

MINNESOTA TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

March 2025 | Department of Public Safety

Hello Minnesota Crash Responders!

We're excited to share an update on our Traffic Incident Management training efforts. On March 3, we piloted our first MnTIM Training at Camp Ripley with 42 cadets, facilitated by Minnesota State Patrol troopers Parker Bluhm, Chad Peterson, Brian Schwartz, and Andrew Martinek, who represent different regions across the state. This pilot was a big step in expanding TIM education to all responders, and we're already looking forward to another session to fine-tune the training before rolling it out statewide. Additionally, on March 6, we filmed portions of the new Scene Safe video just outside of Cologne, MN. This updated training resource will help reinforce critical safety practices for responders.

In this issue, we also cover recent Minnesota and national incidents, including two serious responder-involved crashes that highlight the dangers of roadside work. Our TIM team has been active at conferences and workshops, engaging with responders to enhance safety strategies. Chief Rick Denneson shares how Maple Plain FD's TIM trailer is improving scene management, and we emphasize the lifesaving importance of high-visibility vests. Lastly, we provide Minnesota's latest crash data, giving insight into trends affecting incident response.

We hope you enjoy the rest of the newsletter, and if there's something you'd like to see covered in future editions, let us know—we'd love to hear from you!



MN TIM TRAINING CAMP RIPLEY | MARCH 2025

Thank You

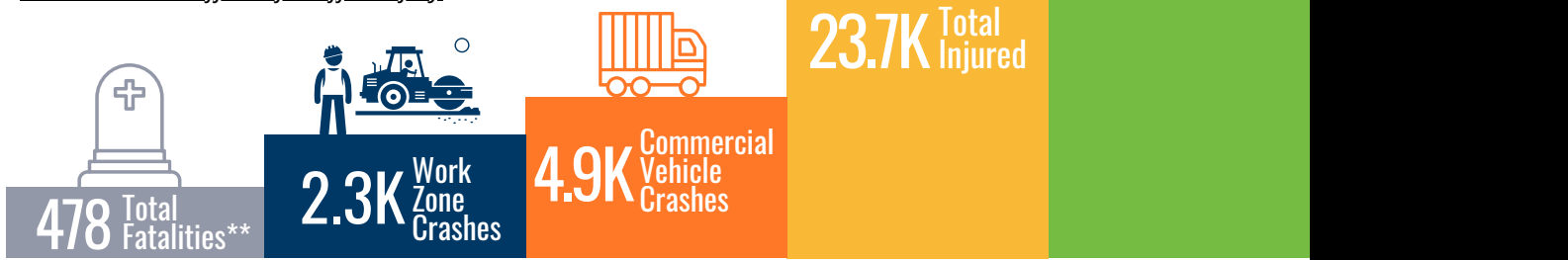
Aimee Eggen, Office of Traffic Safety
Tony Kasella, Department of Transportation
Lt. Andrew Martinek, Minnesota State Patrol

MN Crash Data: January - December 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:

Crash Responders Struck in Minnesota

In recent months, two separate incidents in Minnesota have highlighted the dangers that crash responders face on our roadways.

Douglas County Deputy Injured After Squad Car Hit at Crash Scene

On November 24, a Douglas County Sheriff's Deputy was seriously injured when a vehicle struck his parked squad car while responding to a crash on I-94. The deputy, who was wearing his seatbelt, was transported to Alomere Health along with the other driver. Authorities urge drivers to slow down and remain cautious, especially in winter conditions.

[Read the full story](#)

St. Cloud Tow Truck Driver Severely Injured After Being Struck

On January 13, a St. Cloud tow truck driver suffered severe injuries after being hit by a vehicle while assisting a car in a ditch. The driver who struck him admitted to consuming alcohol and had a blood alcohol content of .183—more than twice the legal limit. The victim faces a long road to recovery.

[Read more here](#)

These incidents serve as reminders of the risks responders face daily.

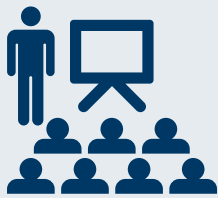


ACROSS THE NATION:

On December 24, 40-year-old Hussain Farhat, a Chicago tow truck driver, was struck and killed while loading a disabled vehicle on the shoulder of I-94 in Waukesha County, Wisconsin. The driver of a blue minivan fled the scene but later turned himself in. He now faces a felony charge for Hit & Run Causing Death. Authorities continue to investigate the crash.

