

MINNESOTA TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

November 2024 | Department of Public Safety

Hello from the Minnesota TIM Team!

As 2024 draws to a close, we must reflect on a sobering statistic: this year, **thirty-four first responders** (number subject to update) have tragically lost their lives across the United States due to roadway incidents. According to ResponderSafety.com, effective prevention starts with accurate data. By understanding near misses and struck-by incidents, we, as a responder community, can develop and implement strategies to protect our teams.

We need your help.

Support the voluntary reporting databases at ResponderSafety.com for Fire/EMS, Law Enforcement, and Towing/Recovery by submitting reports of any near misses or struck-by incidents you've encountered. Your input is crucial for shaping effective safety measures and reducing these tragic events.

Let's work together to make our roadways safer for everyone.

[Link for reporting near-misses](#)

Thank You

*Aimee Eggen, Office of Traffic Safety
Tony Kasella, Department of Transportation
Lt. Andrew Martinek, Minnesota State Patrol*

CRASH RESPONDER SAFETY WEEK: NOVEMBER 18-22, 2024

Every minute of every day, first responders—including law enforcement, fire and rescue teams, emergency medical services, public works, transportation workers, towing services, and others—work on our roadways to keep motorists safe. These dedicated professionals put their lives on the line as they handle motor vehicle crashes, stalled vehicles, and roadway debris.

In Minnesota alone, our emergency responders managed approximately 64,713 traffic crashes in 2023, including 402 fatalities. Their commitment to saving lives and maintaining highway safety is commendable.

Crash Responder Safety Week (CRSW) is coming up from November 18 – 22, 2024, with this year's theme: **"Responders Ahead! Reduce Your Speed as You Proceed."** Supported by the Minnesota Department of Public Safety (DPS) and the Department of Transportation (MnDOT), this campaign aims to remind motorists nationwide of the dangers that first responders face daily while working in or near live traffic.

CRSW provides a valuable opportunity to increase road user awareness and encourage compliance with Move Over laws and Traffic Incident Management (TIM) training for all responders. It's a time for the entire responder community to come together and raise awareness about the critical, yet hazardous, work involved in crash response.

Together, let's use Crash Responder Safety Week to educate every emergency responder, driver, and passenger about how to contribute to safe responses at roadway incident scenes. You can collaborate with your agency leadership and use the [CRSW Outreach Toolkit](#) to align your organization's messaging and activities with peers across the state. Remember to move over or slow down when approaching emergency situations to ensure the safety of everyone involved.

What is TIM Training?

Responders across the country put their lives at risk every time they respond to a roadway incident. Reducing this risk means preventing secondary crashes. TIM is a training program developed through the USDOT's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to safely clear crashes more quickly—and save the lives of responders and the traveling public in the process.

TIM training shares local and national best practices for a safer response to a traffic incident and safe scene set-up to protect responders and crash victims. You will gain knowledge in the proper deployment of response vehicles, how to use traffic control devices to create a safe work area and methods to expedite incident clearance. With a focus on lowering the likelihood of secondary crashes and struck-by incidents, TIM reduces overall disruptions to the transportation system while improving responder safety.

Online TIM training is available from the [FHWA's National Highway Institute](#) and the [Responder Safety Learning Network](#).

MINNESOTA STATE PATROL Centralized In-Service Training

Troopers conducted a live hands on scenario training on the EVOC track that required basic management of a crash scene.

The main training takeaways for the station were: **Early warning** (flare placement), **squad positioning** (when and how to block a lane), and **scene management** (quick clearance / condensing a scene).

Additional training takeaways included: Safety Tools (high visibility wear, flares, cones, seatbelt use, etc.) and understanding resources needed (tows, additional lights, MnDOT assistance, message boards, etc.).



The main TIM MSP teaching points included:

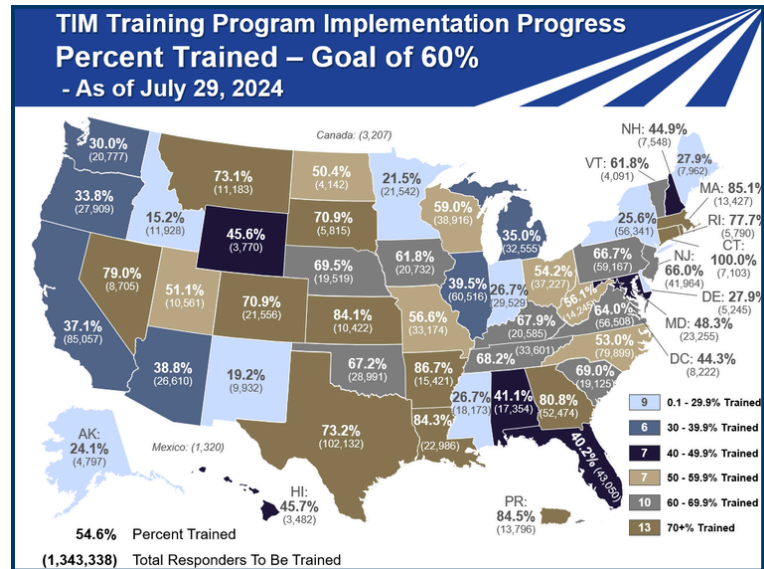
Early Warning – lighting flares or putting out cones while using your squad as cover. We should not be setting out flares exposed to traffic, away from our squad. Set our scene up with our squad and emergency lights to the rear. Once the scene is set, drive your squad into the closure and focus on squad positioning

