

2024

# ANNUAL REPORT



**Rahya Geisler**  
Toward Zero Deaths Regional Coordinator  
Northeast Region  
October 2024



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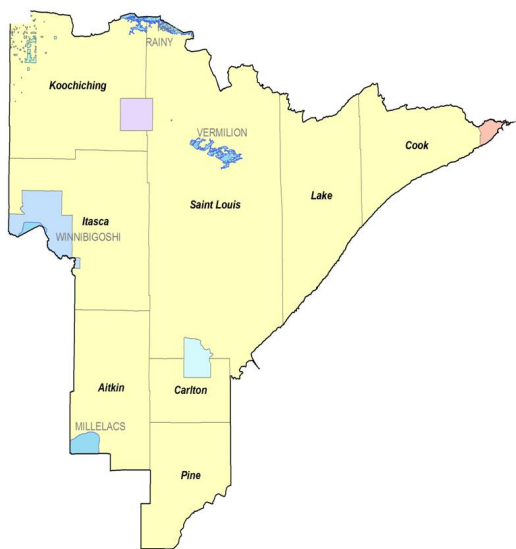
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## Mission:

To create a culture for 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:

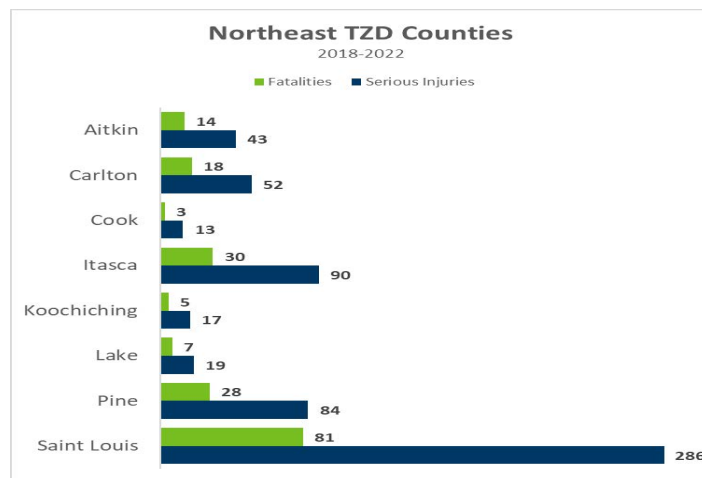
- ❖ Continuous improvements,
- ❖ Engage partners and
- ❖ Evidence-based approaches.



The Northeastern Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) program began in 2010. The counties involved include: Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, Pine, St. Louis

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

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



The leading type of crash resulting in deaths and severe injuries include:

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

The Northeastern Minnesota TZD program is led by a steering committee comprised of the "5 Es:"

- ❖ Enforcement
- ❖ Engineering
- ❖ Education
- ❖ Emergency Medical and Trauma Services
- ❖ Everyone - Community members

## Northeast Minnesota TZD Leadership Contacts

### Engineering

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## Northeast Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths Regional Strategic Plan

### Mission

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

### Goal 1 – Reduce TZD Fatality and Serious Injuries

To continuously decrease traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries in northeast Minnesota from the past **5-year averages** of 35 fatalities and 90 serious injuries (in 2019-2023). 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 seat belt use rates.  
The statewide average was 94.2 percent in 2023, up from 93.3 percent in 2022. As a region our long-term goal is to achieve 100 percent 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. The 2019-2023 5-year average in Northeast Minnesota was 9.4 unbelted fatalities and 20 serious injuries.
- C. To continuously decrease the following:

#### 5-year averages (2019-2023\*) in Northeast TZD Region - Baseline Data

*Contributing Factors:*

	Alcohol	Speed	Distraction	Total
<b>Fatalities</b>	19	13	3	35
<b>Fatal Crashes</b>	17	11	3	31
<b>Serious Injuries</b>	42	35	13	90
<b>Serious Injury Crashes</b>	33	27	10	70

**\*Data are preliminary**

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



## Northeast Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths Regional Strategic Plan

### Total Northeastern Region – Baseline (Preliminary Data)

	Fatalities	Fatal Crashes	Serious Injuries	Serious Injury Crashes
2023 Total	46	42	147	123
2019-2023 Total	195	178	644	535

### Region Goal 2 – TZD Partnership Goals

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

1. Establish the vision of 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 driver education, sober cab development, youth enforcement and education activities.



## Northeast Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths Regional Strategic Plan

**Region Goal 3 – With implementation of the safe system approach, TZD will integrate services to strengthen EMS capabilities focusing on post-crash care to significantly reduce fatalities.**

1. Integrate information systems and highway safety activities

- A. Fatal and serious injury review committees
  - i. EMS agencies collect and share pertinent information about the scene including areas such as road conditions, environment, contributing elements, interagency communication and other areas that impacted the patient and the outcomes.
  - ii. Assist in development of the fatal and serious injury action plan to address and prevent future crashes.
- B. Implementation of Traffic Incident Management (TIM) into coalitions and provide TIM training as needed to first responders.
- C. Public service announcement (PSA) campaign to specifically address the issue of emergency responder safety at crash scenes. Participate in Crash Responder Safety Week in November and throughout the year.
- D. To advocate for, and promote, National Ambulance Safety and EMS Education Standards, with a focus on post-crash patient transport (adults and pediatric populations).
- E. Partner agencies to integrate post-crash care into the Strategic Highway Safety Plan.

2. Integrate EMS systems into TZD Safe Roads coalitions

- A. TZD Safe Roads coalitions will work with EMS on prevention efforts to provide education and outreach to help reduce crashes around the state. EMS can also assist in injury-prevention projects in underserved/diverse areas.
- B. Assist in action planning with the local coalitions/steering committees.
- C. Assist with Stop the Bleed (STB) educational initiatives. Provide STB education to communities to include but not limited to community organizations, schools, law enforcement, MnDOT Districts, and other agencies.

