



# Quick Notes

From the Idaho Office of Highway Safety

January 29, 2015

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**Fatalities as of 12/31/14 = 186 (preliminary)**

Hi Highway Safety Partners:

The Office of Highway Safety has declared 2015 as the year of combating distracted driving in Idaho. It is no secret that distracted driving contributes in a large way to fatal and serious injury crashes on all our roadways. Efforts to eliminate distracted driving should at least match the efforts used to encourage seat belt usage and fighting impaired driving.

Distraction is categorized into the three following types: visual (taking your eyes off the road), manual (taking your hands off the wheel), and cognitive (taking your mind off the road). In Idaho during 2013 distracted driving crashes made up 21% of all crashes and were responsible for 20% of all fatalities. While 72% of all distracted driving crashes occurred on urban roadways, 83% of the fatal distracted driving crashes *occurred on rural roadways*. While only 22% of all distracted driving crashes involved a single vehicle, 44% of fatal distracted driving crashes involved a single vehicle. The economic cost of crashes involving distracted driving was nearly \$598 million dollars in 2013. *This represents 23% of the total costs of Idaho crashes.*

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration texting is the most alarming distraction because it involves manual, visual, and cognitive distraction simultaneously. Sending or reading a text message takes the driver's eyes off the road for 5 seconds. For a driver traveling at 55 miles per hour, that's the equivalent of traveling the entire length of a football field blind!

The good news is that everyone can play a part to combat distracted driving. Our office is seeing more businesses creating policies addressing distracted driving. These efforts are deeply appreciated. Both public and private sectors can both play a critical role in combating distracted driving. Here are some issues to consider when developing a policy:

- Will you restrict cell phone use while driving for employees conducting business or ban it altogether? Keep in mind that although it may be tempting to allow workers to use hands-free devices, they have not been shown to be substantially safer than handheld cell phones because the cognitive distraction remains.
- Establish a company policy on answering and returning phone calls while on the road so that workers don't feel that there will be negative repercussions for avoiding cell phone use while driving. For example, you can instruct employees to pull over to a safe location within a specified time period after receiving a phone call or to stop at certain intervals (e.g., every 2 hours) to check voicemail and text messages. Employees who are not on the road need to know about these policies, too, so everyone's expectations are aligned.
- Address emergency situations. While talking or texting on a cell phone while driving is dangerous, cell phones can also be lifesavers in emergencies. Your policy should allow for these situations and provide guidelines for who to contact in emergencies and how to report emergencies safely.

- Remind your employees—then remind them again—of your company’s distracted driving policies and consequences. Consider having *all* drivers consistently follow these four steps: (1) Turn off electronic devices and put them out of reach before starting to drive. (2) Set a good example for young drivers and talk with teens about responsible driving, as young drivers are most at risk. (3) Speak up when you are a passenger and the driver uses an electronic device while behind the wheel. Offer to make the call for the driver, so his or her full attention is on the road, and; (4) Always wear your seat belt—it’s the best defense you have against other unsafe drivers.

Eliminating distracted driving in Idaho is worthy of our efforts. It will take all of us working together in 2015 and beyond to change the culture of distracted driving to the point this behavior is simply not acceptable. Achieving this goal will take Idaho far on our quest of *Towards Zero Deaths*.

Brent Jennings  
Highway Safety Manager



## **State fatality rates continue sharp decline despite significantly increased volumes**

BOISE – For the third time in the last four years, Idaho achieved a measure of roadway safety the state could not reach for the better part of 60 years. While there is still significant work to be done, this shows a trend in the right direction.

Idaho’s roadway fatality rates continue to decline sharply, despite significant increases in vehicles traveling on the state’s roads and people driving more miles each year.

In the year just completed, fewer than 200 people died on Idaho’s highways, according to early 2014 data provided by the Idaho Transportation Department’s Office of Highway Safety. The preliminary total for 2014 is 187 fatalities.\*

“Any loss of life is troubling, but this early 2014 data shows that we continue to make progress toward our goal of no one dying on an Idaho roadway,” said ITD Highway Safety Manager Brent Jennings.

Fatalities also were under 200 in 2011 (167) and in 2012 (184). It was not always so, however, as the average from 1956-2010 was 270 highway deaths per year.

There were 349 deaths recorded on Idaho's roadways in 1973, the worst year on record for traffic deaths in the state. In fact, Idaho averaged 323 fatalities each year throughout the 1970s.

The downward trend has continued despite a statewide increase in miles traveled and vehicles operated.

