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State of Minnesota  
**Annual Report**  
Federal Fiscal Year 1999

Prepared by the  
Office of Traffic Safety  
Minnesota Department  
of Public Safety

In accordance with 23 CFR  
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December 1999



# Traffic Safety in Minnesota

Annual Report for Federal Fiscal Year 1999

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# Traffic Safety in Minnesota

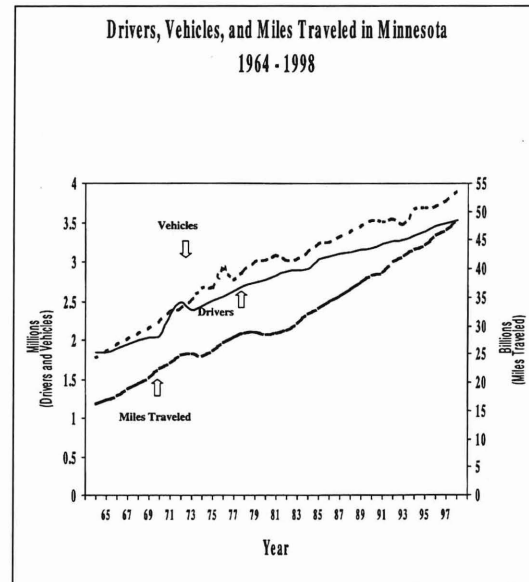
## Introduction and History

This report summarizes the success of traffic safety programs sponsored by the Minnesota Department of Public Safety's Office of Traffic Safety. The majority of the programs mentioned in this report are supported by federal funds received through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (part of the United States Department of Transportation). Other programs are supported by federal funds from the Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, state funds from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, and by funding supplied by other traffic safety partners.

The activities described in this report were conducted in Federal Fiscal Year 1999 (October 1, 1998 through September 30, 1999). Your appreciation of the activities described will be enhanced by understanding the history of traffic crash concerns and the risk factors associated with crashes.

### Risk Factors Increase Steadily

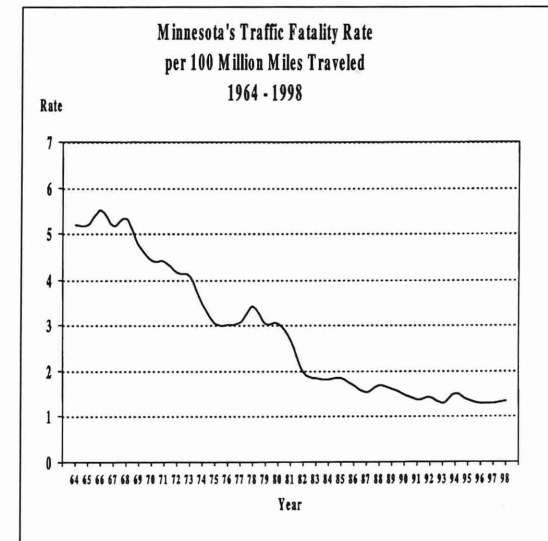
Over the last 30 years, the number of licensed drivers, the number of registered vehicles, and the number of miles traveled have all increased steadily in Minnesota. As each of these factors



increased, our exposure to risk of traffic crashes, injuries, and death increased as well.

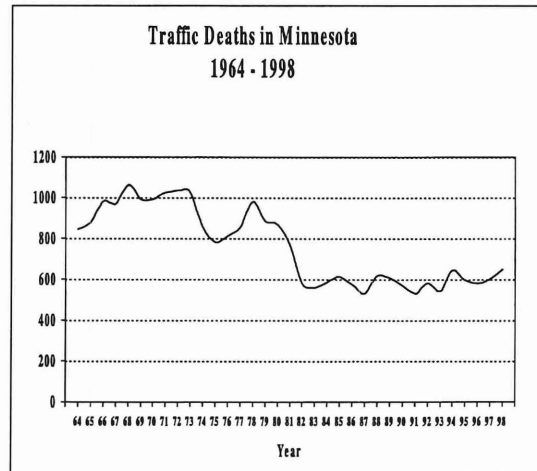
Despite the increasing risk factors, the traffic fatality rate (calculated by dividing the number of traffic deaths by the number of miles traveled) has declined steadily through the years. In this measure of traffic safety, Minnesota's performance is ahead of the nation.

Before we get complacent about Minnesota's



traffic safety rank among the other states, it's important to remember that being "better than the nation" is no comfort to the families of the 650 people killed in 1998. Those families will never be the same.

Between the 1960s and the 1980s, there was a significant change in the number of people killed each year in crashes. Unfortunately, during the past 15 years we have made no improvements in this area. In fact, the number



of fatalities is increasing. Between 1997 and 1998, the number of fatalities jumped from 600 to 650. More than 620 people died in traffic crashes during 1999. Unless new solutions to old problems are found and implemented, the increase is bound to continue.

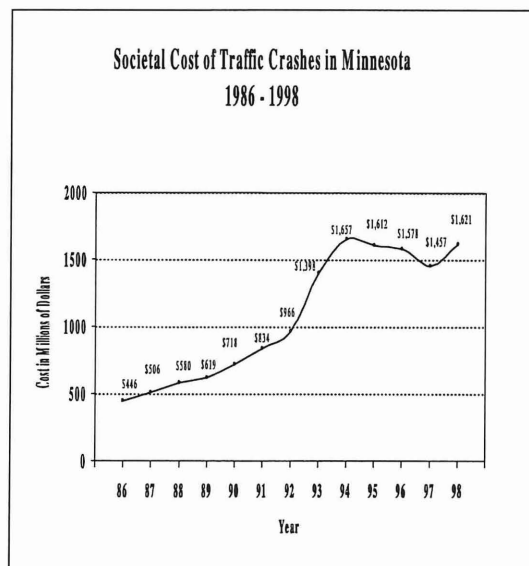
### Cost of Crashes — Dollars and Lives

Crashes are costly. In addition to the cost in terms of lives lost, bodies maimed, and families torn apart, there is a cost from crashes that is purely economic.

Using figures provided by the National Safety Council, we estimate that crashes cost Minnesotans over \$1.6 billion each year. These costs come from medical bills, repair costs, increased insurance premiums, and other costs

related to crashes.

After years of constant increase, the cost of crashes peaked in 1994 at \$1,656,634,200. For three years (1995, 1996, and 1997), the cost of crashes in Minnesota declined — an unprecedented reversal of our expectations and an indirect measure of our programs' successes. In 1998, however, the cost increased to \$1,620,664,600 — the second highest amount in history. Clearly, there is still ample reason to be concerned about the economic loss from traffic crashes.



### Preventing Crashes — What the Data Say

Our lives are based on decision-making. We use the information available to make the best choices possible. We continually analyze, judge, and evaluate the decisions we've made, using whatever data are available to improve our choices in the future. It's no different in the field of traffic safety.

We use the information and data we have available in the Office of Traffic Safety to identify traffic safety problem areas, analyze potential solutions, and evaluate the effectiveness of traffic safety programs.

Over the years, the greatest gains in traffic safety have come from programs that deal with the traffic safety "Big Three" — speed, belts, and booze. The data from crash reports show that the largest number of crashes, the most severe crashes, and the most severe injuries come from situations where the people involved were driving too fast, were impaired by alcohol or other drugs, or were not wearing their seat belts.