3. Providing timely on-scene care and reduce the time from injury to appropriate trauma level care.

- A. Post-crash care: Trauma-related improvements will help save more lives on the roadways.
  - i. Auto launch - Support the role of air ambulance services as an adjunct to ground ambulance services, especially in rural regions, with documented response time delays.
  - ii. Telemedicine to assist EMS with connection to trauma units. This will support ground ambulance services, especially in rural regions with limited resources. (Pilot project in SC region- Cottonwood, Jackson, Nobles and Rock Counties, SW region – all counties and NE region – all but Pine County.)
  - iii. Sharing of crash data and telemedicine data/results. (Pilot project in SC, SW and NE region)

*\* Please note that results involving trauma are a complex issue – dependance on volunteers for emergency response, capacity and capabilities of hospitals and trauma centers and other factors can impact the outcomes of traumatic situations. It is our hope that with the use of telemedicine trauma-related improvements will help save more lives on the roadways.*

\*\* Resources for Goal 3:

[Section V - Description of Strategies | A Guide for Enhancing Rural Emergency Medical Services | The National Academies Press](#)

[EMS, Highway Safety & Post-Crash Care | EMS.gov](#)

## Regional Seat Belt Survey Rates

The annual, regional observational seat belt survey was not conducted in 2024. Currently, we are taking a look at how the regional observational seat belt checks are completed and are looking to incorporate the regional sites into the statewide survey. However, in Minnesota, we are seeing the statewide annual seat belt compliance steadily increase.

According to the recent annual seat belt survey conducted/funded by the Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) division, more people are buckling up on Minnesota roads. Looking at available survey data dating back to 2010, the 2024 rate of **94.7 percent is the highest rate recorded since 2013 (94.8 percent) and the fourth year in a row we've seen the compliance rate increase.** Increased compliance is demonstrated in populations that have been an ongoing concern, including young adults who are 16- to 29-year-olds and pickup drivers. In addition, the percentage of young adults choosing to wear a seat belt rose to a 10-year high of 93.6 percent. Pickup drivers hit an all-time high of 91.9 percent. We have been working hard to educate Minnesotans on the importance of seat belt safety – and these numbers reflect these efforts.

# 2024 Northeast Regional Workshop

Kitchi Gammi Club – Duluth, MN

May 21, 2024

The Northeast Regional Workshop was well attended again this year with almost 90 attendees. Some of our new attendees included: tribal members, faculty from University of MN – Duluth, and probation. Our impact speaker was Elias Youngblom, a survivor of an impaired crash. Elias has a great story of resilience and humor after a life changing event. He will be an opening speaker at the state TZD conference this year. Our day was packed full of great information sharing and networking.







## Media on Workshop:

<https://www.fox21online.com/2024/05/21/toward-zero-deaths-reminds-drivers-to-slow-down-and-drive-more-safely/>

<https://www.northernnewsnow.com/2024/05/22/spike-traffic-deaths-has-duluth-area-law-enforcement-making-changes/>

<https://www.wdio.com/uncategorized/northeast-minnesotas-toward-zero-deaths-workshop-convenes-in-duluth/>



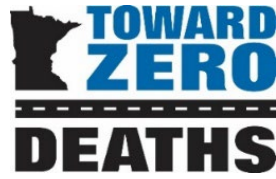


**Northeast Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths  
Regional Workshop  
Kitchi Gammi Club  
831 East Superior Street, Duluth  
Tuesday, May 21, 2024  
8:30 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.**

## **Agenda**

- 8:30 a.m.      **Registration and Continental Breakfast**
- 9 a.m.          **Welcome & Regional Roundup**  
*Capt. Lemon, Minnesota State Patrol, District 2700, and northeast Minnesota TZD  
Regional co-chair*
- 9:15 a.m.      **Safe Systems Approach Implementation Plan**  
*Derek Leuer, PE, State Traffic Safety engineer, MnDOT Office of Traffic Engineering*  
The Safe System Approach is a traffic safety management approach that, like TZD, clearly states, “Deaths and serious injuries are unacceptable.” This human-centered approach acknowledges that humans are fragile and while people make mistakes, they and others shouldn’t pay for those mistakes with their lives. This presentation will briefly introduce the Safe System Approach, its principles, and elements, and how MnDOT is developing an implementation plan to integrate SSA practices into its processes.
- 9:30 a.m.      **How Complete Streets Create a Safe System**  
*Derek Leuer, PE, State Traffic Safety engineer, MnDOT Office of Traffic Engineering*  
Our transportation system doesn’t serve just cars. They also serve our most vulnerable road users, people walking and biking. This presentation is about rethinking our roads to better accommodate vulnerable road users. Focusing on how Complete Streets and the Safe System Approach can help us design roadways that will help reduce speeds and crashes through design.
- 10 a.m.        **What’s New with Responsible Beverage Server Training?**  
*Cleven Duncan, Responsible Beverage Service liaison, DPS Alcohol & Gambling Enforcement*  
Responsible Beverage Service Training is available to law enforcement, public health organizations and Alcohol and Drug community coalitions. These classes are crucial in helping to reduce the societal impact of excessive alcohol consumption.
- 10:30 a.m.     **Break – Exhibits & Refreshments**
- 10:45 a.m.     **A Sixth Sense of Humor**  
*Elias Youngblom, personal impact speaker*  
On March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015, a wrong-way, impaired driver changed a college student’s life. Since then, he has learned to live a full life with a sixth sense of humor.  
<https://www.ndvisionservices.com/news/sixth-sense-humor>





**Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths**  
**2024 Northeast Regional Workshop**

**Evaluation Summary**

Kitchi Gammi Club – Duluth

Tuesday, May 21, 2024

**Number of participants registered:** 79

**Number of participants registered plus walk-ins:** 87

**Total number of attendees (includes pre-registered plus walk-ins minus no-shows):** 83

**Number of Qualtrics evaluations complete:** 25 (30%)

**Number of Exhibitors:** 6

<b>General Sessions</b>	<b>Average Rating (out of 4.00)</b>
Welcome & Regional Roundup	3.36
Safe Systems Approach Implementation Plan	3.40
How Complete Streets Create a Safe System	3.28
What's New with Responsible Beverage Server Training	2.64
A Sixth Sense of Humor	3.76
SHSP – Minnesota Needs You!	3.04
SHSH Activity #2: Focus Area Strategies	2.84
ATV MN – Who Are We?	3.08
Tribal Traffic Safety Summit Update	2.92
Oral Fluids Update	3.05
Northeast TZD Coalition Updates	3.13
SHSP Report Out	3.00
Wrap Up	3.35

Arrangements	Average Rating (out of 4.00)
Convenience of the Registration Process	3.68
Location of the venue	3.28
Facilities were comfortable and appropriate	3.04
Food served for meals and breaks was satisfying	2.96
Electronic participant materials were helpful and useful	3.22
Exhibitors were informative	3.24