Today, the number of miles driven in Idaho is six times greater than 1956 and has tripled since 1973. The number of vehicles on state roadways also has increased – seven times higher than in 1956 and more than a million more vehicles than in 1973. Yet, fatalities have decreased by 42 percent since those tragic years of the 1970s.

Jennings said that ITD's goal is to continue this downward trend in 2015 and moving forward.

"Idaho drivers are making smarter decisions, buckling up and avoiding risky behaviors such as speeding, distracted driving or driving while impaired," he explained.

Credit also goes to increased safety efforts by law enforcement, transportation and emergency response professionals; engineering improvements to vehicles and driving surfaces; and educational campaigns that increase awareness.

\*Highway traffic fatality rates are preliminary.



## **Highway Safety Grant Funding Available**

The Idaho Transportation Department, Office of Highway Safety, announces grant funding to be awarded for FY 2016. This funding is available to projects that address specific traffic safety priority areas to include Impaired Driving, Aggressive Driving, Distracted Driving, Occupant Protection, Child Passenger Safety, Motorcycle Safety, Traffic Records, Youthful Drivers and Traffic Records. Grants may be awarded for assisting the Idaho Office of Highway Safety in addressing traffic safety deficiencies, expansion of an ongoing activity, or development of a new program or intervention.

**To apply for FFY 2016 funding, complete the *Office of Highway Safety Grant – Application*.**

Grant Application and Grant Application Instructions are available on our website at <http://itd.idaho.gov/ohs/programs.htm> *Be sure to scroll to the bottom of the page.* These applications are for year-long funding for FFY 2016 and are different and completely separate from the Traffic Enforcement Mobilizations (TEMA).

**The application submitted by your agency must be postmarked, e-mailed or faxed no later than 5:00 PM MST Friday, February 27, 2015. Send e-mailed submissions to [ohsgrants@itd.idaho.gov](mailto:ohsgrants@itd.idaho.gov) or fax to (208) 334-4430.**

If you have any questions or need assistance completing the forms, please contact the Office of Highway Safety at (208) 334-8100. For an electronic version of the forms send a request to the above e-mail.



## **New Video Shows How FHWA Makes Walking, Biking Safer**

US DOT Fast Lane Blog, Posted by Todd Solomon, January 7, 2015.

See how the Federal Highway Administration and its partners collaborate to make biking and walking safer, affordable, more accessible, and an integral part of livable communities across America. Available at: <http://www.transportation.gov/fastlane/fhwa-youtube-we-make-walking-biking-safer>

## **Pedestrian Safety Enforcement Operations: A How-to-Guide**

In 2012, 4,743 pedestrians were killed in traffic crashes, which is a 6 percent increase over the previous year. Over the past 10 years, the percentage of pedestrians killed has increased from 11 to 14 percent of all fatalities. More Americans are walking as a healthy alternative to driving on short trips, and we have a responsibility to protect their safety. At the U.S. Department of Transportation, safety-including the safety of pedestrians- is our top priority.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has created a guidance document to support law enforcement operations to prevent pedestrian deaths, titled, "Pedestrian Safety Enforcement Operations: A How-to Guide." This guide is intended to help law enforcement and public safety officials develop and execute pedestrian safety enforcement operations in an efficient and effective way to improve safety in your communities. The guide was developed with the input of dozens of law enforcement professionals, pedestrian safety experts, and highway safety offices to provide the users with helpful information to develop and manage pedestrian enforcement operations.

The guide is available on line at <http://www.nhtsa.gov/staticfiles/nti/pdf/812059-PedestrianSafetyEnforceOperaHowToGuide.pdf> It is available to you at no cost, and we encourage you to download and share the information with your partners and stakeholders. We thank you for the dedication and commitment you display every day to keep our roads and highways safe. We hope this new pedestrian safety enforcement guide will be of value to you, and that it will serve to support your efforts to reduce pedestrian fatalities.

Sincerely,  
Anthony R. Foxx  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation

## **Lives Saved by Vehicle Safety Technologies and Associated Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards, 1960-2012**

[NHTSA REPORT DOT HS 812 069, January 2015](#)

NHTSA began in 1975 to evaluate the effectiveness of vehicle safety technologies associated with the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards. By June 2014, NHTSA had evaluated the effectiveness of virtually all the life-saving technologies introduced in passenger cars, pickup trucks, SUVs, and vans from about 1960 up through about 2010. A statistical model estimates the number of lives saved from 1960 to 2012 by the combination of these life-saving technologies.

Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) data for 1975 to 2012 documents the actual crash fatalities in vehicles that, especially in recent years, include many safety technologies. Using NHTSA's published effectiveness estimates, the model estimates how many people would have died if the vehicles had not been equipped with any of the safety technologies. In addition to equipment compliant with specific FMVSS in effect at that time, the model tallies lives saved by installations in advance of the FMVSS, back to 1960, and by non-compulsory improvements, such as pretensioners and load limiters for seat belts.

FARS data has been available since 1975, but an extension of the model allows estimates of lives saved in 1960 to 1974. A previous NHTSA study using the same methods estimated that vehicle safety technologies had saved 328,551 lives from 1960 through 2002. The agency now estimates 613,501 lives saved from 1960 through 2012. The annual number of lives saved grew from 115 in 1960, when a small number of people used lap belts, to 27,621 in 2012, when most cars and LTVs were equipped with numerous modern safety technologies and belt use on the road achieved 86 percent

## **Talking with Older Drivers about Safe Driving**



Getting older does not necessarily mean a person's driving days are over. But it is important to plan ahead and take steps to ensure the safety of your loved ones on the road.

If you think you need to have a conversation with an older driver about his or her driving abilities, remember that many older drivers look at driving as a form of independence. Bringing up the subject of their driving abilities can make some drivers defensive. So, be prepared with your observations and questions, and - if necessary - provide possible transportation alternatives.

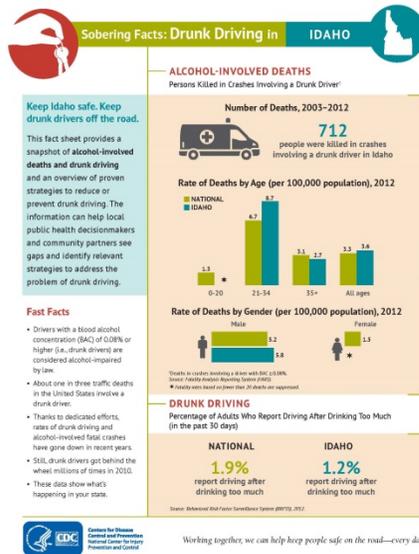
Answering the following questions may help you decide if you need to initiate a conversation with an older driver about driving safely:

- Getting lost on routes that should be familiar?
- Noticing new dents or scratches to the vehicle?
- Receiving a ticket for a driving violation?
- Experiencing a near miss or crash recently?
- Being advised to limit/stop driving due to a health reason?
- Overwhelmed by road signs and markings while driving?
- Taking any medication that might affect driving safely?
- Speeding or driving too slowly for no reason?
- Suffering of any illnesses that may affect driving skills?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you might need to talk with an older driver about safe driving. [NHTSA offers free materials](#) to help you learn more about how to recognize and discuss changes in your older loved one's driving.

# Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – Safety Fact Sheets

The CDC offers some great resources for motor vehicle safety topics including state fact sheets and data, free social media, effective interventions and evidence-based motor vehicle injury prevention program, to just name a few. Check out their website at <http://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/>



**IDAHO**

**DRUNK DRIVING LAWS**

- All 50 states and the District of Columbia have laws in place to protect the public from drunk drivers (e.g., driving is illegal with BAC at or above 0.08%).
- In Idaho, sobriety checkpoints are not allowed.
- Ignition interlock laws and license suspensions vary by state. For up-to-date information on your state, check with the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety at [www.iihs.org](http://www.iihs.org).

**What Works**

The strategies in this section are effective for reducing or preventing drunk driving. They are recommended by The Guide to Community Preventive Services and/or have been demonstrated to be effective in reviews by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Different strategies may require different resources for implementation or have different levels of impact. Find strategies that are right for your state.

**Strategies to reduce or prevent drunk driving**

- Drunk driving laws** make it illegal nationwide to drive with a BAC at or above 0.08%. For people under 21, "zero tolerance" laws make it illegal to drive with any measurable amount of alcohol in their system. These laws, along with laws that maintain the **minimum legal drinking age** at 21, are in place in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, and have had a clear effect on highway safety, saving tens of thousands of lives since their implementation.
- Sobriety checkpoints** allow police to briefly stop vehicles at specific, highly visible locations to see if the driver is impaired. Police may stop at a certain portion of drivers. Breath tests may be given if police have a reason to suspect the driver is intoxicated.
- Ignition interlocks** installed in cars measure alcohol on the driver's breath. Interlocks keep the car from starting if the driver has a BAC above a certain level, usually 0.02%. They are used for people convicted of drunk driving and are highly effective at preventing repeat offenses while installed. Mandating interlocks for all offenders, including first-time offenders, will have the greatest impact.
- Multi-component interventions** combine several programs or policies to prevent drunk driving. The key to these comprehensive efforts is **community mobilization** by involving coalitions or task forces in design and implementation.
- Mass media campaigns** spread messages about the physical dangers and legal consequences of drunk driving. They persuade people not to drink and drive and encourage them to keep other drivers from doing so. Campaigns are most effective when supporting other impaired driving prevention strategies.
- Administrative license revocation or suspension laws** allow police to take away the license of a driver who tests at or above the legal BAC limit or who refuses testing. States decide how long to suspend the license; a minimum of 90 days is effective.
- Alcohol screening and brief interventions** take advantage of "teachable moments" to identify people at risk for alcohol problems and get them treatment as needed. This combined strategy, which can be delivered in health care, university, and other settings, helps change behavior and reduces alcohol-impaired crashes and injuries.
- School-based educational programs** are effective at teaching teens not to ride with drunk drivers. More evidence is needed to see if these programs can also reduce drunk driving and related crashes.