In Federal Fiscal Year 1999, data analysis revealed important developments in the key areas of speed, belts, and booze.

### Speed

The laws of physics are predictable. As a vehicle travels faster, it becomes harder to control, it takes longer to stop, and it travels



farther in the time its driver takes to react to the situation. As a result, high-speed travel has always been a traffic safety issue.

One study conducted by OTS this past year was the *Summary Report of Traffic Safety Before and After the July 1997 Speed Limit Increases in Minnesota*.

The study examined the crash experience on each section of Minnesota's roadways, noting whether the speed limit on that section increased or remained the same. The report

found a 66% increase of fatal crashes on roadways where the speed limit was increased. There was only a 2% increase in fatal crashes on roadways in which the speed limit remained the same. Similar results, but less dramatic, were found for severe injury crashes. There was no substantial difference between the two types of roadways for fender-benders (that is, crashes in which no one was injured). This study reinforced the fact that higher speeds will cause the injuries received in a crash to be more severe.

Related to the problem of speed is the increasing public concern about aggressive driving. Data on this topic are difficult to compile because there is no standard definition of aggressive driving. As a definition emerges, we will monitor the crashes and losses associated with this issue.

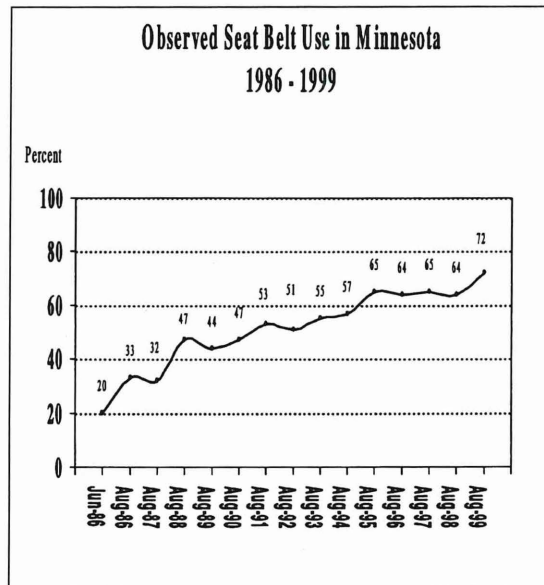
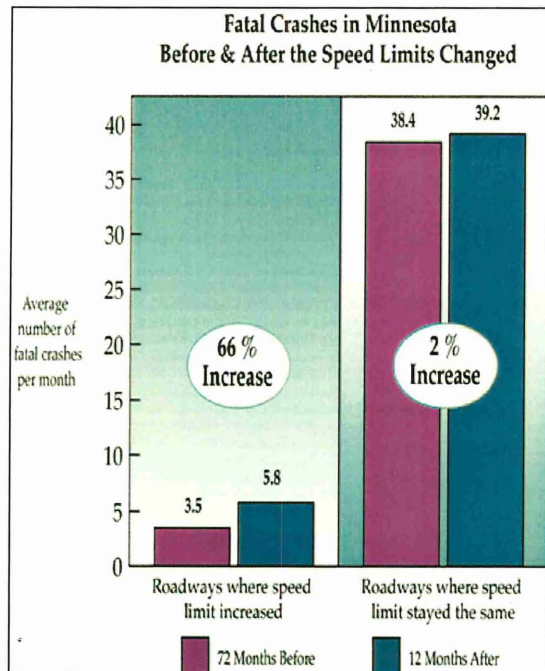
### Belts

Seat belts save lives. Wearing a seat belt will reduce the severity of the injuries you receive in a crash. If your car has airbags, you must use seat belts to obtain the full safety benefit in a severe crash and to prevent serious injuries from airbag deployment in a minor crash.

Many of the programs supported through OTS are designed to increase belt use by informing citizens of the benefits of wearing seat belts, persuading them that belt use is easy and

important, and (when those approaches don't work) enforcing the belt use laws that exist in Minnesota.

Each August, we observe belt use throughout Minnesota. The survey is designed to provide a representative sample of all the state's roadways and population densities, and it has been conducted in the same manner for many years (making the results comparable across time). After being stagnant for four years, belt use in Minnesota jumped to 72% in 1999. We are delighted with this indication that our efforts to encourage citizens to buckle up are paying off.



It is important to note, however, that over one-quarter of Minnesotans are not wearing seat belts when they travel. This means that, despite the sharply increased usage rate in 1999, we have a long way to go before we can be satisfied that the problem is solved.

### Booze

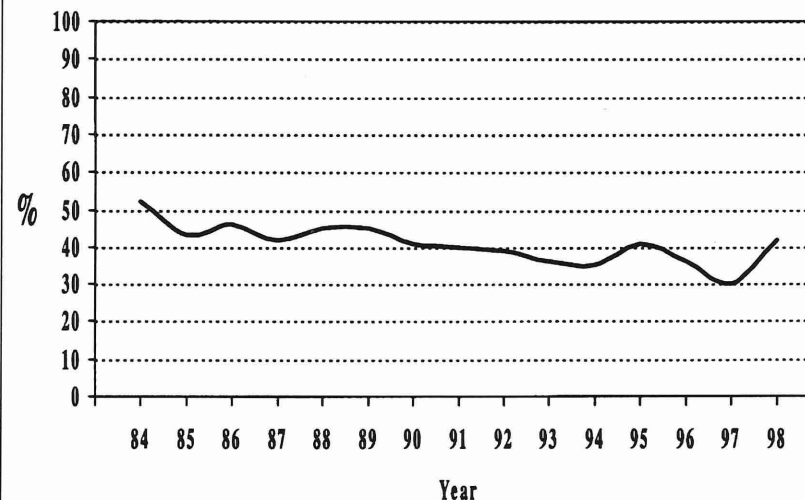
Safe driving takes concentration, coordination, and awareness. Driving while impaired by alcohol, other drugs, or fatigue can be deadly.

One measure of progress in reducing impaired driving is the percentage of traffic fatalities that are alcohol-related. In 1997, we had the lowest number of alcohol-related fatalities on record. In 1998, the number of alcohol-related fatalities jumped by nearly 100, and the percentage of alcohol-related traffic fatalities reached 42%. This was disheartening, especially in light of the previous year's apparent success.

### Summary

More than 30 years of attention to traffic crashes in Minnesota has not been sufficient to solve the problem. The costs — in terms of lives and in terms of dollars — is more than society should bear. Clearly, more efforts must be made in the "Big Three" if major gains are to continue. In addition, new partnerships, new approaches, and new thinking must be used to save lives and prevent injuries.

**Percentage of Traffic Fatalities that are Alcohol-Related  
Minnesota, 1984 - 1998**



The following report summarizes the programs conducted through the Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) during Federal Fiscal Year 1999. Although the report was prepared to fulfill one of the requirements of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) State and Community Highway Safety Grant

Program, we hope it helps you understand the range of programs OTS supports, the severity of Minnesota's traffic crash problem, and the types of solutions currently employed throughout Minnesota.



## Traffic Safety in Minnesota Program Highlights

### Campaign *Safe & Sober*

#### Grants to Communities

1999 was the fifth year in which *Safe & Sober*, a campaign combining increased traffic patrols with public information and education, was conducted in Minnesota. Nearly 75 agencies were given funds for overtime traffic law enforcement; requests for funding were double the amount available.