#### Comments about the general sessions

- Thank you for all the work to put this workshop together.
- All good information. Derek always brings his sense of humor. :-)
- Session was informative and interesting. I believe regarding road improvements which affect us all, highway staff and road workers should have input as they may provide some valuable feedback for engineering teams. Exercises were interesting and contributed for creative debates but hallway exercise was confusing and chaotic. Overall nice presentation and constructed well.
- The impact speaker really brought the Safe Systems message home. Great to include that person, or someone with a similar life experience.
- The SHSP 'dot survey' activity (placing Y or N stickers in response to goal statements for each of the focus areas) was too crowded (and by the time I got to the end of the hallway, I was out of stickers). I did appreciate how the facilitator asked for clarification (comments from the group) about certain points after the exercise was completed -- even if she got no responses to some of her questions.
- I was struck by how much the E's framework of traffic safety was put forward in this session (or maybe with the TZD organization in general), given that (a) it was first proposed in 2023, by transportation planner Julien H. Harvey (REF: Groeger, 2011), and (b) recent research supporting the Safe Systems approach to traffic safety is showing how it's been ineffective on the whole ("As engineering, enforcement, and education are not equally effective, the E's paradigm neglects the public health principles which stipulate that population level interventions that require less individual effort should be prioritized." (Reference: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2590198223001525>)). Finally, and I say this respect to our law enforcement community and the participants in this workshop -- and recognizing that this could or would likely be a sensitive topic -- I'd propose that future Vision Zero workshops address how its practitioners could better determine where and whether enforcement (and punitive measures in general) are actually improving driving - or biking or walking - behavior. Also courageously, respectfully, and honestly address the ways that enforcement, in the name of improving safe mobility, has the potential (or actual effect) of

worsening racial injustices. This could also include information about reforming standards for police stops, and how a priority should be placed on increasing the investments in safe road design, rather than enforcement, to discourage unsafe behaviors, such as speeding.

- Very good workshop as always. Thank you all.
- Let's make a plan when we find out about SHSP results. Implementation through the coalitions. Do we have a regional steering committee? Very interested in the tribal summit continuing/expanding.

**Please write any comments on the arrangements** (registration, location, food, materials, and exhibitors)

- Please return to other larger venues so there is better accessibility, parking, and more space for people and exhibitors can be in same space.
- Need better table arrangement. All chairs should be faced towards the presenter, no round tables or removed those chairs facing backwards.
- I thought the venue was nice in general, but maybe not for this type of event. It seemed cramped in the workshop area. Many had to turn around to see the presentation which made it hard to see and take notes. I like it best when the vendors are in the same area as the workshop, so they feel part of the whole event. I feel there were less people visiting booths when they had to go downstairs.
- Nice presentation. Well done.
- Interesting venue to see, but space was very cramped. Food and coffee ran out. Food was decent, from what we had. Didn't like the vendors being away from participants.

**Do you have suggestions for topics you would like to see offered at future workshops?**

- Traffic safety culture; going more in depth with a variety of messages, strategies, ideas
- Discussion/root cause of poor driver behavior that seems to have gotten worse with COVID and not improved. Why are people choosing to speed, run red lights, text while driving, etc. In addition to more enforcement what can be done to change driver behavior?
- More about what TZD regions are doing to educate on the SHSP focus areas. We can learn from other regions.
- More info on the Impact Teen Drivers teen program and what schools have went through the program.
- Maybe information on EMS, their data, what their struggles and successes are.
- Didn't like hallway exercise. Many good topics but too rushed during exercise.
- Most presentations are what we want to do, but it would be nice to have a success story as well.
- A presentation by law enforcement on procedures when arriving on a scene and/or steps for a crash reconstruction?
- (Please see my previous comments regarding the shift away from the "E's Framework as well as recent research about the effectiveness of relying on Enforcement as a strategy to eliminate traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries); I'd be very interested to hear from a speaker (jurisdiction or a consultant) who has successfully implemented that broad, elusive and essential goal of "Improved safety culture" -- e.g., what worked, what didn't. Lessons learned, how before- and after- community attitudes were measured, etc.  
I'd also encourage you to seek out an impact speaker who represents the most vulnerable roadway users (i.e., a person who's been seriously injured, but have lived to tell the tale while walking, jogging and/or bicycling).

- I'd also be interested in presentations that:
  - (a) reinforce the idea that people who bike and walk are legitimate users of our roadways (perhaps hearing from people who CHOOSE to bike or walk as transportation and why, and/or from those who can't afford a personal vehicle, so they have to walk, or bike or use transit);
  - b) describe the demographic trends showing how fewer teens and young adults are choosing to drive;
  - c) makes the public health case for building opportunities for physical activity into our day-to-day lives and how Safe Systems infrastructure improvements contribute to that;
  - d) gives more detail about the comparatively high rates of bike/ped fatalities and injuries (are there patterns emerging about contributing factors? Are there examples of mitigation projects that show a before- and after improvement at a high-risk location?);
 And finally, consider inviting the City of Superior's Mayor, Jim Paine, who's a great advocate for walking and biking and not only just making the roads safer, but also how these improvements make your community a better place to live. (Incidentally, he was hit by a car when he was riding a bike as a child, and keeps that in the forefront of why he supports safe systems).
- I like to hear about what is happening with TZD outreach. What is happening elsewhere as well? What can we do differently to further reduce deaths??

