

NORTHWEST TOWARD ZERO DEATHS REGION ANNUAL REPORT

2024



Sue Johnson

MnDOT

10/25/2023



Northwest Region Annual Report

Mission

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

Vision

To prevent fatalities and serious injuries on Minnesota's roads to get to zero.



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

Background Regional Death Rates

Northwest Region

- There were 17 traffic-related fatalities in 2023.
- Five-year average was 18.
- 2023 serious injuries were 60. 2022 serious injuries were 67.
- The five-year average was 65 serious injuries.
- Red Lake and Roseau County had zero fatalities in 2023.

Northwest TZD Region

2019 to 2023 (preliminary 03/25/24) fatal and serious injury crashes on all Minnesota public roads

Goal 1: Reduce TZD Fatality and Serious Injuries

To continuously decrease traffic related fatalities and serious injuries in Northwest Minnesota from the past five year average of 18 fatalities and 65 serious injuries (2019-2023).

Five Year Averages: Northwest TZD Region

	Metric	Impaired	Speed	Distraction	Unbelted	Total
CRASHES	K Crashes	7	6	2	5	17
	A Crashes	17	14	8	9	52
	K+A Crashes	24	19	10	14	69
INJURIES	Fatalities	7	6	2	5	18
	A Injuires	21	17	10	11	65
	K+A Injuries	27	22	12	15	83

2023 Outcomes: Northwest TZD Region

	Metric	Impaired	Speed	Distraction	Unbelted	Total
CRASHES	K Crashes	6	7	0	3	17
	A Crashes	15	9	4	6	60
	K+A Crashes	21	16	4	9	77
INJURIES	Fatalities	6	7	0	3	17
	A Injuires	16	10	4	7	67
	K+A Injuries	22	17	4	10	84

Baseline Comparison

Metric	Total Count		Average	Avg. Annual Percent Change		
	2023	2019-2023	5-year Avg.	Region	Statewide	
CRASHES	K Crashes	17	83	17	-10.2%	+3.8%
	A Crashes	60	262	52	+4.3%	+8.2%
	K+A Crashes	77	345	69	+1.0%	+7.3%
INJURIES	Fatalities	17	88	18	-11.7%	+3.9%
	A Injuires	67	325	65	-0.3%	+7.8%
	K+A Injuries	84	413	83	-2.5%	+7.1%

Northwest TZD Region

2019 to 2023 (preliminary 03/25/24) fatal and serious injury crashes on all Minnesota public roads

General Traffic Safety Trends

	Metric	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	5-Year Trend
CRASHES	K Crashes	20	17	21	8	17	Decreasing
	A Crashes	50	50	49	53	60	Increasing*
	K+A Crashes	70	67	70	61	77	Increasing
FATALITIES	Total	23	17	22	9	17	Decreasing
	Pedestrian	1	1	4	0	2	Increasing
	Bicyclist	0	0	0	0	0	N/A
	Motorcyclist	2	3	1	1	4	Increasing
	Unbelted	8	4	5	3	3	Decreasing*
A INJURIES	Total	69	65	57	67	67	Decreasing
	Pedestrian	2	2	2	4	2	Increasing
	Bicyclist	2	3	2	0	2	Decreasing
	Motorcyclist	5	7	11	7	9	Increasing
	Unbelted	18	10	11	7	7	Decreasing*

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

NOTE: number of crashes not people killed or seriously injured

	SHSP Focus Area	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	5-Year Trend
BEHAVIOR	Impairment	25	28	22	24	21	Decreasing*
	Speed	24	18	19	19	16	Decreasing*
	Unbelted	22	13	15	9	9	Decreasing*
	Inattention	11	12	12	9	4	Decreasing*
MODE	Comm. Vehicle	8	6	4	5	10	Increasing
	Motorcycle	6	10	9	8	12	Increasing*
	Pedestrian	3	3	6	4	4	Increasing
	Bicyclist	2	3	2	0	2	Decreasing
DRIVER	Unlicensed	18	12	18	18	17	Increasing
	Younger Driver	14	16	11	12	11	Decreasing*
	Older Driver	8	12	15	12	17	Increasing*
ROADWAY	Intersection	25	28	19	24	32	Increasing
	Run-off-Road	29	31	32	23	30	Decreasing
	Head-on	15	8	8	5	6	Decreasing*
	Train	0	0	0	1	0	Increasing
	Work Zone	1	1	0	0	1	Decreasing

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

Regional Seat Belt Survey Rates

The annual, regional observational seat belt survey was not conducted in 2024. Currently, we are taking a review to 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.