This year, OTS raised the bar on enforcement of seat belt and child seat violations; agencies were warned they would not be funded again if they did not actively enforce these laws. The strategy appears to have worked – while hours worked increased approximately 9.5% over 1998, seat belt and child seat actions increased 37% (and over 70% of the increase was for citations rather than warnings). We are confident that *Safe & Sober*, with its newly-reiterated emphasis on occupant protection, played a big part in the increased seat-belt use rate in Minnesota this year.

In addition to the over 11,000 occupant protection actions taken, the project took 869 impaired drivers off the road, discovered 499 fugitives with warrants for arrest and slightly over 1,000 drivers whose licenses had been cancelled, revoked or suspended, recovered 24

stolen vehicles, removed illegal drugs from nearly 300 vehicles, and stopped more than 35,000 speeding drivers.

#### *Safe & Sober* Challenge

The *Safe & Sober* Challenge is designed to recognize the dedication and excellence of members of the Minnesota enforcement community who do not receive grant support for their traffic law enforcement efforts.



*Staff in the Office of Traffic Safety view the Safe & Sober Campaign as one of the most effective programs implemented in the history of Minnesota's participation in the State and Community Highway Safety Grant Program.*

Agencies participating in the Challenge receive sample public service announcements, news releases, and editorials. They are provided with opportunities to nominate people for Saved by the Belt awards and businesses for Honor Roll awards. In addition they are given access to Vince and Larry (the crash dummies) costumes, brochures, posters, and other traffic safety materials printed or purchased by OTS or NHTSA.

At the end of the year, Challenge participants report to OTS on their *Safe & Sober* activities. Ten first, second, and third-place prize winners are selected and awarded mini-grants of \$1,500, \$1,000, or \$500 respectively. The grants were used for overtime patrolling hours, traffic-related equipment, small incentive items with logos and slogans, and for registration fees in intoxilyzer training for officers.

Mini-grants were distributed in 1999 in recognition of the outstanding work done by the police departments in Anoka, Bloomington, Brainerd, Caledonia, Champlin, Circle Pines, Eagan, Fulda, Janesville, Lester Prairie, Litchfield, Lonsdale, Madison Lake, Montgomery, Morris, North Mankato, Osseo, Owatonna, Plainview, Ramsey, Roseau, Rosemount, St. James, Winona, and Winsted; and the sheriffs' departments in Big Stone,

Le Sueur, Meeker, Morrison, Renville, and Winona counties.

### ***Safe & Sober Liaisons***

Three retired officers are under contract with OTS to assist Minnesota enforcement agencies and officers in their *Safe & Sober* activities. Each is assigned a specific area of the state to cover through one-on-one contact and by attending enforcement agency meetings throughout the state.

The law enforcement liaisons visit with and encourage sheriffs and chiefs of police to emphasize impaired driving and seat belt or child seat use on their regular patrols and to educate the public on the many benefits of doing so.

### ***Safe & Sober Billboards***

Eighty billboards were posted across the state during each of the four waves of the *Safe & Sober* campaign to increase recognition of the *Safe & Sober* program and its goals, and to recognize individual officers who do outstanding community work by enforcing traffic laws. Posters of each billboard were also distributed throughout the state. Common sites where the posters were hung included the following: schools and colleges; health, safety, or county fairs; retail businesses; and law enforcement departments.

Each set of billboards pictured three different officers (one each from the State Patrol, a

municipal police department, and a sheriff's office) and reminded drivers of the number of stops in the previous year for different traffic safety laws (DWI, speeding, seat belts, and not a drop of alcohol when under age 21). The tag line for each board was the same – "Because We Value Your Life."

## **Occupant Protection**

Occupant protection programs involve efforts to encourage seat belt use and programs to convince parents to use child safety seats properly. Our proudest moment in 1999 was when we received the results of our annual belt use study. Seat belt use in Minnesota had jumped to 72%.



## **Child Passenger Safety**

The Office of Traffic Safety is committed to educating the public about child passenger safety and the proper use of child seats for children through age eight. In approximately 80 percent of the child restraints seen in Minnesota, either the seat is installed incorrectly, the child is in the seat incorrectly, or the child is not the right size for the device being used. We have long recognized a need for establishing "quality control" on child passenger safety course content and instructors to ensure that information and materials being taught and disseminated are up-to-date, accurate, and consistent. We have made substantial progress towards that goal this year.

Guidelines and curriculums for four levels of certification of child passenger advocates are in place and law enforcement personnel, nurses, child care providers, and emergency medical responders who take the classes receive continuing education credits for their time. The four training levels are instructors, technicians, practitioners, and family educators.

OTS provided or assisted in the training of seven instructors and 63 technicians. Sixteen courses for practitioners, seven courses for family educators, and at least 80 child passenger safety check-up clinics were held during the federal year.

The largest clinic checked over 200 child safety seats. Parents and care-givers voluntarily attend clinics to find out if their car



seat is being used correctly; the clinics are held at a variety of parking lots across the state and publicized through the local media.

OTS provided information, materials, and technical assistance on how to operate car seat distribution programs and conduct car seat clinics. We also provided updated information to the child passenger safety advocates in Minnesota, directed the certification process, and ensured courses were provided throughout the state. The OTS web-site is regularly updated with information on clinics and courses.

### Seat Belts

OTS developed a more visible public information campaign advocating belt use, reinforced the critical importance of belt enforcement within its *Safe & Sober* special traffic enforcement program, and funded an intensive belt enforcement pilot project that partnered Minnesota State Patrol District 2200 with several county and local agencies (*see the Special STEP report on the following page*). These efforts, combined with the efforts of our partners, made it possible to raise safety belt usage in Minnesota from 64% (in 1998) to 72% (in 1999).

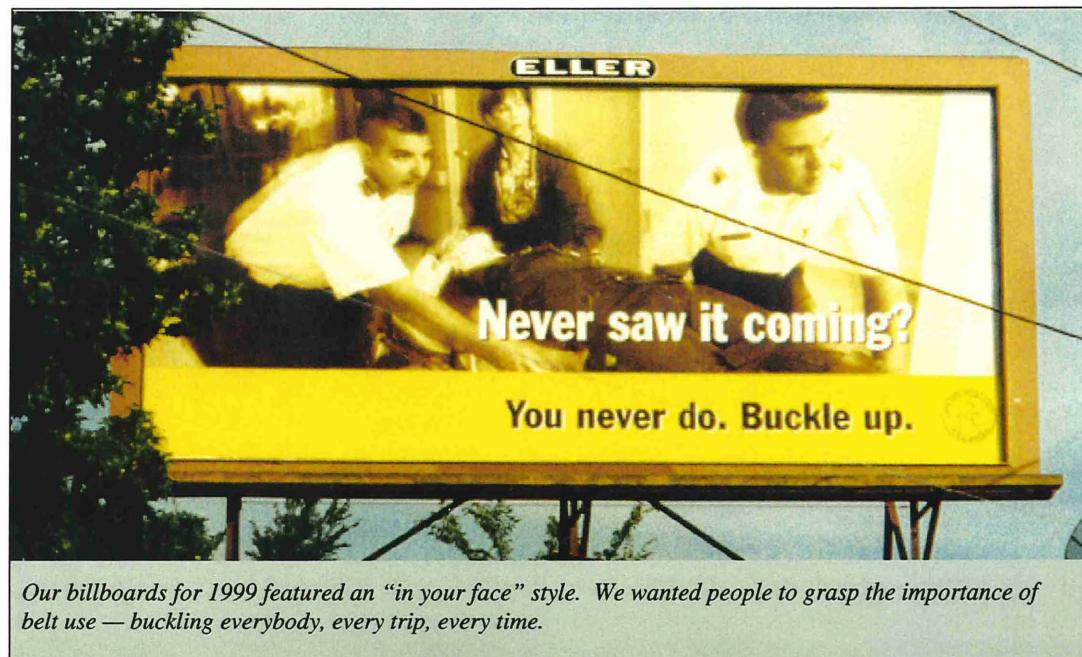
The 1999 safety belt public information campaign utilized billboards, posters, fact sheets, ad slicks, updated brochures, and media events.