Squad Positioning – Remember, the squad should be used as protection while on scene. If you need to block a lane, park your squad completely in the lane. Not only does it help drivers understand the lane is closed, but it also protects responders on scene.

Scene Management – This scenario focuses on condensing our scene. We should avoid walking having traffic drive down the middle of scene. We should utilize tactics to keep our scene on one side of the road, enhancing the safety of responders on scene.

Nationwide Training - FHWA

Here are the latest national training maps from FHWA illustrating the percentage of responders in Minnesota who have completed nationally accredited TIM training. Minnesota saw an increase from 19.5% in December 2023 to 21.5% in July 2024 of its responders trained in TIM.



**COMING
SOON**

MnTIM Training

If you're interested in hosting TIM training, please fill out our training request form to be notified when curriculum becomes available.



Scene Safe Video

Updated version coming in 2025. More to come!



WHAT IS A SNOW SQUALL? Snow Squall Warnings and Traffic Management

From our friends at Nebraska TIM, October 2024 Newsletter



A [snow squall](#) is an intense but brief period of moderate to heavy snowfall, accompanied by strong, gusty surface winds and possibly lightning. Snow accumulation could be significant. The phenomenon is not new, but the term and warnings associated with it were only introduced in 2018.



Snow squalls differ from snowstorms in that they are much shorter in duration, but they also frequently include a phenomenon known as a flash freeze. Rapidly falling temperatures, combined with freshly fallen snow, can quickly glaze highways.



The National Weather Service (NWS) began issuing warnings in 2018 because of the impact on travel, which frequently resulted in chain reaction crashes due to low visibility and flash-freeze road conditions. Snow squall warnings are issued for travelers, with the goal of giving drivers enough time to get off the road before the snow squall hits.



The warning is issued similarly to that of a severe thunderstorm; both are considered significant events, but they are brief (typically 30-60 minutes) and limited to a specific area. The NWS will not issue a snow squall warning if a blizzard warning has already been issued, or at night when the impact on traffic is lessened.

For more information on snow squall warnings, please see the ["Impact-Based Snow Squall Warnings"](#) fact sheet from NWS.



Winter Weather Crashes

We're developing the Minnesota TIM Training curriculum with local examples and may feature related photos and stories in future newsletters. As winter approaches, please send any winter weather operations content, crash reports, or photos to the [OTS TIM Coordinator](#).

Winter Traffic Incident Management Tips



Delay Towing When Conditions Are Dangerous: If roads are icy or visibility is poor, consider waiting to tow until conditions improve for responder safety.



Ensure Responders Are Prepared: Equip all responders with proper winter gear, vehicles with good traction, and clear visibility equipment.



Set Up Warning Systems: Use road closures, signage, and emergency lights to alert drivers of hazards and prevent further accidents.