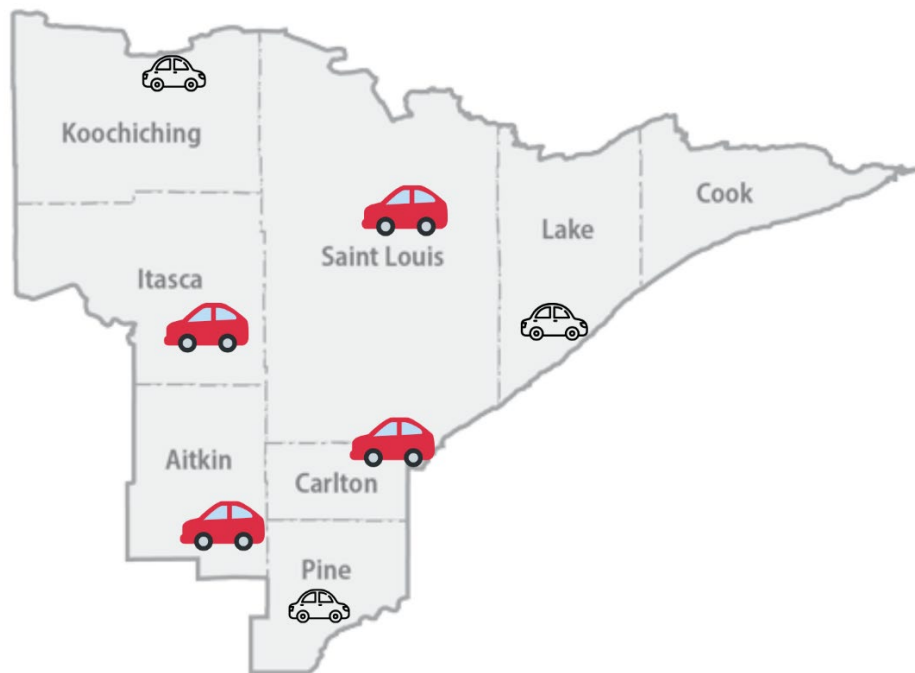
**What are your suggestions for building and maintaining support for this region's Minnesota TZD program?**

- More actual community activities and less meetings just to have meetings. Coalitions and meetings are fine, but what are we actually doing to educate? How are we educating younger drivers, older drivers, passenger safety, bike and ped safety, etc?
- The new director seems very knowledgeable and organized. I believe she will continue her outreach as she is doing to expand services.
- Some more networking time or collaboration time for all the E's?
- Encourage all jurisdictions and tribes to apply for the federal SS4A planning and/or implementation grants that are now available!
- More outreach to students! Get new people involved. More tribal participation, even if that means going to them. Tribal coalitions??

**Any other comments or suggestions are welcome**

- Overall, a good conference.
- Roads should be equipped for handicapped as speaker pointed out they are not and that is a large problem in my opinion.
- Be vigilant in encouraging the use of the word "eliminate" instead of "minimize" or "reduce" transportation-related fatalities and serious injuries.





## NE Region Safe Roads Coalitions:

### Funded:

Driving 4 Safe Communities – Southern St. Louis and Carlton Counties

Arrive Alive Coalition – Northern St. Louis County

Itasca County

Aitkin County

### Unfunded:

Pine County

Koochiching County

Lake County

University of Minnesota – currently building a coalition for college campus

## NE Region Successes

This last year has brought so many new partnerships, collaboration opportunities and progress in the Northeast! I am grateful to have this opportunity to work along side so many amazing people in many sectors of traffic safety. I am amazed every day at the sheer number of people across our state that make it a priority to keep our roads safe in Minnesota. We still have a lot of work to do to bring that number to zero. Minnesota is a leader in traffic safety, for sure. Here is a snapshot of some of those successes in the Northeast and Statewide:

- Organizing the 2024 Tribal Traffic Safety Summit – to be an annual event
- Applying and receiving for the Tribal TZD Roundtable events with the ACTS grants
- Creating new partnerships with Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (MIAC)
- Joining the Advisory Council on Tribal Transportation (ACTT) as TZD rep
- Creating the “Mission in the Middle” committee for the Northeast Region
- Hosted 2 stakeholder meetings in Koochiching and Lake Counties
- Created, coordinated and hosted 1<sup>st</sup> annual “Crossing Borders for Passenger Safety” event in Duluth
- Partnering with University of Minnesota Duluth to create Safe Roads coalitions for College campuses
- Accepted into the MnDOT’s Leadership Development Team Program for ‘24 -‘25
- Completed International Technology of Engineers (ITE)- Safe System Approach course with 17 PDH hours



## TZD Partnerships

Creating and maintaining partnerships is vital in the daily work we do. Changing the beliefs and habits of our communities in Traffic Safety is the key. When we all have a common goal and outcome – to save lives on our roads – we can then begin the work we need to do in our communities to make changes to help save lives. Please see the list below of activities, meetings, and events that I have attended, presented, or partnered with.

### Internal:

- Attend regular check-in's with State District Engineer
- Meet with regional MSP Lieutenants and Captains
- Attend TZD Coordinator's quarterly meetings
- Partner with OTS and DPS to coordinate Tribal Traffic Safety Summit event
- Meet with DOT staff as requested
- Meet with regional TZD chairs to discuss Workshop and Steering Committee meetings
- Host Summer MnDOT D1 employee picnics in Virginia and Duluth
- Attend Safe System Approach Implementation Plan (SSAIP) meetings
- Attend D1 Employee engagement planning meetings
- Collaborate with MSP and others to start NE Traffic Incident Management Coalitions (TIMS)

### External:

- Present in Lake and Koochiching County – TZD Stakeholders meetings
- Collaborate with UMD faculty and Staff to start a TZD for Colleges coalition
- Attend Regional EMS meetings
- Attend NEMNATP meetings
- Create and host "Mission in the Middle" mtgs for the NE
- Lead and organize Tribal Traffic Safety Summit meetings and Summit
- Partner with Tribal leaders in Traffic Safety
- Attend Lifesavers Conference in Denver, CO
- Attend National Transportation Indian Country Conference in Durant, Ok
- Present and attend as a member - Advisory Council for Tribal Transportation
- Attend Tribal State Relations trainings at: Boise Forte and Red Lake Nations
- Attend Indian Health Services Injury Prevention trainings











## NE Regional Activities

This past year I focused on the “bigger” picture. How can I bring TZD to the NE Region more broadly and efficiently? This is something I am always pondering in my daily work. I believe that making connections and cultivating partnerships is the way to do this. Taking time to create coalitions and multi-agency task force committees has been top of my priorities for the Northeast. I am very passionate about bringing TZD to our Tribal partners. The NE Region shares land with 4 of Minnesota's 11 Tribal Nations. Working with state, local and tribal partners to prevent fatalities and serious injuries in Indian Country is important. I am humbled and honored to lead these initiatives and events on behalf of TZD. Below are some highlights of the last year:

### • Education

- ✚ Host D1 Staff Picnic in Virginia and Duluth – TZD seat belt convincer and fatal vision goggles for staff to educate on impaired driving and seat belt safety – see pictures
- ✚ Meet with University of Minnesota Duluth staff and faculty regularly to organize a college campus Safe Roads Coalition – see handout
- ✚ Attend Pine County “National Night Out” – Seat Belt Convincer was a hit – see pictures

