	0.9%	0.9%	2.4%	1.5%	0.7%	0.6%	8%
December	0.5%	1.0%	0.6%	0.6%	2.1%	1.5%	1.1%	0.4%	8%
Σ	4%	9%	9%	15%	23%	18%	15%	8%	100%

A fatal or serious injury crash involving a younger driver occurred approximately every 36 hours. These crashes are more prevalent in the summer and autumn & during the evening hours; this analysis does not control for existing traffic patterns.

Top Five Intersection Types (where intersection/interchange related)



About 1 in 2 fatal and serious injury crashes involving a younger driver (55%) were intersection or interchange related.

In Summary:

It is a pleasure to work with such talented and passionate people who truly care about the health and wellness of our communities. I appreciate and learn from all of you each and every day.