Regional Successes

- Younger Driver program Impact Teen Drivers
 - Lead Younger Driver State Action Team and implemented the Impact Teen Drivers program statewide in 2023. The education modules include traffic safety from a positive culture perspective and empowers younger drivers and passengers to make good decisions every time they drive or ride in a car. We are fortunate to partner with the Minnesota State Patrol on this initiative as enforcement is key to traffic safety success.
 - To date, TZD NW Region has presented to eight schools with eight more scheduled before year end 2024. We continue to bring distracted and reckless driving education to over 1,000 young drivers and passengers in our high schools. We have also trained six troopers to help with presentations.
- Completed quarterly reports and annual report for the NW region.
- 2024 Regional Workshop was on April 23, 2024. It was great to have an in-person workshop! We had 81 attendees and 13 exhibitors. The most attended conference ever!
- Engaging younger drivers throughout the region is always energizing! We are always looking for additional ways to empower and impact them!
 - Thief River Falls Lincoln High School partnered with Goodridge High School for the 2023 TTZD Conference on April 10, 2024. The main focus was to bring traffic safety and mental health education to our youth and community.
 - Approximately 300 students and leaders attended. Five area schools participated. Over 120 more than last year!
 - The TTZD Conference is a younger driver traffic safety conference, but it also involves all the E's and is also a venue for a career expo. The 15 breakout sessions and 10 career sessions were presenters from engineering, EMS, enforcement, and education. The students are encouraged to ask whatever questions they have pertaining to these professions. This is the perfect opportunity for students to learn more about all the E's and what career opportunities are out there for them.
 - TTZD has social media posts, Tik Tok videos, and other social media and messaging that they do on a regular basis that focuses on traffic safety.

Northwest Steering Committee

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

2024 NW Regional Workshop

This past year, the NW region held their workshop on April 23, 2024. We had the highest attendance ever with a whopping 81 attendees and 13 vendor booths. We had phenomenal speakers, good discussions, and overall, a successful workshop.

Regional Seat Belt Efforts

Seat belt use has been a consistent concern in the Northwest region. We continue to bring awareness through education, media, enforcement, and community engagement and events. We utilize the seat belt convincer, seat belt persuader, and driving simulator to educate all ages on the importance of seat belt use. TZD participates in the Safety Around School with SAFE Kids to educate on the importance of buckling up. We also stress buckling up in our Impact Teen Drivers presentations in the high schools. TZD and MnDOT met with LOW County Commissioners at their board meeting at the high school where we shared TZD county and regional data and stressed the importance of wearing seat belts.

Regional Distracted Driving Efforts

We have been utilizing our driving simulator, hands-free and buckle-up stencils, Distract a Match, and TZD banners through outreach events within our communities. We continue to do messaging throughout the communities via digital boards, radio, table tents, enforcement waves, and social media. Distracted driving is one of the key messages that we educate the high school students on in the Impact Teen Drivers curriculum. We also stress the importance of being a good passenger and not distracting the driver in the car.

Regional Impaired Efforts

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

Regional Speed Efforts

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

Other Efforts

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

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

- Teen TZD – Younger Driver

- With the statewide implementation of the Impact Teen Drivers program, we hope to bring these educational modules to all the schools in the NW region.
- I have started a conversation with Leech Lake/Cass Lake High School principal on initiating a Teen TZD in their school. I will continue to keep trying to build a relationship with the tribal communities.
- Continue to look for opportunities to work with colleges on younger driver safe driving initiatives.
- Continue to work with SRTS grantees in the Northwest area to partner on bike and pedestrian safety efforts, specifically their Safety Around the School initiative.
- Continue to work with SAFE Kids with bike, pedestrian, bus, and car/passenger safety.
- Continue to work with BikeMN / TRF on bicycle safe community initiatives and efforts.
- Continue to work with county commissioner boards to share the TZD message, data, and to encourage TZD efforts in their county.
- Trainings – Attended numerous webinars and virtual presentations regarding seat belt usage, speed, distraction, Impaired, safe systems, tribal communities, diversity and equity, and mental health. These are some of the highlights of some of the training webinars that I recently attended:
 - Teen TZD Conference – April 10, 2024
 - Attended other Regional TZD Workshops to support and learn from the other TZD coordinators.
 - State Action Team planning – Continue to build and enhance the Teen TZD State Action team along with Scot Edgeworth. A big win for the State Action Team is the implementation of the Impact Teen Drivers program in 2023.
- Building Relationships both internally and externally by:
 - Participated in local and state meetings regarding all means of road safety and assist by providing educational resources.
 - Attended and participate in TZD regional and leadership meetings, TZD stakeholder Hotdish meetings, TZD statewide calls, D2 leadership calls, WESTAC meetings, and county TZD coalition meetings.
 - Participate in the Drug-Free Coalition meetings.
 - Participate in the NW Traffic Advisory Council meetings.
 - Participated in BikeMN Bicycle Friendly Community meetings.
 - Participate and attend the Western Regional Trauma Advisory (WESTAC) committee.
 - Participate and attend the Safe Kids Pedestrian and Wheeled Sports committee.
 - Continue to participate in traffic meetings with Red Lake and Leech Lake Tribal communities.

Gaps and Challenges

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

Media and Outreach Events

Without any major media platforms in the Northwest, we continue to share our message through radio interviews, local newspapers, changeable message boards, table tents, and social media. I have noted those previously above and here are a few more below that have happened in the last quarter of 2024. I also included the 2024 Regional Workshop and Teen TZD Conference again since this is the annual report. Below you will also see several clippings from our local newspaper.