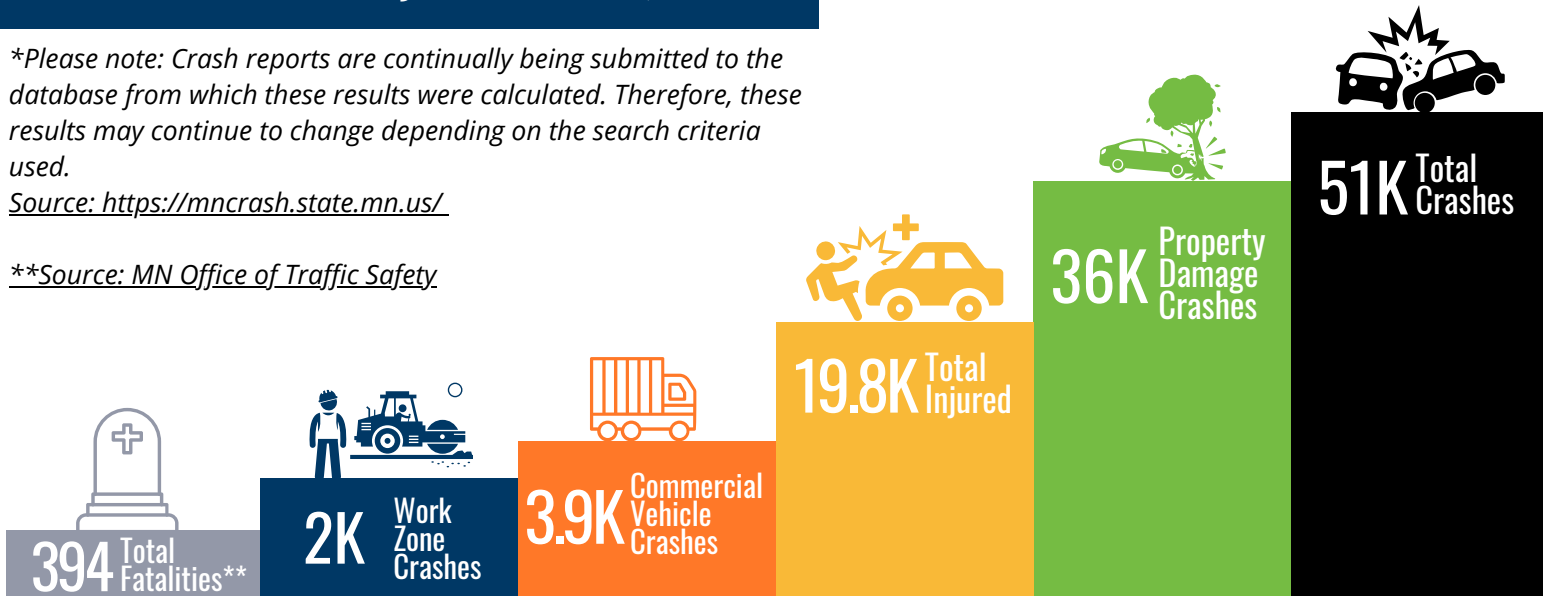
Encourage Drivers to Stay Inside Their Vehicles: In severe weather, advise drivers to remain safely in their cars until it's safe to approach or clear the scene.

MN Crash Data: January - October 31, 2024*

*Please note: Crash reports are continually being submitted to the database from which these results were calculated. Therefore, these results may continue to change depending on the search criteria used.

Source: <https://mncrash.state.mn.us/>

**Source: MN Office of Traffic Safety



LOCAL NEWS:

Trooper and Deputy Save Teen from Runaway Car in Dramatic Rescue

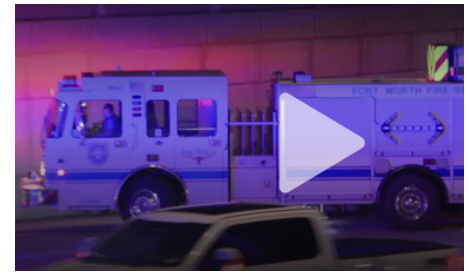
On September 17, 2023, 18-year-old Sam Dutcher's Honda Pilot accelerated uncontrollably as he drove near Harwood, ND. For over 30 miles and into Minnesota, Sam desperately tried to stop the car, reaching speeds of 113 mph, but nothing worked. With no way to slow down, he called 911. Minnesota State Trooper Zach Gruver and Clay County Deputy Zach Johnson made a split-second decision: Sam was directed to crash into Trooper Gruver's patrol car. The collision triggered the car's safety system, stopping the vehicle. Miraculously, Sam survived with only minor injuries.

Check out the video on [Good Morning America for the full story.](#)

We're grateful Sam is okay! Do you have a traffic safety story to share? Email it to Aimee.Eggen@state.mn.us, and it could be featured in an upcoming newsletter.

ACROSS THE NATION:

FORT WORTH, Texas – Two Fort Worth fire trucks were involved in separate collisions on I-35W Saturday morning (September 28). The first incident occurred around 4:40 AM while crews were responding to an emergency. Fort Worth police reported that the driver of that vehicle was arrested and charged with driving while intoxicated. Later, a Fort Worth Fire Department scorpion truck was stationed on the highway to secure the scene when it was struck by another driver. Fortunately, no firefighters were injured in either incident.



Don't miss the new video from the Department of Public Safety on the Move Over Law!



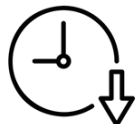
TIM goals



Reduce responder exposure



Reduce secondary crashes



Reduce incident clearance time



Reduce travel delay



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Traffic incident management, or TIM, is a coordinated effort by all responders to accommodate their safety, victims' safety, incoming traffic's safety, and overall mobility.

Responders include those working in communications, emergency medical services, fire and rescue, law enforcement, towing and recovery, and transportation and public works.

Contact:



trafficincidentmanagement.dot@state.mn.us



minnesotatd.org/tim



Department of Public Safety