### • EMS

- ✚ Collaborate with Arrowhead EMS to apply for Safe Streets for All grant
- ✚ Attend Arrowhead EMS meetings
- ✚ Partner with state TIMS coordinator to start coalitions in the NE

### • Enforcement

- ✚ Itasca County Hwy 169 Task force – bring law enforcement, engineers, and county stakeholders together to discuss the high fatalities on a 5 Mile stretch of Hwy 169 east of Grand Rapids. This group is working on Short-, medium- and long-term solutions to prevent fatalities from crashes. Engineers are working on countermeasures for the various Intersections on this corridor. Public Health partnered with law enforcement to start the “Hwy 169 Safe Road Zone Campaign”. This campaign will go through 2025 – see campaign card

- ✚ Hosted 1<sup>st</sup> annual “Crossing Borders for Passenger Safety” media event  
The gathering of 13 law enforcement, EMS and fire departments along  
With TZD, WI Zero, and the Office of traffic Safety to promote seat belt  
And child passenger safety in September – see poster and media links
- ✚ Released media advisory on the “Move over Law” and interviewed -  
<https://www.wdio.com/front-page/top-stories/minnesota-state-patrol-will-have-more-troopers-labor-day-weekend/>

## • Engineering

- ✚ Plan with State Aid - Local Road Traffic Safety Workshops – see agenda
- ✚ Attend the Advisory Council on Tribal Transportation – TZD rep
- ✚ Attend the Northeast Minnesota Area Transportation Partnership meetings – NEMNATP
- ✚ Visited Swan River Roundabout construction site – brought Pizza To my daughter and the crew – see pictures

## • Everyone

- ✚ Hosted NE Regional Roundtable meetings: - see agendas  
December 2023 – Hermantown  
March 2024 – Virtual meeting  
June 2024 – Grand Rapids
- ✚ Coordinate Tribal Traffic Safety Summit  
April 3, 2024 – Hinckley, M  
Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe – Hosted  
2025 Summit – Upper Sioux will host – see info
- ✚ Create “Mission in the Middle” committee for the NE  
Bringing together staff from various agencies across  
The NE region that have intersecting missions with  
Traffic safety



# CROSSING BORDERS FOR PASSENGER SAFETY



MINNESOTA WELCOME CENTER  
THOMPSON HILL, DULUTH, MN  
SEPT. 5, 2024

MINNESOTA STATE PATROL, WISCONSIN STATE PATROL, DULUTH POLICE DEPARTMENT,  
ST. LOUIS COUNTY SHERIFF, DOUGLAS COUNTY SHERIFF, HERMANTOWN POLICE  
DEPARTMENT, PROCTOR POLICE DEPARTMENT, SUPERIOR POLICE DEPARTMENT,  
LIFE LINK III, MAYO AMBULANCE, DULUTH FIRE DEPARTMENT, SUPERIOR FIRE DEPARTMENT,  
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA-DULUTH POLICE DEPARTMENT, MINNESOTA TOWARD ZERO  
DEATHS, ZERO IN WISCONSIN, OFFICE OF TRAFFIC SAFETY – MINNESOTA  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY







# MINNESOTA TOWARD ZERO DEATHS

## Crossing Borders for Passenger Safety Event

St. Louis County, MN & Douglas County, WI

**What:** Passenger Safety Awareness Event

**Where:** Duluth – MN Welcome Center – Thompson Hill  
8525 W Skyline Pkwy, Duluth, MN 55810

**When:** September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024 - 11am short program  
EMS Vehicle set up – 10:30am

**Who:** MN State Patrol, WI State Patrol, Duluth PD, UMD PD, St. Louis County Sheriff, Douglas County Sheriff, Hermantown PD, Proctor PD, Superior PD, Life Link III, Mayo Ambulance, Duluth Fire, Superior Fire, MN Toward Zero Deaths, Zero in Wisconsin, Office of Traffic Safety – MN Department of Public Safety

**Why:** Create Awareness on Child Passenger and Seat Belt Safety.  
NHTSA Enforcement Campaign – Sept. 15-21<sup>st</sup>

**Questions or for more information:** Rahya Geisler – [Rahya.geisler@state.mn.us](mailto:Rahya.geisler@state.mn.us)  
218.830.1477

### Articles from the event:

<https://www.wdio.com/front-page/top-stories/minnesota-and-wisconsin-first-responders-cross-borders-for-passenger-safety/>





**Why we are conducting increased traffic enforcement:**

- Deaths on Minnesota roadways are up this year. We want to change that.
- This stretch of highway has a higher rate of crashes and deaths than the state average.
- Unbelted occupants (over 90% of people wear seat belts in our region) are twice as likely to be killed in a crash. 3 out of 4 unbelted traffic deaths occur in Greater MN.
- Distracted drivers are much more likely to be involved in a crash. Minnesota has a hands-free law. Remember hands-free is not necessarily distraction-free.
- Impaired driving doesn't just happen at night.
- Almost 1/3 of roadway deaths involve high speeds.

**Help us make our roads safe for everyone!**  
 Sheriff Joe Dasovich









## Media and Communications

<https://www.fox21online.com/2024/05/21/toward-zero-deaths-reminds-drivers-to-slow-down-and-drive-more-safely/>

<https://www.northernnewsnow.com/2024/05/22/spike-traffic-deaths-has-duluth-area-law-enforcement-making-changes/>

<https://www.wdio.com/uncategorized/northeast-minnesotas-toward-zero-deaths-workshop-convenes-in-duluth/>

<https://www.wdio.com/front-page/top-stories/minnesota-state-patrol-will-have-more-troopers-labor-day-weekend/>

<https://www.fox21online.com/2024/09/06/minnesota-and-wisconsin-law-enforcement-agencies-host-passenger-safety-awareness-event/>

<https://www.wdio.com/front-page/top-stories/minnesota-and-wisconsin-first-responders-cross-borders-for-passenger-safety/>

# 2025 Minnesota Tribal Traffic Safety Summit

**March 24–26, 2025**

Day One: 1:00–5:00 p.m. (optional training)

Day Two: 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Day Three: 9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

[Prairie's Edge Casino](#)

5616 Prairie's Edge Lane  
Granite Falls, MN 56241



## About the Event

This summit is designed to bring together traffic safety professionals, invested stakeholders, and community members to provide education and raise awareness of crash-related injuries and deaths affecting Minnesota's Tribal communities. The event also aims to identify strategies that will prevent serious and fatal injury crashes from occurring on Tribal lands and impacting Tribal communities.