Minnesota fact sheets on ejection fatalities, how belt use responds to legislation, and the costs of

not buckling up were developed as ad slicks for use by *Safe & Sober* agencies as well as our other partners. An ad slick of the May billboard concept ("Never Saw It Coming? You Never Do. Buckle Up.") was also developed in various column sizes as filler for the Minnesota Newspaper Association, and the ads showed up in several dozen Greater Minnesota newspapers in the following months. Posters continued to be in high demand, and a Randy Moss poster was printed to join the popular "Impress your friends, not your windshield" poster (which was developed last year).

OTS supported the Minnesota Safety Belt Coalition's monthly newsletter to over 300 members. Aside from interesting articles and statistics on occupant protection, the newsletter reported the number of unbelted fatalities on Minnesota roadways for the previous month. We believe this helped keep the urgency of the issue focussed for coalition members.

Minnesota's Saved by the Belt program was streamlined and given a new look to increase law enforcement participation and recognition. A recognition and media event was also organized to present a Scott County Sheriff's





## Special STEP Report

Early in 1999, the State Patrol's Mankato District (2200) received a seat belt enforcement grant through the DPS Office of Traffic Safety. The grant provided funding for overtime enforcement hours for troopers, deputies, and police officers to aggressively enforce Minnesota's "secondary" seat belt law.

The State Patrol invited the participation of law enforcement agencies in the 10-county District. Eleven other agencies participated: Brown, Blue Earth, LeSueur, Martin, Nicollet, and Watonwan County Sheriff Departments, and New Ulm, North Mankato, Hutchinson, Fairmont, and Sleepy Eye Police Departments.

The enforcement project was called STEP – Strategic Traffic Enforcement Project. Participants in the project looked for the **combination** of a moving violation and a seat belt offense. Many drivers received a warning for the moving offense and a citation for the seat belt violation. Courtesy was stressed throughout the project.

Participation in the enforcement project was voluntary. Officers who participated were required to sign an agreement of expectations – which proved to be a critical reason for the project's success. Participants were also required to review a video presentation by Carolyn Hanig, an Oklahoma City Flight Nurse. Ms. Hanig tells a moving story of how she arrived by helicopter at the scene of a crash that killed her son. She tells why she believes her son would have lived had there been a seat belt law combined with aggressive enforcement, and then explains how she was instrumental in the passage of Oklahoma's seat belt law.

Judges and prosecutors in the District were informed of the enforcement plans before the project started. Each of them was also given a copy of the Hanig video, along with information supporting the need for aggressive seat belt enforcement. Judges, prosecutors, and court administrators later proved that they were extremely supportive of the project.

Participants did an outstanding job. "Enforcement of the seat belt law is like any other task. Many of the troopers, deputies, and police officers who worked the project became impressively effective at observing seat belt violations. Some participants issued as many as five seat belt citations per enforcement hour," said Captain Mike Asleson, District Commander at the Mankato District.

It was also clear that courtesy was used during every stop. More than 2,000 seat belt citations were issued before one negative call was received. Even that call was not a true "complaint," but rather a father who was concerned about the high fine of the seat belt ticket given to his daughter. Many participants reported that the majority of the people they issued citations to were surprisingly receptive to the enforcement, and often thanked the officer for the belt citation and the warning for the moving offense.

The project was a huge success. Project participants issued a total of 8,814 citations and 9,728 warnings. Of those totals, 6,832 of the citations and 1,392 of the warnings were for seat belt violations. There were numerous drivers booked who were wanted on warrants, and others who were in violation of DWI laws or who were driving after revocation. In spite of time taken from patrol for other arrests, project participants still averaged more than two seat belt citations per enforcement hour.

The enforcement showed results as well. Enforcement, media coverage, and the small town newspapers listing the rather long summary of seat belt fines from their court docket caused more vehicle occupants to buckle-up. Near the end of the project, seat belt surveys taken around the District showed an average seat belt usage of 85%. This was during the time when the rest of Minnesota was moving from an average of 64% to 72%. One survey taken near Mankato showed belt usage at 93%.

The project proved what so many already believed. First, aggressive enforcement of Minnesota's secondary seat belt law is possible, and is supported by the citizens we serve. Second, law enforcement officers who are given high expectations will do their best to achieve them. Third, aggressive enforcement does result in changed behavior by drivers and vehicle occupants.



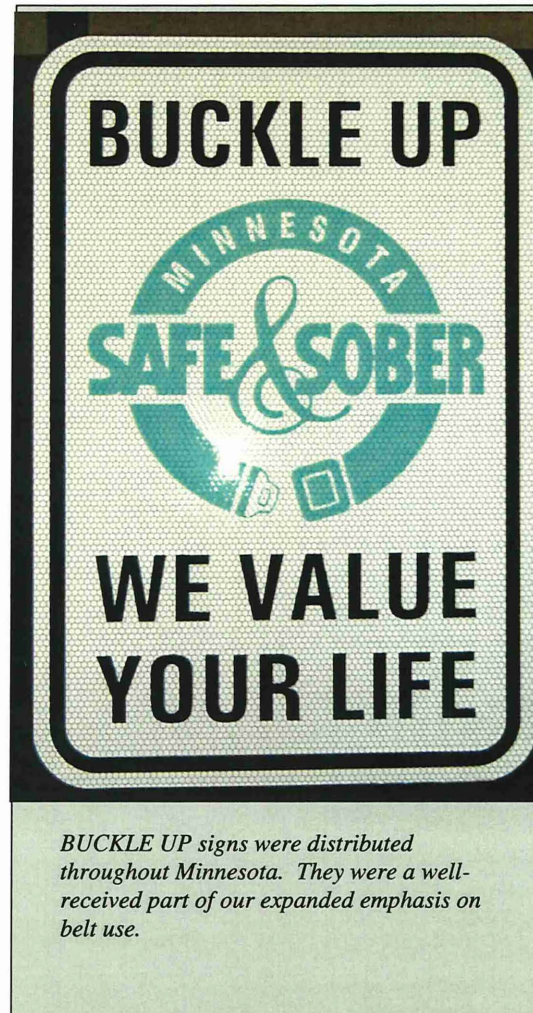
Deputy with a first-ever leadership award for his commitment to the program in nominating 20 survivors for Saved by the Belt awards over the past year.