2024 Teen TZD Conference



Students and advisors at Lincoln High School in Thief River Falls put a lot of time and effort into presenting the Teens Toward Zero Deaths Conference that was held at the Free Church in Thief River Falls on April 10. Over 330 students from throughout the region heard presentations from

several emergency provider organizations. This is the only TTZD Conference held in Minnesota. The goal is to encourage other schools to start their own TTZD organization and to eventually have TTZD conferences throughout the state.



The goal of the Teens Toward Zero Deaths Conference is to encourage other schools to start their own TTZD organization and to eventually have TTZD conferences throughout the state. Over 330 students from

throughout the region attended the conference, which was held at the Free Church in Thief River Falls and organized by students and advisors from Lincoln High School.

SAT | APRIL 27 | 2024

State and Regional Toward Zero Death conference held in TRF

by David Hill
Editor

TZD or Toward Zero Deaths is a national strategy on highway safety advocating for the elimination of serious injuries and deaths on the nation's roadways. Tuesday, April 23, the state TZD and regional TZD conference were held at the Legacy Event Center in Thief River Falls. Nearly 80 individuals from all over the state, but mostly the region, attended the event.

Conference topics included:

- updates on what officials are seeing on roads and trails regarding ATVs and UTVs (utility vehicles),
- an update on the Strategic Highway Safety



Teens Toward Zero Deaths members in Thief River Falls presented before the annual conference of Toward Zero Deaths in Northwest Minnesota. The conference was held in Thief River Falls at the Legacy Center on April 23.

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**Northwest Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths
Regional Workshop - Legacy Event Center
16458 160th Avenue NE, Thief River Falls
Tuesday, April 23, 2024
8:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.**

Agenda

- 8:30 a.m. **Registration and Continental Breakfast**
- 9 a.m. **Welcome & Regional Roundup**
J.T. Anderson, District engineer, MnDOT District 2, and northwest Minnesota TZD Regional co-chair; and Sue Johnson, northwest Minnesota regional coordinator
- 9:15 a.m. **DNR – ATV/UTV Updates**
Jeremy Wolnarowicz, Conservation officer, DNR- Thief River Falls
What is the DNR seeing out on our roads and trails regarding ATV/UTV's. What are the rules and Regulations and are they being followed? How can we all work together to keep everyone safe, while enjoying the outdoors on these motorized vehicles.
- 9:35 a.m. **ATV Club Updates**
Peter Murch, Northwest Region director, ATV Minnesota
Red Rivers Riders-Moorhead; Woods and Wheels-ATV Minnesota – Detroit Lakes
What the ATV/UTV riders see on the trails. How the trails interact with the state, county and local roads.
- 9:50 a.m. **Strategic Highway Safety Plan: Minnesota Needs YOU!**
MnDOT Staff and Alliant Engineering
Every five years, the Minnesota Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) is updated. It is time to update the plan – and we want your ideas! Through interactive activities and discussion, help prioritize emphasis areas, identify and rank strategies, and suggest local champions to assist with developing a plan that works for Minnesota.
- 10:30 a.m. **Break & Exhibits**
- 10:45 a.m. **SHSP Activity #2:**
MnDOT Staff and Alliant Engineering
- 11:20 a.m. **What's New with Responsible Beverage Server Training?**
Cleven Duncan, Responsible Beverage Service Liaison, Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Alcohol & Gambling Enforcement Division
Most people are aware that it's against the law to serve alcohol to an obviously intoxicated customer, but spotting someone impaired by cannabis might not be so easy. RBST Trainers teach servers to recognize impairment, spot invalid IDs and to make servers aware of the civil and criminal penalties. The train-the-trainer is available to law enforcement, public health organizations as well as Alcohol & Drug community coalitions.

- 11:35 a.m. **Teen TZD**
Rosaline Groven, Teen TZD lead and students
Hear about the Pennington County Teens Toward Zero Deaths are promoting traffic safety. They will also share how and why they incorporate mental health in their traffic safety efforts.
- 12 p.m. **Lunch & Exhibits**
- 12:45 p.m. **Understanding Grief – What to Say, What to Do, How to Help**
Randy Stocker, Author of Hugs Help; Our Story of Tragic Loss, Survival, and Helping Others.
Loss and grief have widespread impact on personal well-being, workplace engagement, relationships, and more. Grieving is a dynamic and ever-changing process for both the griever and the supporter. Gain some practical insight on how best to help while boosting your own resilience when these situations arise.
- 1:15 p.m. **SHSP Report Out**
MnDOT Staff and Alliant Engineering
- 2:15 p.m. **Bus Stop Arm Grant Follow-up**
Rahya Geisler, Northeast Regional TZD coordinator
- 2:30 p.m. **Wrap up**
Capt. Michael Wedin and Lt. Brad Norland, Minnesota State Patrol
- 3 p.m. **Adjourn**

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

Venue WiFi Network: *Johnson Guest*
Password: *jrsls1964*

2024 TZD Regional Workshop Evaluation Survey QR Code



- **Ribbon Cutting in Polk County – Sept 30, 2024 - CR 21 and Hwy 75 Roundabout**



- **Local Road Traffic Safety Workshops 2024 in Pennington and Hubbard County.**



- **Impact Teen Drivers training – Held on 7-25-24 at Roseville MnDOT. This is the 2nd train-the-trainer for the Impact Teen Drivers program.**



Community Events

- Participated in several county fairs, businesses Health and Wellness events, schools, community events, and other outreach events using TZD equipment to educate community on traffic safety.
 - National Night Out in Beltrami County, East Grand Forks Showcase, Pennington County, and Lake of the Woods utilized TZD equipment. These events reached thousands of people in the NW region.
 - NewFest on September 9, 2023 in Marshall County.
- **National Night Out events in several counties using TZD Educational equipment .** Education on seat belt safety, roundabout safety, impaired driving and risky behavior, K-9 unit, etc.