## Call for Presentations

Interested in presenting at the 2025 summit? [Submit a presentation idea](#) by October 30, 2024.

With questions, contact [rahya.geisler@state.mn.us](mailto:rahya.geisler@state.mn.us).

[SUBMIT A PRESENTATION IDEA](#)

## Event Goals

- Solicit information and feedback related to traffic safety issues from Tribal Nation partners.
- Improve crash data sharing and discuss prevention strategies with Tribal community members.
- Share experiences and celebrate successful Tribal Nation traffic safety initiatives.
- Identify traffic safety resources available to Tribal Nation partners.
- Map out collaborative strategies to prevent fatal, serious, and life-altering crashes affecting Tribal community members.
- Identify strategies that will address the disproportionate fatality rate of Tribal Nation members on Minnesota's roadways.

## Who Should Attend

- Attorneys
- Child Passenger Safety Advocates
- City, County, State and Tribal Engineers
- Departments of Transportation, Public Safety, and Health Employees
- Driver Educators
- Drug Recognition Evaluators
- EMS and Health Care Personnel
- Government Employees
- Judges
- Law Enforcement Officials
- Local and State Elected Officials
- Probation Staff
- Public Health Officials
- Safe Communities Coalitions
- Traffic Safety Stakeholders
- Tribal Council Leaders

## Questions?

Contact Rahya Geisler at [Rahya.Geisler@state.mn.us](mailto:Rahya.Geisler@state.mn.us).

## Sponsors

This summit is offered by the Minnesota Departments of [Health](#), [Public Safety](#), and [Transportation](#).

# Agenda

START TIME	DURATION	AGENDA
9:00 AM	15 mins	Welcome & Introductions
9:15 AM	10 mins	Project Overview & Goals/Objectives
9:25 AM	15 mins	History Lesson
9:40 AM	15 mins	Crash Data - <i>What's the problem &amp; why local roads?</i>
9:55 AM	40 mins	Safe System Approach
10:35 AM	15 mins	BREAK
10:50 AM	35 mins	Ice Breaker – <i>Where do you stand?</i>
11:25 AM	1 hour 5 mins	The Big Book of Ideas Session 1 – Rural Strategies
12:30 PM	1 hour	LUNCH <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lunch &amp; Learn Session – Access Management</li> </ul>
1:30 PM	10 mins	TZD Presentation
1:40 PM	1 hour	The Big Book of Ideas Session 2 – Urban Strategies
2:40 PM	15 mins	BREAK
2:55 PM	30 mins	Communicating Traffic Safety
3:25 AM	15 mins	Safety Funding Sources
3:40 PM	10 mins	Highway Safety Improvement Program
3:50 PM	10 mins	Wrap Up and Commitment Statement – <i>What I am taking away?</i>

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

PDH hours earned: \_\_\_\_\_



## What is a Coalition?

A coalition is a group made up of people, organizations, and constituencies working together to achieve a goal. Safe Roads Coalitions can include individuals as well as representatives of other organizations, such as police departments or emergency services providers.

## Advantages of a College Campus Coalition:

- Coalitions are often more effective than individuals working alone - or even different organizations working independently.
- If a campus want to change behavior or attitudes it is important to know what is happening in that community.
- Coalitions can build strong college campus support for opportunities to make campus more accessible and safer for people of diverse visual, hearing, and mobility needs.
- Working together brings more resources and a bigger voice to your needs.
- When a project demonstrates both widespread support and active involvement, opinion leaders, faculty, students, and the community will begin to take the effort seriously and pay attention.
- There will be collaborative research and educational opportunities for faculty and students within and across disciplines and colleges (e.g., Public Health and Engineering).
- Student leadership with faculty organization and facilitation is the key to long term successes.
- Campus and community engagement opportunities are endless during the year.
- Be part of a broad-based grassroots opportunity and pioneer College Campus TZD Safe Roads Coalitions.

## Coalition Members

- Coalition members are the ambassadors for the program and can provide
  - ⇒ diverse skills;
  - ⇒ access to target population;
  - ⇒ their particular expertise or resources to help the cause

## Finding Members

- Who are the Key community leaders that need to be at the table? The 5 E's - Enforcement, Education, EMS and Engineering and **EVERYONE!**
- Everyone: Partners in the College community, ex.: Businesses, non-profits, faith-based communities, etc.
- Who has a personal interest in traffic safety in this College community?



## TZD Safe Roads Coalition Grant Program Opportunity:

Safe Roads Coalitions are "working" coalitions funded by grants from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety. Grants are written for a one-year period in this competitive grant program.

To apply for funding or for more information, please visit <https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/ots/tzd-safe-roads/Pages/default>. \*List not complete. Additional grant requirements listed on website.

For more information contact: Rahya Geisler: [rahya.geisler@state.mn.us](mailto:rahya.geisler@state.mn.us)  
218.830.1477

## 2:25 PM | BREAKOUT SESSIONS (CONTINUED)

### SESSION 6 – BALLROOM 3

#### Tribal Injury Prevention with Traffic Safety Partners

*KaRee Liimatainen, Injury Prevention Coordinator, Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa and Allison Nicolson, CTRS, CPSI, Essentia Health*

The Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa has been championing an injury prevention program since 1999. In this presentation, we will provide a concise overview of the program's historical context, its sustainability strategies, and the collaborative efforts with external agencies. Moreover, we will explore the significant impact these initiatives have had on the broader community, highlighting the key benefits and achievements of the program.