The OTS also continued its involvement with NHTSA's National Safety Belt Honor Roll by assisting interested businesses with their participation in that program.

Vince and Larry, the crash test dummies, traveled extensively this past year. They remain a popular attraction at community events around the state and were even on hand for Governor Ventura's Inauguration.

### Buckle Up Signs

Three thousand metal signs stating "Buckle Up — We Value Your Life" were produced for OTS by the Mn/DOT sign shop. They were distributed by the three law enforcement liaisons to law enforcement agencies across the state. Requests from the agencies for the signs greatly exceeded the number produced. The signs were designed to be placed under stop or yield signs at exits from parking lots (rather than on highways). High schools were the most common site for posting the signs, followed by other schools, hospitals or clinics, businesses, and governmental offices.



*BUCKLE UP signs were distributed throughout Minnesota. They were a well-received part of our expanded emphasis on belt use.*

### Impaired Driving

In addition to the anti-drunken driving efforts described under the *Safe & Sober* program, we conducted several high-profile projects to reduce impaired driving in Minnesota.

#### *Safe & Sober* NightCAP

*Safe & Sober* NightCAP (Nighttime Concentrated Alcohol Patrol) provides Minnesota a statewide program for concentrated impaired driving enforcement. The saturation patrols occur monthly; include city, county, and state law enforcement officers; are statewide; and use public information techniques to generate media attention for the impaired driving reduction efforts. The Minnesota State Patrol served as the coordinating agency and public information activities were accomplished by the DPS Office of Communications staff. A retired law enforcement officer assisted as a liaison between the Office of Traffic Safety and the MSP and helped the MSP coordinate the project.

Two saturations were scheduled each month in the Twin Cities metro area. State Patrol Districts in greater Minnesota scheduled their enforcement saturations around community events that had experienced problems with impaired driving in the past.

#### Drug Recognition Experts

In June 1999, Minnesota hosted the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Drugs, Alcohol, and



Impaired Driving Conference. In addition to funding the keynote presentation by Bill White of Chestnut Health Systems in Chicago and a luncheon for the conference attendees, OTS reimbursed the registration and lodging expenses for almost 50 Minnesota Drug Recognition Experts (DREs) who attended the three-day conference.

This conference provided an excellent



*NHTSA Region V representative George Ferris presents an award to Minnesota State Patrol Sgt. Doug Thoof at the IACP Drugs, Alcohol, and Impaired Driving*

opportunity to showcase Minnesota's DRE program, and Minnesota DREs accomplished their recertification requirements during the course of the event. Conference attendance exceeded 500 law enforcement personnel and prosecutors from throughout the United States and Canada; feedback from attendees was uniformly and enthusiastically positive.

On the heels of this very successful conference, the MN State Patrol ran its sixth DRE School. Twenty-two law enforcement officers from agencies throughout the state completed the rigorous coursework and conducted the required field observations to hone their skills in a record five weeks.

### **BATmobile**

After a successful 1998 *Safe & Sober* NightCAP season using the retro-fitted DPS Division of Emergency Management's Winnebago motorhome, OTS and the Minnesota State Patrol decided that a vehicle designed for and dedicated solely to impaired driving enforcement would be welcomed by the state's law enforcement community. With this purpose in mind, a 36-foot-long mobile breath testing station with room for administrative activities, DWI investigation interviews, and drug recognition evaluations was ordered and built. With its debut at the IACP Drugs, Alcohol, and Impaired Driving Conference at the end of June and its first enforcement assignment over the Fourth of July holiday, the BATmobile (Breath Alcohol Testing mobile) began a very popular season of enforcement activity. Able to function as

either a stand-alone testing facility in the middle of a rural county or as an adjunct to existing testing facilities, the BATmobile was an instant attention-grabber that generated both media coverage and enforcement interest.

### **Equipment Grants**

In keeping with our desire to improve technological resources for impaired driver detection in Minnesota, OTS funded a project to distribute digital Preliminary Breath Testers (PBTs) to law enforcement agencies throughout the state. Three hundred and fifty Alco-Sensor IV devices were distributed to county and local agencies who had shown commitment to impaired driving enforcement through their participation in *Safe & Sober* NightCAP saturations, the *Safe & Sober* enforcement program and the *Safe & Sober* Challenge program. In addition, OTS purchased 50 PBTs for the newest troopers hired by the Minnesota State Patrol.

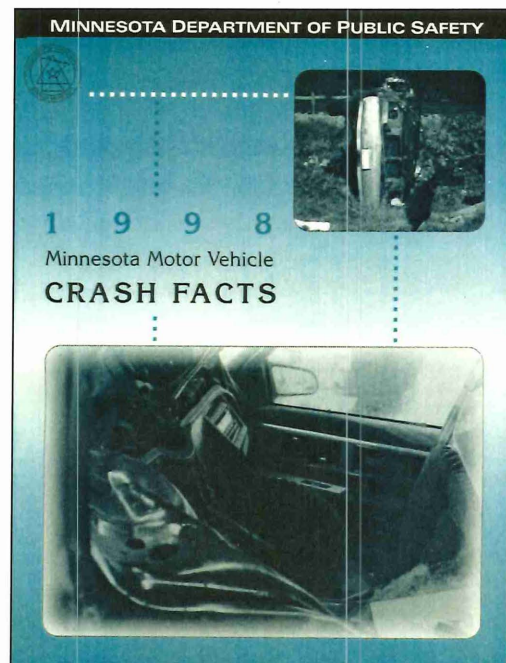




*The new Minnesota BATmobile was unveiled at a news conference in conjunction with the IACP Drugs, Alcohol, and Impaired Driving conference. Minnesota State Patrol Chief Col. Anne Beers describes the plans for the BATmobile, which include high-visibility deployment throughout Minnesota, a commitment to keep the vehicle's graphics fresh and eye-catching, and careful management of this important new resource. We remain grateful to NHTSA for their approval of our purchase of this popular and effective tool.*







## Traffic Records Systems

Without adequate data systems, our efforts to reduce the number and severity of traffic crashes would be reduced to a guessing game. Because Minnesota has a reliable crash database, we have the data needed to identify traffic safety problem areas, craft programs to reach key target audiences, and evaluate the effectiveness of those programs.

### *Crash Facts*

The bedrock of Minnesota's problem

identification efforts is the annual publication *Minnesota Motor Vehicle Crash Facts*. This document has been produced by OTS for 30 years. A great deal of effort is devoted to maintaining the high standards for quality in *Crash Facts*. *Crash Facts* is praised as one of the most thorough and accurate books of its genre.

## CODES

Minnesota won a competitive grant award to link certain databases for analysis and evaluation. The grant is called Crash Outcome Data Evaluation Systems (CODES). The goal of CODES is to provide medical and financial outcome information about Minnesota's traffic crashes. Our research staff will use this additional information for problem identification, analysis, and evaluation. Our partners are the Minnesota Departments of Health and Transportation, the Minnesota Hospital and Healthcare Partnership, and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

## Traffic Records Coordinating Committee

The State Traffic Records Coordinating Committee (TRCC) meets monthly. The members of this committee are drawn from the agencies and organizations within Minnesota that administer, collect, and use highway safety data and traffic records. Committee members represent highway safety, highway infrastructure, traffic enforcement, public health, injury control, and motor carrier organizations. The first project sponsored by the TRCC is a

Commercial Vehicle Information Systems and Networks project. This project will efficiently transfer commercial vehicle crash data to the offices in DPS and Mn/DOT that perform regulatory functions in this area.