**For More Information**

Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Web site at [www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/](http://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/):

- highlight costs and other data related to drunk driving
- Detailed information on effective strategies to reduce or prevent drunk driving

Source: The Guide to Community Preventive Services (The Community Guide). Major Update: Motor Vehicle Injury Prevention: Administrative License Revocation and Suspension for Drunk Driving (2012). 7th edition. [www.cdc.gov/cdc/ncipc/pdfs/1127.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/cdc/ncipc/pdfs/1127.pdf).

Find this and other state-specific information at [www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/states](http://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/states). (Updated December 2014)

## Cascade Buckle Up Event



Officer Eric Littlejohn of the Cascade Police Department coordinated a Buckle Up safety event at the Cascade Junior/Senior High School last November. The event featured a simulated crash, and focused on the importance of buckling up. High school students, the local fire department, emergency medical services, Buckle Up for Bobby (Duke and Sheri Rogers) <http://buckleupforbobby.com/>, the ITD Office of Highway Safety, and local law enforcement personnel were there to demonstrate the consequences of not wearing their seat belts. The Cascade Elementary School students also showed up however the presentation did not contain graphic images of crash "victims."



## Seat Belts Save Spring 2015 Challenge

<http://www.seatbeltssave.org/>

Registration is NOW open and closes April 17th.

The National Organization for Youth Safety (NOYS) is offering a Spring Seat Belts Save challenge. The challenge is designed to educate teen drivers about the dangers of riding in a car unbelted with the purpose of increasing the number of teens who buckle up (and reducing teen deaths). In Idaho, between the years 2008-2012, 106 teens

were killed in car crashes; 64 of the teens were not wearing seat belts. Information about the challenge has been mailed to all Idaho high schools and law enforcement agency leaders.

A change that may motivate schools to take part: NOYS is offering special incentives (raffles) for participating schools from secondary law states. Kuna and North Fremont High Schools have already registered.

The Occupant Protection Committee is considering ideas to encourage an in-state friendly competition between high schools.

## **Change for Youthful Drivers Being Considered by Washington Legislators**

Washington state legislators are considering a bill to require drivers under the age of 19 for display a decal, “new driver” on the vehicle rear window. Read more at <http://www.thenewstribune.com/2015/01/29/3613821/bill-would-make-teen-drivers-show.html>

## **2015 CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

To add an event to the calendar, contact [lisa.losness@itd.idaho.gov](mailto:lisa.losness@itd.idaho.gov)

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event Description, Location</b>
Nov 27, 2014 – Jan 4, 2015	<b>Impaired Driving Mobilization</b> Driver Sober or Get Pulled Over
March 15-17, 2015	<b>LIFESAVERS, National Conference on Highway Safety Priorities – Chicago, IL</b>
March 15-22, 2015	<b>Impaired Driving Mobilization</b> Buzzed Driving is Drunk Driving
April 29-May 2, 2015	<b>Child Passenger Technician Training Course</b> Meridian– to register <a href="http://www.cert.safekids.org">www.cert.safekids.org</a>
May 5-6, 2015	<b>HIGHWAY SAFETY SUMMIT – Pocatello, ID – Red Lion</b>
May 20 – June 2, 2015	<b>Seat Belt Mobilization</b> Click it or Ticket

[Click to view or register for Upcoming Alive at 25 courses in Idaho](#)



**Quick Reference Guide** – click on the topic to go directly to website.

Idaho Office of Highway Safety Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/IDOHS](http://www.facebook.com/IDOHS)

[OHS](#), Office of Highway Safety

[ITD](#), Idaho Transportation Department

[NHTSA](#), National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[FHWA](#), Federal Highway Administration