- **East Grand Forks Showcase – September 4, 2024 -** Minnesota State Patrol and TZD partnered to educate on all traffic safety by folks spinning the Traffic Trivia Wheel.



- **Bike Rodeo and Car Seat Clinics** - TZD and partners join forces to educate kids and adults on bike, ped, bus, and car/passenger safety by holding bike rodeos and car seat clinics.



- **Central Boiler Corporations Health & Wellness event** on September 118 & 19th with community vendors representing all areas of good health which included: medical, chiropractic, rehab, financial, exercise, home, traffic safety, mind, EMS, city police, state patrol, nutrition, and all areas of health of your mind, body, and soul.

Central Boiler employs over 200 employees. The impaired goggles were the big attraction for the employees as they tried to dunk the bean bags while wearing the goggles. The goggles created visual impairment with the level of goggles ranging from just under the legal limit of BAC .07 (.08 is legal limit) to BAC of .25 which would be over three times the legal limit.



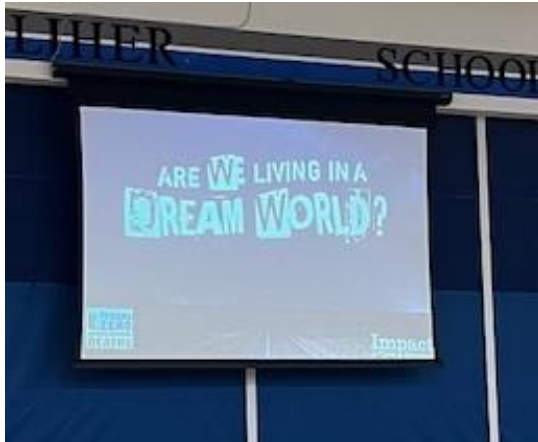
- **Tri-Valley EMS Drowsy Driving Training** - August 24, 2024- The pedal kart was used with the distraction goggles to practice tired driving. Each driver relied on their partner to get them thru the cone course...If they hit a cone or the deer they had to change drivers.



- **Safety Around the School event** – September 18, 2024 - Challenger Elementary School in Thief River Falls. The bike, ped, car/passenger, and bus education is for all students grades kindergarten through 5th grade. We will continue to do this education in several other schools this Fall.



- **Impact Teen Drivers Presentation** – September 20, 2024 at Kelliher High School. There were approximately 60 students (60% Native American) that attended the presentation “Are You Living In a Dreamworld”.



- **Bike TRF Events** - The 3rd Annual Bike TRF Gramble was held on Sept 28, 2024 . Biker enthusiasts could ride 1.6, 8, 16, 32, or 64 miles.



- **Pedestrian and Bike Safety Events:** February 7, 2024 – Winter Walk to School



- **Child Passenger Safety** - Continue to partner and support CPS clinics in the region. New laws that went into effect on August 1, 2024.

FREE Car Seat Checkup

Thursday, June 20, 2024
3:30 - 5:30 p.m.
By Appt Only
Beltrami County Fairgrounds

Register for this free event to have a certified child passenger safety technician check your car seats for correct installation and make sure every child is using the appropriate car seat for their size. Kids grow fast and adjustments are often needed! This checkup event is open to the public. Use the QR Code or call 701.780.1489 to schedule.

Register Here

SAFE KIDS GRAND FORKS **TOWARD ZERO DEATHS** **OFFICE OF TRAFFIC SAFETY**

Event Questions? safekids@altru.org or 701.780.1489

Age/Size	Restraint Use
Birth to at least 2 years old.	Rear-facing in an infant or convertible child safety seat.
At least 2 years old AND has outgrown the rear-facing seat with internal harness by height or weight.	Forward-facing with an internal harness.
4 Years old AND has outgrown the forward-facing seat with internal harness by height or weight.	Ride restrained in a belt-positioning booster seat using the lap belt and shoulder belt.
9 years old or has outgrown the booster seat AND the child can pass the 5-step test.	Ride restrained with a lap belt and shoulder belt secured correctly on the vehicle seat.
A child, under age 13, must sit in a back seat, if possible.	