The TRCC has decided to revise the Accident Report System. The System includes the Police Accident Report Form, the Citizen Accident Report Form, data collection elements and methodologies, data transmission from local and county law enforcement agencies to the Department of Public Safety, hardware/software upgrades, and much more. The committee will spend most of its time in the coming year working on this project.

## Motorcycle Safety

Minnesota's motorcycle safety program set new records for training in 1999 and introduced a new public information campaign to reduce the incidence of impaired riding. While 1999 motorcycle crash data is not yet available, we hope to maintain recent declines in motorcycle crashes. Minnesota had a record low number of crashes, fatal crashes, and injury crashes in 1997.

Despite an unseasonably warm spring and fall that extended the riding season from an average of eight months to ten months in 1998, Minnesota recorded its second lowest total of motorcycle crashes with 1,065 crashes. Motorcycle crash injuries were also at their second lowest total on record at 883.



While more Minnesotans than ever are riding (301,992 endorsed motorcyclists) and the number of registered motorcycles has increased significantly over the last two years, we have kept pace by training a record number of motorcyclists in 1998 and again in 1999. This year, the number of students trained in the basic Riding Street Skills course increased by 18% (from 3,612 to 4,265). Over half of the newly endorsed riders in Minnesota completed a rider training course.

Overall participation in the rider training programs grew by 16% this year. In 1999, the Minnesota Motorcycle Safety Center (MMSC) trained 76% more riders than it did just five years ago while increasing the training budget by just 28%.

Participation in the Experienced Rider Course (ERC), however, continues to be a disappointment; it was down from last year's record high of 431 riders to 406 riders this year. The MMSC has been trying to grow this course for a few years and will continue to refine our marketing of this course for next year. Our goal is to have over 500 riders take the ERC next year and to be training 1,000 ERC students each year by 2004.

We completed the first year of a two year public information campaign to reduce impaired riding. The campaign's tagline ("Live To Ride") was developed to tie the consequences of impaired riding to the motorcyclists' love of riding. The 1999 campaign employed three posters, two indoor ads, two billboard concepts, and three radio

spots. The motorcycling community was active in developing this year's campaign and did an outstanding job of getting the word out on impaired riding. When our staff attended motorcycle events and rallies, we were impressed by the large number of riders who knew the campaign and already had posters. Somewhat surprisingly, several motorcycle bars are also displaying the posters from this year's campaign — an indication of the campaign's appeal to our target audience.

The Minnesota Department of Public Safety received two awards in 1999 from the Motorcycle Safety Foundation for Outstanding State Program (Category III) and Outstanding Media Campaign.

Evening motorcycle skills testing (which was established in Minnesota through a special grant from NHTSA) completed its second year as a project entirely funded through state resources. This project tested 838 permit riders for their endorsement in 1999. An added benefit of this project is that it has decreased demand for daytime motorcycle skills testing at overcrowded driver's license exam stations.

## Other Programs

### Older Driver Research

During 1999, the Geriatric Research, Education, and Clinical Center at the Minneapolis Veterans' Administration Hospital completed a study of the characteristics of older drivers diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease,

Parkinson's disease, or glaucoma in comparison to healthy older drivers. Subjects were recruited from metropolitan area medical centers and senior driving improvement classes. Over 600 drivers were surveyed. Results show that older drivers in all categories have driven for most of their adult lives, drive frequently, and consider driving to be an integral part of their lives. Few have convenient alternatives to driving. Most drivers have changed their driving habits by driving less at night, on freeways, and during rush hour, but do not plan for complete driving cessation.

## NHTSA/OTS Sponsored Training and Conferences

In federal fiscal year 1999, OTS sponsored a variety of training opportunities for our traffic safety partners.

### "Looking Beyond the Ticket"

In the early fall of 1999, the Office of Traffic Safety held its first law enforcement conference open to all officers in the state. Topics covered included looking beyond the traffic ticket, police communication in traffic stops, airbags, new grantee orientation, the Peoria experience, new technologies, and innovative enforcement techniques. Nearly 160 officers attended the one-day meeting; evaluations showed an overall rating of 3.85 with 5.0 being perfect. An inter-agency agreement allowed OTS to pay for a state conference planner to facilitate the event; by all accounts, this worked exceptionally well.

**SFST and OPUE**

Through a grant with the Minnesota State Patrol, the OTS was able to continue to offer Standardized Field Sobriety Training (SFST), Advanced SFST: Drugs that Impair, and Occupant Protection Enforcement classes free of charge to law enforcement officers in the state. This training is an important component of our *Safe & Sober* Campaign. All officers participating in *Safe & Sober* must have completed SFST and OPUE.

**Prosecutor Training**

Under contract to OTS, the Minnesota County Attorneys Association (MCAA) schedules and designs a four-hour course which emphasizes updates and best practices in enforcing DWI statutes. The course is sent via satellite to 40 video sites across the state and includes time for questions from the participants (who can phone or fax the questions back to the broadcast center). A panel of experts is assembled to answer the questions and give the lectures. A county attorney is also present at each site to discuss issues and solutions with officers. In 1999, 586 officers and 42 prosecutors attended the traffic safety update.

The county and city attorneys assigned to prosecute DWI offenses are often the most inexperienced staff in their offices. In order to increase their prosecutorial skills, a two-day seminar on DWI trial tactics was designed and conducted by the Minnesota County Attorneys Association. Sessions included jury selection, case strategy, opening and closing comments, issues regarding expert witnesses, and direct and

cross examinations. The prosecutors prepare a DWI case before the seminar begins and are videotaped delivering portions of each of the above topics during the seminar. Twenty-one prosecutors attended. Their average experience on the job was one-and-one-third years, and they rated the course 9.06 out of a perfect 10.

The MCAA also conducted a one-day seminar on prosecuting a DWI case involving a drug other than alcohol; the seminar was attended by 19 prosecutors with an average of three-and-one-third years of experience. The course included information on drug categorization, horizontal gaze nystagmus, the Minnesota Drug Evaluation and Classification Program for law enforcement officers, toxicology, and case preparation. The course earned an overall rating of 8.1 (out of a perfect 10) by the participants.

Three people were sent to a five-day course in Virginia on instructing prosecutors on vehicular homicide cases. According to a survey of prosecutors, there was considerable interest in attending such a course if it could be conducted in Minnesota. A three-day course was designed and 23 prosecutors attended. The course was rated 8.82 overall by those attending. The average prosecutor attending had eight-and-one-half years of experience.



# Traffic Safety in Minnesota

## Key Partnerships

Despite our creative efforts, knowledge, and enthusiasm, OTS will never have the resources to solve Minnesota's traffic safety problems all by itself. Without partnerships and collaborative efforts, none of the success seen in the last 30 years would have been possible. This section of the annual report highlights a few of the important partnership activities that took place in 1999.