[Read the full story here](#)

This tragic loss is a stark reminder of the risks responders face daily. Situational awareness, proper scene positioning, and consistent communication remain critical to staying safe on the job. Stay vigilant, watch for hazards, and look out for each other.



Join the MnTIM Team at your regional TZD Workshop!

Join the MnTIM Team at your regional TZD Workshop for a quick overview of Minnesota's Traffic Incident Management efforts. Learn how we're working to improve responder safety, reduce traffic delays, and enhance coordination at crash scenes.

[Click here to sign up for your regional workshop!](#)

TIM COALITION RECAP

Since the last newsletter, TIM coalitions have held several key meetings. In September, St. Louis County hosted a meeting, followed by Dakota County in November. Isanti County met in January, and in mid-February, Chisago and Washington counties held meetings, with Ramsey County meeting later that month.

Most recently, Dakota County hosted a meeting on March 20, and the Lakes Area (Western Hennepin County) will meet on [March 27](#). These meetings are essential for reviewing incidents, sharing best practices, and strengthening collaboration.

If you'd like to get involved in future coalition efforts, reach out!

MNTIM TEAM ENGAGES AT CONFERENCES

In October 2024, the MnTIM team had a successful exhibit at the Minnesota State Fire Chiefs Association (MSFCA) conference, followed by a strong presence at the Arrowhead EMS Association Conference & Expo in January 2025.

It was a great opportunity to connect with attendees, share insights, and engage in meaningful conversations.

Thank you to everyone who stopped by our table - we look forward to continuing these valuable connections!

Lakes Area Emergency Management: Enhancing Traffic Incident Response with the TIM Trailer in Western Hennepin County

By Rick Denneson, Maple Plain Fire Chief

In western Hennepin County, several cities have been meeting quarterly for years as part of a collaborative group known as the "Lakes Area Emergency Management" alliance. This partnership was formed to bring together police, fire, public works, and emergency managers in an effort to prepare for not if, but when, a natural disaster or other emergency arises. The group focuses on emergency management planning, training, and exercises in coordination with Hennepin County Emergency Management.

Over time, the group identified a critical need for improved traffic incident management. These cities were often responding to severe crashes, particularly along the Highway 12 corridor stretching from Wayzata to the Hennepin/Wright County line in Independence. These crashes would frequently result in road closures for hours due to investigations and reconstruction efforts.

Many of these incidents occurred late in the evening, during hours when public works and road maintenance crews were off-duty. The cities relied heavily on their paid-on-call fire departments for traffic control assistance, but the need for more comprehensive support was evident.

Through funding and cooperation with Hennepin County Emergency Management, the group developed a "Traffic Incident Management" (TIM) trailer. This trailer is equipped with foldable road signs featuring changeable placards to communicate a variety of messages, including "Crash Ahead," "Road Closed," "Detour," "Fire," and other emergency alerts. Additionally, the trailer contains cones, portable barricades, and sandbags to secure the signs and enhance traffic control.

The TIM trailer is stored at the West Hennepin Police Department, where it is accessible to all the cities within the Lakes Area. Any police officer, CSO, firefighter, or public works personnel (when on duty) can retrieve the trailer at any time, day or night, to deploy the signs, cones, and barricades as needed. In the spirit of mutual aid, if a city facing an emergency is unable to retrieve the trailer, surrounding cities are ready to respond and assist with the deployment.

Over the years, the TIM trailer has been used multiple times during house fires, car crashes, natural disasters, and other emergencies that required road closures. The equipment inside the trailer helps create a safer working environment for responders by giving motorists advanced warning of an incident and providing tools to effectively close roadways or delineate lanes where responders are operating.

In addition to the TIM trailer, the Maple Plain Fire Department also has a water tender/tanker truck that was built about five years ago. As part of the build, a changeable message board was installed on top of the truck. This vehicle serves as a blocker and early warning system during traffic incidents. The message board allows responders to display important alerts, such as "Crash Ahead" or "Slow Down," to warn approaching drivers of potential hazards. This added layer of communication and protection helps ensure the safety of both responders and motorists, further enhancing the department's ability to manage roadway incidents effectively.