## 3:15 PM | ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & CLOSING CEREMONY

### BALLROOM 4

#### Roadway to Safety and Next Steps: A Mentimeter Activity

*Rahya Geisler, MN Toward Zero Deaths Program Coordinator, NE Region, MnDOT District 1 and Lisa Kons, Minnesota Network of Employers for Traffic Safety, State Coordinator*

*Wrap Up – Col. Matt Langer, Minnesota State Patrol*

*Retiring of the Colors – Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Veterans*

*Adjournment*

**THANK YOU TO TODAY'S MODERATOR LEVI BROWN!**



**THANK YOU TO OUR EXHIBITORS!**

Alliant Engineering, Inc. · Fond du Lac Human Services  
CIL Broward, Center for Independent Living of Broward  
Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (MIAC) · MDH · MnDOT  
Minnesota Network of Employers for Traffic Safety  
Minnesota State Patrol · Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths  
National Safety Council · The Plum Catalyst



# ROADWAY TO SAFETY

## STRONGER TOGETHER

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3, 2024**  
**GRAND CASINO | HINCKLEY, MN**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:

**mi** DEPARTMENT  
OF HEALTH



**mi** DEPARTMENT OF  
TRANSPORTATION



## 7:30 AM | REGISTRATION & BREAKFAST

## 8:30 AM | OPENING CEREMONY & WELCOME – BALLROOM 4

Presentation of the Colors – Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Veterans

Invocation – Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe

Drum Group – The Mille Lacs Singers

Welcome

Samuel Moose, Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, Commissioner of Administration

Bob Jacobson, Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Public Safety

Peggy Flanagan, Lieutenant Governor of Minnesota (invited)

## 9:15 AM | KEYNOTE PRESENTATIONS – BALLROOM 4

### Disproportionate Deaths on Tribal Lands

*Tabatha Austin-Harris, Highway Safety Specialist, U.S. Dept. of Transportation*

This presentation will delve into the prominence of motor vehicles as the leading cause of death among American Indian and Alaska Native populations. We will explore the potential of employing a safe system approach to diminish fatalities and injuries, emphasizing the importance of behavioral changes that can ultimately save lives.

### Brief History of Minnesota Tribal Lands and Tribal Civil Laws

*Shannon Geshick, Executive Director, Minnesota Indian Affairs Council*

*Tadd Johnson, Senior Advisor for Government Affairs, Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe*

This presentation will include a comprehensive review of the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council, along with a synopsis of the relevant Federal, State, and Tribal laws concerning land/jurisdiction.

## 10:45 AM | BREAK

## 11:00 AM | BREAKOUT SESSIONS

### SESSION 1 – BALLROOM 1 Cannabis and Traffic Safety Discussion

*Sgt. Tyler Milless, Drug Recognition Expert Coordinator, Minnesota State Patrol*

In this session, attendees will gain an understanding of Minnesota's cannabis laws in the context of driving. In an open forum discussion participants can actively engage in posing questions and contributing to the dialogue.

### SESSION 2 – BALLROOM 3 You said HOW MUCH? Funding and Resources

*Chris Kwlinski, Safety Program Specialist, Office of Tribal Transportation, Federal Highway Administration; Tracy Olson, Tribal Affairs, BIL Grants Coordinator, Equity in Transportation, MnDOT; Michael Bowman, Director, White Earth Public Transit; Jeff Donnell, Construction Manager, Red Lake Tribal Engineering Division*

This presentation will provide the latest information on safety funding opportunities available to tribes through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the MN Department of Transportation (MnDOT), federal funds through a tribal support contract. Representatives from the White Earth and Red Lake Nations will discuss collaborative efforts within these programs.

## 12:00 PM | MIDDAY MESSAGE – BALLROOM 4

*Commissioner Nancy Daubenburger, MnDOT*

*Commissioner Dr. Brooke Cunningham, MDH (video message)*

## 12:10 PM | LUNCH – BALLROOM 4

## 12:40 PM | YOUTH ART EXHIBITION & AWARDS – BALLROOM 4

*Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Youth*

## 12:50 PM | STATE HIGHWAY STRATEGIC PLAN PRESENTATION – BALLROOM 4

*Derek Leuer, PE, State Traffic Safety Engineer, MnDOT Office of Traffic Engineering*

MnDOT is currently in the process of developing the upcoming five-year Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP). This plan will serve as a crucial guide, shaping and directing millions of dollars in infrastructure, enforcement initiatives, and educational programs.

## 1:10 PM | BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS UPDATES – BALLROOM 4

*Robert Frazier, Civil Engineer, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Division of Transportation*

## 1:25 PM | BREAKOUT SESSIONS

### SESSION 3 – BALLROOM 1 Human Trafficking

*Brian Pottratz, Human Trafficking Investigator, Leech Lake Tribal Police*

*Ana Negrete, Community Planner, Missing Murdered Indigenous Relative Office*

This presentation focuses on the fundamentals of human trafficking encompassing both Sex Trafficking and Labor Trafficking. It will delve into the definition of Human Trafficking and explore the methods traffickers employ to target their victims. Additionally, the presentation will address cultural considerations specifically relevant to Native American victims.

### SESSION 4 – BALLROOM 3 Pediatric Safe Transport

*Melody Schreiner, RN, BSN, Trauma and Critical Care Outreach Clinical Liaison, Hennepin Healthcare*

Explore the various safe methods available for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) transport of pediatric patients and understand their significance. Evaluate the preparedness of your department for pediatric cases and gain insights into the EMS-C Pediatric Readiness Initiative.

## 2:25 PM | BREAKOUT SESSIONS

### SESSION 5 – BALLROOM 1

**Pedestrian Safety and Vulnerable Road Users on Tribal Lands**

*Michael Petesch, Active Transportation Data Coordinator, Office of Transit and Active Transportation and Sonja Piper, Active Transportation Safety Engineer, Office of Traffic Engineering, MnDOT*

Learn about the collaborative and innovative efforts between MnDOT and Tribal Nations in investigating and tackling pedestrian safety. This session will cover specific projects, diverse data collection approaches, trends in vulnerable road user safety at the statewide level, valuable insights gained, and the identification of safety countermeasure opportunities applicable to both rural and urban settings.





# MINNESOTA TOWARD ZERO DEATHS

## Northeast TZD Steering Committee Meeting

December 20, 2023, 10 – 11:30 a.m.

MnDOT District 1

Hermantown Police Department

Hermantown, MN

### Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
  - Cannabis Updates  
*Sgt. Tyler Milless, DRE Coordinator, Minnesota State Patrol*  
Handout NETS flyer
  - Review Annual Report  
Any questions?
  - 2023 Northeast TZD Regional Workshop Discussion  
Impact Speaker idea for 2024 workshop?
  - 2023 Statewide TZD Conference Discussion  
*Nov. 14 & 15, 2023 – Mayo Civic Center in Rochester*  
Anyone go? Feedback?
  - Upcoming TZD Campaigns
    - *DWI: Nov. 22-25; Nov. 30 Dec. 2; 7-9; 14-16; 21-23; 28-31, 2023*
  - Round Robin and Safe Roads Coalitions Updates
    - ✚ Next Meeting: March 26, 2024 – Virginia Hibbing area - TBD
- \* NE TZD Workshop – May 21, 2024 – Kitchi Gammi Club - Duluth, MN  
\* Tribal Traffic Safety Summit – April 3, 2024 – Grand Casino - Hinckley, MN  
\* 2024 State TZD Conference – October 22-23, 2024 – St. Cloud, MN



# MINNESOTA TOWARD ZERO DEATHS

## Northeast TZD Round Table Meeting

March 26, 2024, 10 – 11:30 a.m.