- Continue building relationships with Drug-Free Community grantees to enhance teen safety and community safe roads education and involvement:
 - Lake of the Woods (I am on their DFC coalition)
 - Hubbard (I am on their DFC coalition)
 - Roseau (I will keep trying to get in the door somewhere in Roseau County)
- TZD Coalitions in the regions:
 - Beltrami (unfunded)
 - Hubbard (unfunded)
 - Pennington County (funded)
 - Polk (unfunded)
- Continue to send weekly traffic safety messaging to a defined list of traffic safety partners. Messages include Monday Message, National Traffic Safety weeks, enforcement calendar promotions, and other traffic safety campaigns statewide and nationally.
- Monthly Spin TZD newsletter. The TZD Monthly Spin is a two- page news publication that is sent out each month showcasing TZD community efforts, enforcement calendar, upcoming dates and events, and other TZD related information and material. The Monthly Spin has been sent out to our Safe Roads partners since April 2020. Below is the October Monthly Spin as an example. Sharing of this newsletter is encouraged!



MINNESOTA TOWARD ZERO DEATHS

TZD Monthly Spin

NW Region July 2024

Digikey Health and Safety Event

Toward Zero Deaths and Minnesota State Patrol participated the event on June 12 2024. Over 1,000 employees stopped by the booth to engage in "Traffic Trivia" consisted of work zone, bike, pedestrian, seat belt, speed, impaired driving, and distracted driving educational trivia questions. The question that stumped most everyone was "What is the speed limit in alleys"?. The answer is 10 mph. We had very few that got that correct, so it was one of the first question that we asked when they landed on green on the wheel.



Trooper Casey Roiland made many "walk the line" with the Fatal Vision goggles. The Fatal Vision goggles created a great opportunity to educate on impaired driving.



The 3rd Annual Bike Swap/Exchange

Bike TRF held their 3rd annual bike swap on June 5 & 6, 2024. The bike swap is for those that would like to swap out a bike that maybe fits them better, an opportunity to donate bikes to others that may need one, an opportunity for those that need a bike but may not be able to afford one, or maybe they need a form of transportation to get to school or work.

There is no charge for the bikes and this year over 70 bikes were given away at this event.

Bike TRF hopes to encourage more people to ride bikes and to provide education on riding safety on our roads.



Enforcement Update:

- 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
- Seat belts and child restraints: Sept 15-21, 2024

Minnesota Traffic Deaths To Date

2024 **213** 2023 **174**

— Preliminary Year-End —

2023 **411**

It's Getting Hot Out There

Whether you're a parent, grandparent, babysitter or relative, kids are out of school for the summer and may be frequenting your backseat more often for the next couple of months. Although the busy school season comes to a halt in June, your life doesn't slow down as you navigate summer activities and your work schedule. No matter the chaos, always be a responsible driver and care for your passengers.

- **Don't forget about them.** Life gets busy but don't forget passengers in the backseat. When the temperature hits 72 degrees outside, a vehicle can reach 117 degrees in just 60 minutes, resulting in heat exhaustion and death in some cases. More than half of vehicular heatstroke deaths nationwide occur when a child is forgotten while in a rear-facing car seat or sleeping in the backseat. Kids and Car Safety is urging drivers to [Look Before You Lock](#) during these hot summer days. You can also learn more about vehicular heatstroke and prevention with these [National Heatstroke Prevention Day resources](#).
- **Teach them to be good passengers.** Children can be distracting because they can get restless and start acting up. Model good behavior for them, provide mess-free activities to keep them quiet and teach them how to be respectful passengers.
- **Buckle up, Buttercup!** Make a habit of checking your passengers' seat belts before you set out for the road. Even if your passengers are close friends, their life is at risk and could cost you a hefty ticket.
- **Use a proper car seat.** Whether for pets or for children, using a proper seat for their age, height and weight secures your passenger and maximizes safety. Plus, keeping animals restrained decreases distraction in your vehicle!



Mark your Calendars!

- July 17, 2024—TZD Traffic Safety Hotdish (register on minnesotatzd.org/events/hotdish)
- Aug 14, 2024—NW Region Steering Meeting—Bemidji MnDOT Headquarters
- Oct 22 & 23, 2024—TZD State Conference—St. Cloud River's Edge Convention Center
- Apr 30, 2025—Teen TZD Conference—Evangelical Free Church in TRF
- May 1, 2025—NW Regional Workshop—Thief River Falls Legacy Center

Toward Zero Deaths Northwest Regional Newsletter

Sue Johnson, Towards Zero Deaths Coordinator – NW Region

248 125th Ave

Thief River Falls, MN 56701

218-766-5943



Minnesota Child Passenger Safety Law Update

Starting Aug. 1, 2024, Minnesota's car seat law is getting a makeover, and parents have plenty to catch up on. The new law states kids must remain rear-facing until a minimum of 2 years old. They must also have outgrown the rear-facing seat by height or weight before switching to a forward-facing car seat with an internal harness.

Every driver who transports a child or children under the age of 18 years in a motor vehicle is required to have the child or children restrained in a child safety seat or seat belt.



Minnesota Child Passenger Safety Law

<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/169.085>

Changes effective August 1, 2024

If a child can be placed in more than one category, then the child must be placed in the more protective category.

	An infant under 2 years old must be secured in a rear-facing convertible or infant carrier seat.
	A child at least 2 years old AND has outgrown the manufacturer's height or weight limits for a rear-facing car seat must be secured in a forward-facing car seat with internal harness.
	Children at least 4 years old who have outgrown their forward-facing car seat with internal harness must be secured by a belt-positioning booster seat using the lap and shoulder belt.
	A child at least 9 years old or has outgrown their booster seat AND the child can pass the "5 Step Test" may be restrained by lap and shoulder belt if the child can be secured properly.