### Hennepin County Seat Belt Challenge

The Community Health Department of Hennepin County created a "Seat Belt Challenge." This four-week program was designed to increase seat belt use among teenagers. This was the third year for the Hennepin County Challenge and the results were commendable; for instance, Orono High School achieved a 90% seat-belt use rate among its student body.

Students begin the program with an observational survey of seat belt use at their school. After implementing a month of activities to motivate their classmates to buckle up the students repeat the survey. Schools compete against each other for Golden Seat Belt Awards for "most improved use," "highest seat belt use," and "best campaign." This year, 14 high schools in the county participated in

the program; nearly all experienced an increase in seat belt use.

Representatives from community agencies, such as local fire departments and hospitals, served as Community Partners and acted as liaisons between the health department and high schools. Besides receiving a \$5,000 grant from OTS, the program also enjoyed generous sponsorship from businesses. Because the program was very successful, OTS will fund the project again in the year 2000.

### Seat Belt Billboards

One hundred belt billboards were posted each month in May, July, and September. OTS partnered with the EMS community for the May billboard, which featured paramedics and the tag line, "Never saw it coming? You never do. Buckle up." The July billboard featured Minnesota Governor Jesse Ventura and the tagline, "Use your mind. Buckle up." The September billboard featured Minnesota Viking Randy Moss and the tagline, "Football is a game. Life is not. Buckle up." The average daily effective circulation for each belt billboard posting was approximately 570,000 vehicles. We are certain that the collaborations with the EMS community, the Governor, and the NFL contributed to the increase in belt use in 1999.

### The Media

The media was an important partner in every aspect of our program. The structure of *Safe & Sober* (media-enforcement-media) depends on adequate and appropriate coverage of our events by the local media and the statewide news sources.

### DPS Office of Communications

Our ability to reach the media is enhanced by the work of the DPS Office of Communications. Their staff facilitated a number of events designed to hook the media and get news coverage for our activities. For example, a press conference was held for Buckle Up America Week. A media event conducted in July unveiled the Governor Ventura billboard, and another media event followed in August with the theme "Don't be caught dead on the highway." This event featured volunteers laid out on a closed stretch of highway to graphically depict the number of unbelted motorists killed in Minnesota during the last year.

### Progressive Insurance Company

Progressive Insurance contributed funding and materials to support our programs. Thanks to their financial assistance, we were able to place radio announcements during our *Safe & Sober* campaign. Progressive also paid to print posters that emphasized the need to buckle up. In

addition, their "ET-Buckle Up" materials were well-received by the public.

### **MADD**

"Phillip's Killer" was an extremely well received poster created by the Office of Communications that involved a very interesting partnership. The Hennepin County chapter of Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) approached DPS with a photograph they wanted to turn into a public information piece. The photograph was the result of a collaboration of a professional photographer with an art director who had been convicted of DWI in Hennepin County. The art director wanted to give back to the community after this experience and he worked with MADD and the family of a victim to produce a chilling photograph aimed at young adults. The DPS Office of Communications worked with MADD and the victim's family to create the appropriate message, produce the poster and distributed them to high schools and colleges throughout the state.

### **Bicycle Safety Project**

The University of Minnesota, Extension Service conducted the Community Bicycle Safety Project, which was state funded. A small amount of federal funding (\$10,000) was used to augment development and distribution of materials sent throughout the state. The director of the project made over 101,000 law enforcement and youth serving organization contacts for the project and provided materials for these contacts.

### **Prevention Collaborative**

The Prevention Collaborative project involves

six private/public college campuses in the metropolitan area addressing drinking and driving by students attending their schools. They have incorporated the "social norming" process in the development of their media campaign. "Social norming" is a process where campuses conduct a survey specific to their students drinking and driving behavior. After determining the incidence of student drinking/driving behavior, they created posters and ancillary information for the campaign. From all the campus surveys, it was found that the majority of students do NOT drink and drive nor do they binge drink. Promoting positive behavior is the goal of the project and a process evaluation is being completed for the following grant year.

### **Enforcing the Underage Drinking Laws**

The project was implemented October 1998 with block grant funds from the Office of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention, Department of Justice. The funds have been distributed to three agencies, each of which has a separate role. The Alcohol & Gambling Enforcement Division (AGED) in the Dept. of Public Safety provide assistance to local law enforcement agencies to conduct compliance checks. The non-profit organization Minnesota Join Together (MJT) provides technical assistance to local community coalitions to create comprehensive programs addressing underage drinking. The MN MADD state office conducts Youth In Action, which pairs youth and community MADD members to be trained in policy making efforts on the local and state level.

At AGED's presentations for conducting alcohol compliance checks, the local law enforcement agency has invited all licensed beverage establishments, city council and/or county commissioners, city administrators, prosecuting attorneys and judges to the presentation. The owners/managers are not enthusiastic about the prospect of being checked but, by the end of the meeting, come to understand the need for compliance checks, which has made this effort more successful.

Many local tobacco and alcohol prevention coalitions had been established before this project was implemented, but with MJT's technical assistance, they are now able to focus on underage drinking. Assistance comes in the form of ideas for addressing underage drinking in their community, policy development within the school system and/or community - especially around community events, how to support city council decisions about enforcing underage drinking laws.

MADD trained 14 youth teams (approximately 135 youth) and identified five projects to work on during the legislative session. They have proven to be effective "lobbyists" with legislators testifying before legislative committees during the previous session. This project not only involves youth in the resolution of underage drinking but provides youth leadership training in meaningful and timely issues.



## Traffic Safety in Minnesota Planning and Administration

The Office of Traffic Safety is one of the thirteen divisions of the Minnesota Department of Public Safety. The other divisions within the Department of Public Safety include several of our important traffic safety partners, such as the Minnesota State Patrol, the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, Driver and Vehicle Services, Alcohol and Gambling Enforcement, and the Office of Communications. Being located within Public Safety provides OTS with the operational and administrative support necessary for our success.

1999 was a year of great change for OTS. We had significant staff turnover when long-term employees left for other opportunities or

retirements. In addition, the size of our staff grew from 13 to 18 because we filled several long-standing vacancies and added a few new programs (such as CODES).

As new people joined OTS, our mission, values, and goals provide the framework for integrating their new ideas with our existing programs. (The OTS mission, values, and goals are shown on the following page.)

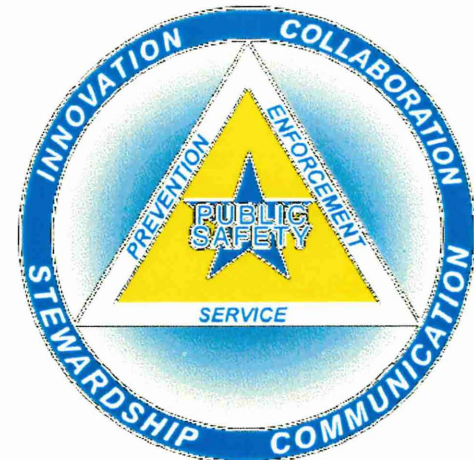
Success in the future will depend on an on-going re-evaluation of our existing mission statement and the values and goals that support it. We must also be ready to re-assess our program delivery methods and modify them (if necessary) to fit our partners' needs and the needs of Minnesotans who expect to be able to travel our roads safely.

In 2000, our focus will be on improving our program delivery methods and our customer service. We plan to maintain our vital, vibrant programs and create new ones to fill the needs of a changing society.