This is just one example of how communities in western Hennepin County have come together to ensure that roadway incident responders have the tools they need to stay safe while managing emergency situations.



EXCITING COLLABORATION: FILMING THE NEW 'SCENE SAFE' TRAINING VIDEO

On March 6, 2025, a dedicated group of Traffic Incident Management (TIM) advocates gathered near Cologne, Minnesota, to film segments for the updated *Scene Safe* training video. Despite concerns about a significant winter storm that brought nearly a foot of snow to areas near the metro, MnDOT confirmed mid-afternoon the day prior that the selected road closure for filming could proceed. The following morning, the skies cleared, providing a beautiful backdrop for the shoot.

Over three productive hours, key TIM tactics were staged and captured on film. The footage will enhance not only the *Scene Safe* training video but also serve as valuable educational material for the Department of Public Safety's communications initiatives, including Crash Responder Safety Week. We eagerly anticipate sharing the final product in upcoming newsletter editions.

A huge thank you to all agencies that assisted: Cologne Fire Department, Ridgeview Ambulance, Colony Plaza Towing, Carver County Sheriff's Office, MnDOT, John McClellan, Office of Traffic Safety (OTS), DPS Office of Communications, Minnesota State Patrol (MSP), HDR Consulting, Inc., and Rick Denneson, Maple Plain Fire Chief.

Stay tuned for more updates, and thank you for your commitment to keeping our roadways safe!

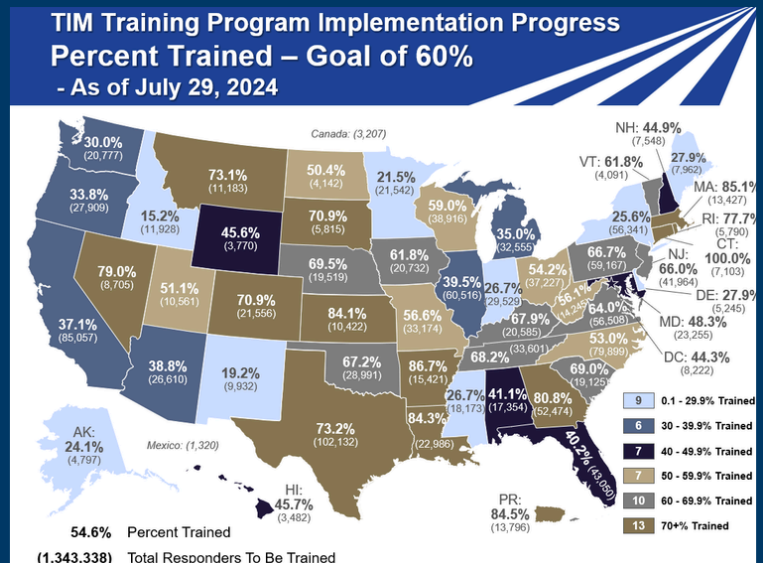


Thank you to John McClellan for the photos!



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.



The Importance of High-Visibility Vests in Traffic Incident Management

In Traffic Incident Management (TIM), visibility is critical for safety. High-visibility vests with reflective materials help responders stand out, reducing risks both day and night, whether in urban or rural areas.

Why It Matters

The FHWA mandates ANSI/ISEA 107-2020 Class 2 or 3 apparel for responders. Bright colors enhance visibility during the day, while reflective materials are crucial at night, helping responders be seen from a safe distance.

Role-Specific Requirements

- **EMS:** ANSI Class 2 or 3 vests
- **Firefighters:** Required unless fire suppression activities prevent use
- **Law Enforcement:** Compliant vests required, with exceptions for tactical operations
- **Tow Operators:** Must wear ANSI Class 3 vests at all times

Maintaining High-Visibility Gear

Daily use vests should be replaced every 6 months. For occasional wear, replace after 3 years or when they're damaged or no longer visible from 1,000 feet.

Wearing high-visibility gear saves lives—ensure your gear is up to standard and well-maintained for safety.

Class 2



Class 3



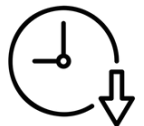
TIM goals



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



minnesotatzd.org/tim



Department of Public Safety