A child under 13 years old, must sit in a back seat of a motor vehicle, if a rear seat is available, and be properly restrained.

Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over

"Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over" is an annual enforcement event aimed at preventing impaired driving among motorists and truck drivers. This year, it goes into effect across the country from August 16 to September 2, 2024. During this period, law enforcement agencies step up patrols to identify and apprehend impaired drivers with the goal of raising awareness about the dangers of driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs and encourage responsible behavior on the roads.

By the Numbers

531

PEOPLE DIED IN TRAFFIC CRASHES DURING 2021 LABOR DAY WEEKEND

41 %

INVOLVED A DRUNK DRIVER

27 %

INVOLVED A DRUNK DRIVER WITH A BAC OF .15 OR MORE

Enforcement Update:

- DWI (optional) Every Thursday-Saturday, May 9—Sept 2, 2024
- Speed: May 1– Sept 1, 2024
- DWI: Aug 16—Sept 2, 2024
- Move Over (optional) August 31, 2024
- Seat belts and child restraints: Sept 15-21, 2024

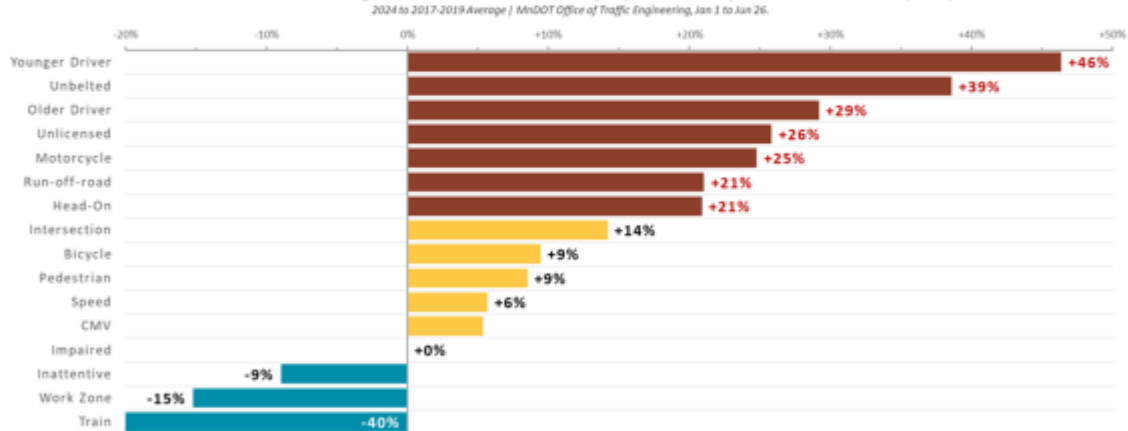
Minnesota Traffic Deaths To Date

2024 **244** 2023 **208**
Preliminary Year-End
2023 **411**

Impact Teen Drivers Education

The Impact Teen Drivers Train-the-Trainer training took place at the MnDOT Roseville headquarters on July 25, 2024. The training was for those TZD Coordinators, Minnesota State Troopers, and TZD partners that will be presenting the Impact Teen Drivers educational modules at the high schools. Currently, we have 46 trained ITD facilitators and have presented to 21 schools and 1400 students. Our goal is to build on those 21 schools each year to reach as many 10th grade students as possible each year. The graph below was obtained by the MnDOT safety group, which demonstrates that we are clearly on the right path as to where we need to focus our efforts.

2024 Percent Change in Fatal and Serious Injury Crashes by SHSP Focus Area (YTD)



Mark your Calendars!

- Aug 14, 2024—NW Region Steering Meeting—Bemidji MnDOT Headquarters
- Oct 22 & 23, 2024—TZD State Conference—St. Cloud River's Edge Convention Center
- Apr 30, 2025—Teen TZD Conference—Evangelical Free Church in TRF
- May 1, 2025—NW Regional Workshop—Thief River Falls Legacy Center

Toward Zero Deaths Northwest Regional Newsletter

Sue Johnson, Towards Zero Deaths Coordinator – NW Region
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MINNESOTA TOWARD ZERO DEATHS

TZD Monthly Spin

NW Region September 2024

Stop For School Buses

It is hard to believe, but summer is coming to an end for students across the state. With schools welcoming back students, Minnesota school buses will make about 10,000 trips each day. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, a school bus is one of the safest vehicles on the road for students, but we all need to work together to ensure that everyone makes it home safely.

Stop for School Buses: It's the Law!

- State law requires all vehicles to stop for school buses when the bus driver activates the flashing lights and has the stop arm fully extended.
- Drivers who violate the law face a \$500 fine.
- Drivers can face criminal charges for passing a school bus on the right, passing when a child is outside the bus, or injuring or killing a child.



Motorists:

- On undivided roads, motorists traveling both directions must stop at least 20 feet from a school bus that is displaying red flashing lights and an extended stop arm.
- Traffic traveling the opposite direction on a divided roadway with a separating median such as a cement wall or boulevard is not required to stop.
- Motorists should slow down, pay attention and anticipate school children and buses, especially in neighborhoods and school zones.