Because data analysis supports all of our program efforts, improved data systems will be a part of our activity for the future. The CODES project, which promises linked data files, will provide broader and deeper information about traffic crashes and their

consequences. Our goal is to turn the data into information, use the information to raise citizen awareness, and mobilize citizens to take responsibility for their traffic safety decisions.

Through materials, technical assistance, and (when possible) direct funding, we will support all community coalitions that form to reduce the human and economic losses associated with traffic crashes. We believe that expanding grassroots support for traffic safety initiatives will pave the way to major traffic safety improvements in 2000 and beyond.



## MISSION

*The mission of the Minnesota Department of Public Safety's Office of Traffic Safety is to reduce the number and severity of traffic crashes in the State of Minnesota. We do this by planning, managing, coordinating, and evaluating traffic safety activities using federal, state, and local resources, by providing statistical information about traffic crashes, and by conducting solid research on traffic safety issues. OTS is the staff office for the Governor's Representative for Highway Safety, and coordinates Minnesota's participation in the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's federal grant program. The process we use to select activities and projects to be funded is guided by the following values and goals.*

## VALUES

- ◆ *We value a well-informed public that sees traffic safety as an important public health issue.*
- ◆ *We value collaborative partnerships for injury prevention.*
- ◆ *We value effective/efficient traffic law enforcement.*
- ◆ *We value improved crash data and traffic records systems.*
- ◆ *We value well-managed, innovative, and pro-active projects.*

## GOALS

- ◆ *Reduce traffic fatality rate*
- ◆ *Reduce severe injury rate*
- ◆ *Increase seat belt use*
- ◆ *Increase child safety seat use*
- ◆ *Reduce alcohol-related traffic fatalities*
- ◆ *Reduce speed-related fatal crashes*
- ◆ *Reduce speed-related injury crashes*
- ◆ *Reduce the economic loss to Minnesota from traffic crashes*

*For a more detailed description of our mission, values, and goals, please consult our annual Highway Safety Plan (HSP). The HSP describes our planned activities for the coming federal fiscal year and provides the specific goals and objectives we have set for our traffic safety program. You can also visit our Internet Website at <http://www.dps.state.mn.us/trafsafe/trafsafe/html>*



## Traffic Safety in Minnesota

### Financial Summary

<b>Project</b>		<b>State and Local</b>	<b>Federal Funds</b>	<b>Local Benefit</b>
<b>Number</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Funds Expended</b>	<b>Funds Expended</b>	<b>(Direct and Indirect)</b>
99-01-01	Planning and Administration	230,495.62	192,006.03	0.00
99-01-02	P&A Accounting	13,902.46	13,912.32	0.00
99-02-01	Occupant Protection Coord. and Support	0.00	20,182.69	11,038.09
99-02-02	Minnesota Kids Buckle Up	0.00	85,077.89	74,537.30
99-02-03	Minnesota Belt Coalition Support	0.00	4,800.00	4,800.00
99-02-04	Observational Study of Belt Use	0.00	12,286.83	12,286.83
99-02-05	Safety Belt Public Information	0.00	97,287.14	62,313.46
99-02-06	Occupant Protection Media	0.00	52,604.13	33,666.64
99-02-07	Safety Belt Enforcement – Mankato	23,000.00	123,462.49	93,776.57
99-02-08	Safety Belt Education – Mankato	0.00	4,867.50	0.00
99-02-09	Belt Use Signs	0.00	38,292.08	38,292.08
99-02-10	Governor's Belt Message	0.00	53,729.93	53,729.93
99-03-01	Alcohol Coordination and Support	0.00	39,122.31	0.00
99-03-02	Alcohol Public Information	0.00	81,128.10	40,564.09
99-03-03	Youth Alcohol Arrive Alive	94,502.55	33,323.40	15,980.26
99-03-04	Youth Alcohol Task Force	0.00	872.32	436.16
99-04-01	Police Traffic Services Coord. and Support	0.00	58,774.12	45,256.09
99-04-02	Advanced Officer Training	0.00	81,075.02	49,357.43
99-04-03	Safe & Sober Billboards	0.00	76,481.91	70,004.05
99-04-04	Safe & Sober – Communities	240,810.23	847,858.99	847,858.99
99-04-05	Safe & Sober – Minnesota State Patrol	49,562.06	245,993.75	12,041.25
99-04-06	Safe & Sober Liaisons	0.00	160,096.64	145,687.95
99-04-07	Safe & Sober Challenge	10,002.01	37,064.57	37,064.57
99-04-08	Traffic Law Enforcement Conference	0.00	34,255.64	17,127.82
99-04-09	Safe & Sober Kick-off and Training	0.00	18,451.89	9,225.96

Project Number	Project Name	State and Local Funds Expended	Federal Funds Funds Expended	Local Benefit (Direct and Indirect)
99-04-10	Aggressive Driving – Minnesota State Patrol	0.00	15,677.25	0.00
99-05-01	Traffic Records Coordination and Support	0.00	68,943.32	50,758.59
99-05-02	Problem Identification and Evaluation	0.00	108,290.65	81,218.01
99-05-03	Traffic Records Coord. Committee	5,772.68	16,126.59	12,094.94
99-05-04	Crash Records Imaging Update	0.00	33,959.92	25,469.94
99-06-01	Safe Communities Coord. and Support	0.00	64,577.14	49,251.64
99-06-02	Safe Communities Public Information	0.00	15,868.15	15,868.15
99-06-04	Older Driver Study	0.00	4,099.31	2,049.66
99-07-01	Motorcycle Rider Training	399,538.95	0.00	0.00
99-07-02	Motorcycle Public Information (used as soft match on 99-14-09)	212,935.00	0.00	0.00
99-07-03	Motorcycle Licensing and Testing	69,180.08	0.00	0.00
99-13-01	Statewide Automated Field Reporting	0.00	185,183.82	92,591.92
99-13-02	Accident Records Imaging Project	0.00	11,624.00	0.00
99-14-01	410 Coordination and Support	1,626,000.00	72,455.53	28,811.75
99-14-03	Workshop for New College Students	0.00	50,000.00	45,000.00
99-14-04	CanclIPS – Minnesota State Patrol	0.00	19,137.02	0.00
99-14-05	DRE Conference	0.00	16,153.99	0.00
99-14-06	Tech. Grants for Locals	0.00	194,202.76	194,202.76
99-14-07	Law and Legal Training	0.00	33,651.15	33,651.15
99-14-08	Operation NightCAP	0.00	306,756.45	75,640.64
99-14-09	Safe & Sober/NightCAP Media Relations	0.00	37,270.04	33,543.07
99-14-10	DRE Coordination and Support	0.00	111,521.98	49,424.94
99-14-11	NightCAP Liaison	0.00	75,771.56	15,154.31
99-14-12	Supreme Court Judicial Training	0.00	1,350.00	1,080.00
99-14-13	Lifesavers Conference	0.00	37,529.38	15,011.76
99-14-16	BATmobile	0.00	189,517.30	0.00
99-14-17	PBTs for MSP	0.00	49,917.37	0.00
<b>Total Expenditures</b>		<b>\$2,977,701.64</b>	<b>\$4,132,592.37</b>	<b>\$2,495,868.75</b>