MnDOT District 1

~~Iron Trails Motor Event Center~~

~~Virginia, MN~~

Virtual – due to weather

### Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- 2023 Preliminary data – Fatal Crashes and Serious Injuries (2<sup>nd</sup> page)
- Hwy 169 – Itasca County – Fatal Crashes
- Year to date -State fatal crash data – as of 3.26.24 – 72; 2023 was 45
  - 2024 NE fatal crashes: Aitkin – 2, Carlton – 1, Cook – 1, Itasca – 2  
Koochiching – 2, St. Louis – 4, Lake – 1, Pine -
- Upcoming TZD Campaigns
  - *Distracted: April 1-30, Speed: May 1 – Sept. 2, DWI: Thurs-Sat, May 9- Sept. 2*
- State TZD Conference presentation ideas – send them in
- Safe Roads Coalitions Updates and Round Robin – 4 E's

📍 Next Meeting: June 20, 2024 – Itasca Resource Center, Grand Rapids

*\*Tribal Traffic Safety Summit – April 3, 2024 – Grand Casino - Hinckley, MN*

*\* NE TZD Workshop – May 21, 2024 – Kitchi Gammi Club - Duluth, MN*

*\*2024 State TZD Conference – October 22-23, 2024 – St. Cloud, MN*





# MINNESOTA TOWARD ZERO DEATHS

Rahya Geisler -NE Region Toward Zero Deaths Coordinator – [Rahya.geisler@state.mn.us](mailto:Rahya.geisler@state.mn.us)

Yes, here are the preliminary numbers for 2023 crashes based on CrashMART. I’m just including the reportable crashes here. There are “nonreportable” crashes that occur that do not go towards the official counts. Reasons for being a nonreportable crash include parking lot crashes, crashes outside the trafficway, crashes deemed to be homicide/suicide, fatalities that occur after the 30 day rule or of natural causes, and some other reasons.

Note these numbers are subject to change:

Area	Fatal Crashes	Fatalities	Serious Injury Crashes
Statewide	374	413 (DPS current count is 410)	1731
ATP 1	42	46	125
Aitkin County	3	3	8
Carlton County	3	3	12
Cook County	0	0	1
Itasca County	7	7	24
Koochiching County	1	1	3
Lake County	2	2	9
Pine County	4	4	16
St. Louis County	22	26	52

\*\*\* 37 participants

2. Participants

Name

Geisler, Rahya (DOT)

Andrew Gruis

Burch, Abigail (DPS)

Patty Nordean

Frank Scherf NE MN LEL OTS

Joe Norstrom

Hill, Duane (DOT)

Jacqueline Primeau







# MINNESOTA TOWARD ZERO DEATHS

Dan Swanson  
John Schlangen  
Shane Troumbly  
Bruce Remme (Guest)  
Peritz, Alex (DOT)  
Monte Fronk  
Fredrickson, Derek (DOT)  
Adri  
Naomi Larson  
Engeldinger, Jason (DPS)  
Luke, Morris (DOT)  
Darbie Eschenbacher  
Jennifer Kinny - Virginia PD  
Caitlin Korpi  
JinYeene Neumann  
Victor Lund  
Michael Tinsley  
Joseph Jurewicz  
Kaitlyn Roach  
Lisa Mortenson  
Gischia, Rachel  
Amanda Schafter (D4SC)  
Kalnbach, Michael K (DOT)  
Adam Shadiow  
Amy Dotzler  
Pat Eliassen  
Lemon, Charles (DPS)  
Miles, James (DOT)  
Tiffany

Notes: Round Robin with all Coalition Coordinators

Cook County Health Fair – April 19-20

Mock Crash – May 1<sup>st</sup> McGregor

Aitkin County Stakeholders mtg – April 30<sup>th</sup>

Mock Crash – May 2<sup>nd</sup> Deer River

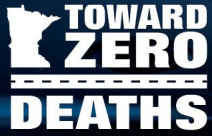
Children's Fair – April 27<sup>th</sup> Grand Rapids

Jim Miles – shared safety projects in D1

Vic Lund – shared projects in St. Louis County; Left turn lanes, J turns, Railroad crossings.

Hwy 169 Project – shared why what where info on crashes in last 5 years.





# MINNESOTA TOWARD ZERO DEATHS

## Northeast TZD Round Table Meeting

June 20, 2024, 10 – 11:30 a.m.

MnDOT District 1

Itasca Resource Center

Grand Rapids, MN

### Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Itasca County Projects – Engineers
- Hwy 169 Task Force
- Year to date -**State** fatal crash data – as of 6.17.24- 184, YTD 2023 was 140
  - **2024 NE fatal crashes:** Aitkin – 3, Carlton – 1, Itasca – 3  
Koochiching – 4, St. Louis – 9, Lake – 1, Pine -1, Cook – 0
- NE Workshop Debriefing - May 21, 2024 @ Kitchi Gammi Club, Duluth, MN
- Upcoming TZD Campaigns:
  - *Speed: May 1 - Sept. 2, 2024 (covers 100 deadliest days) & July 1-31*
  - *DWI (optional): Every Thursday-Saturday, May 9 - Sept. 2, 2024*
  - *Seat belts and child restraints: May 20 - June 2, 2024*
  - *DWI: Aug. 16 - Sept. 2, 2024*
  - *Move Over (optional): Aug. 31, 2024*
- Regional Partnership Opportunities:
  - Tools and resources available*
  - Summer Community Events*
  - Responsible Beverage Server Trainings*
  - Teen Impact Program*
  - ATV Safety Education - Regional Committee*
  - Motorcycle Safety Education*
  - Seat Belt Convincer, Pedal Cart, Fatal Vision Goggles*
- Safe Roads Coalitions Updates and Round Robin – 4 E's
  - 🚦 Next Meeting: October 1, 2024 – Hermantown Police Department

\*2024 State TZD Conference – October 22-23, 2024 – St. Cloud, MN

\*2025 NE Regional Workshop – May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025 – Virginia, MN