Students:

- When getting off a bus, look to be sure no cars are passing on the shoulder.
- Wait for the bus driver to signal that it's safe to cross.
- When crossing the street to get on the bus or to go home, make eye contact with motorists before proceeding.

You can do your part by knowing the School Bus Stop-Arm Safety law. And students can do their part by keeping themselves safe outside and inside the school bus. Please share with others to ensure that all our children make it home safely. Together, we can move Minnesota toward zero deaths!



Tri-Valley EMS Training

Drowsy driving staff training was held on August 24, 2024 for Tri-Valley EMS. The Toward Zero Deaths pedal kart was used to demonstrate the dangers of drowsy and distracted driving. Each driver relied on their partner to get them thru the cone course. If they hit a cone (or deer) they had to change drivers.



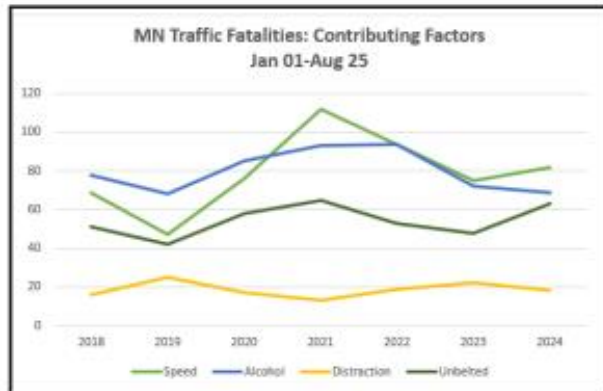
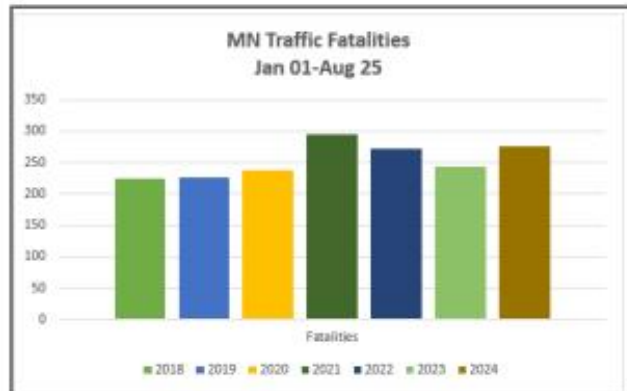
Enforcement Update:

- Seat belts and child restraints: Sept 15-21, 2024
- DWI (optional) Oct 25-26; Oct 31, 2024—Halloween
- DWI (optional) Nov 8-9, 2024—Deer Hunting Opener
- DWI: Nov 27-30; Dec 5-7; 12-14; 19-21; 26-28; 31, 2024



Year-to-Date Traffic Fatality Update

In 2024 through August 25, there were 277 traffic-related deaths on Minnesota roadways. This is 14 percent more than at this time last year (244), 2 percent more than in 2022 (272) and 6 percent less than in 2021 (294). Unbelted fatalities (63) are 31 percent more than this time last year (486), 19 percent higher than in 2022 (53), two less than in 2021 (65) and 50 percent higher than in 2019 (42).



Pennington County National Night Out

The TRF Police and Pennington County Sheriff hosted 600+ community folks on August 6, 2024. Toward Zero Deaths team created a roundabout to educate kids and adults how to safely cross while walking or riding bicycles. The Traffic Trivia Wheel was also fun which included questions on pedestrian and bike safety.



Mark your Calendars!

- Oct 22 & 23, 2024—TZD State Conference—St. Cloud River’s Edge Convention Center
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State Toward Zero Deaths Conference 2023

860 Attendees.

The State Conference went well and the teen session, Teens Toward ZERO together, also went well. The students presented what they have been doing and I presented on Impact Teen Drivers program and where we are going with that. We had 63 people that attended which was pretty good. Great questions afterwards and many people came up after and wanted more information. I also was approached throughout the conference regarding Teen TZD and the Impact Teen Drivers program.

We had eight students attend from TRF/Goodridge along with Rosaline Groven and Stacey Leake. The students also interviewed many people such as Mike Hanson, several troopers including Brad, Colonel Langer, me, and several others for their TikTok social media post.

The Impact Teen Drivers program and the TRF/Goodridge Teen TZD program was mentioned and commended for the work being done by Colonel Langer and Brian Sorenson in their speeches to all attendees. Their support speaks volumes!



2023 TOWARD ZERO DEATHS CONFERENCE CONCURRENT SESSION EVALUATION FORM SUMMARY

November 14, 2023, 1:45-3:00pm
Session 14: Teens Toward ZERO Together

Number of Evaluations Received: 8
Number of Attendees at Session: 46

Content	Average Response (out of 4.0)
Technical content of the session was appropriate and helpful	3.88

Presenter	Average Response (out of 4.0)
Presenter was knowledgeable and had a good presentation style	3.88

Comments on this session:

- Love seeing teens at the conference and share their experiences! Also, great to hear we have a statewide program, Impact Teen Drivers. Nice job, NW region!!
- Hope to get the T-TZD here in the SE area.
- Thank you students for being here.
- Enjoyed having students give presentations and grading first hand from them.
- Having the kids come and present was an awesome choice! They should definitely do more presentations in all of the regions!

Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths recognizes traffic safety leaders throughout Minnesota for their contributions that save lives

Sixteen award winners honored for statewide efforts that drive Minnesota road deaths toward zero

ROCHESTER, Minn. – Sixteen individuals and three organizations were recognized with Minnesota [Toward Zero Deaths Awards](#) at the annual statewide [TZD Conference](#) yesterday, for accomplishments that improve safety and reduce the number of life-changing crashes, deaths and serious injuries on Minnesota roads.

The prestigious traffic safety awards are presented by the Minnesota departments of health, public safety and transportation. The TZD traffic safety conference is being held this year at the Mayo Civic Center in Rochester, Minnesota. More than 800 traffic safety professionals registered to attend the conference in-person, or online.

TZD Child Passenger Safety Star Award – Aimee Eggen, Norman-Mahnomen Public Health child passenger safety technician

Aimee Eggen is a child passenger safety technician with Norman-Mahnomen Public Health. In this role, she has provided car seat distribution and education to 277 clients and has educated hundreds of community members through health fairs, school presentations, and car seat checks. She has built strong partnerships with local clinics, community action agencies, law enforcement, schools, and businesses and uses these to share passenger safety messages. During the pandemic, Aimee continued to serve families by providing virtual car seat visits. She works diligently to increase her clients' knowledge and use of car seats while also working to decrease inequitable access



Mission:

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

Values:

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

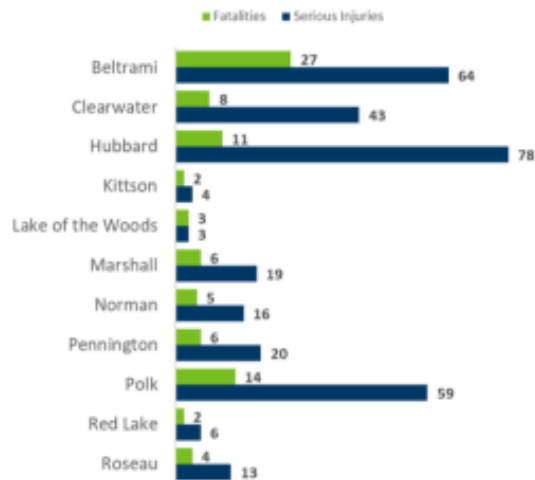


The Northwest Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) program began in 2008. The counties involved include: Beltrami, Clearwater, Hubbard, Kittson, Lake of the Woods, Marshall, Norman, Pennington, Polk, Red Lake, and Roseau.

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

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

Northwest TZD Counties
2019-2023



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

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

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

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

Northwest Minnesota TZD Leadership Contacts

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Education / EMS

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Northwest Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths Regional Strategic Plan

Mission

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

Goal 1 – Reduce TZD Fatality and Serious Injury Goals

To continuously decrease traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries in northwest Minnesota from the past **5-year averages** (2018-2023) of 17 fatalities and 52 serious injuries (preliminary). Note: New injury definitions were introduced in 2016 and may have contributed to a higher reported number of serious injuries.

Objectives

- A. To continuously increase regional seatbelt use rates.

The statewide average **was 93.3% in 2022**. The regional seat belt rate **was 86.5% in 2023**.

No seat belt survey was conducted in 2024. Currently, there is discussion on how to proceed on future seat belt surveys throughout the state. **As a region our long-term goal is to achieve 100% usage rate. Our short-term goal is to see continuous increase in the usage rate each year.**

- B. To examine the characteristics of the unbelted fatalities and serious injuries.

Calculation of seat belt use in fatal and serious crashes is possible with existing data.

- C. To continuously decrease the following:

5 year averages 2019-2023 in NW Region - Baseline Data (Preliminary Data)

	Metric	Impaired	Speed	Distraction	Unbelted	Total
CRASHES	K Crashes	7	6	2	5	17
	A Crashes	17	14	8	9	52
	K+A Crashes	24	19	10	14	69
INJURIES	Fatalities	7	6	2	5	18
	A Injuries	21	17	10	11	65
	K+A Injuries	27	22	12	15	83

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



Northwest Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths Regional Strategic Plan

Region Goal 2 –TZD Partnership Goals

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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.



Northwest Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths Regional Strategic Plan

- 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](#)

In Summary: Why do I choose to focus on teens? Teen fatalities have increase by over 46% over a year ago. That is significant. This clearly indicates that we are focusing on the right demographics.

In 2023:



- Those 46 teens who died in 2023 are more than statistics.
- They are more than names.
- They were students whose lives were cut too short.
- They had friends and family.
- They were loved dearly and leave behind their families and friends grieving for them. Their shattered lives will never be the same.

I am fortunate to work with talented and passionate people who truly care about the health and wellness of our communities. I appreciate and learn from all of you each and every day.

Bemidji, MN - August 19, 2024 - Taken at the TZD Regional In-Person Meeting



