



Annual Report to the Legislature

HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY

2009



JON S. CORZINE

GOVERNOR



ANNE MILGRAM

ATTORNEY GENERAL



PAMELA S. FISCHER

GOVERNOR'S REPRESENTATIVE

INTRODUCTION

The New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety (DHTS) was established to implement the requirements of the National Highway Traffic Safety Act of 1966. DHTS's mission is to (1) annually develop a comprehensive highway traffic safety plan; (2) promote traffic safety; (3) procure and administer available federal traffic safety funds; and (4) coordinate the traffic safety activities of state and local agencies as part of a comprehensive statewide traffic safety program.

DHTS is located in the Department of Law and Public Safety. The Division Director is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the Governor. The Director serves as the Governor's Representative to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the Federal Highway Administration and is chairperson of the Governor's Highway Traffic Safety Policy Advisory Council. The Director's administration of the DHTS is under the direction and supervision of the Governor and the Attorney General.

The Highway Safety Plan for federal fiscal year 2009 (October 1, 2008 – September 30, 2009) included funding from the annual allotment of Section 402 State and Community Highway Safety funds. In addition, funds from the following incentive grant programs were also made available: Section 405 Occupant Incentive Grant, Section 406 Safety Belt Performance Grant, Section 408 Traffic Information System Improvement Grant, Section 410 Alcohol Incentive Grant, Section 1906 Incentive Grant Program to Prohibit Racial Profiling, Section 2010 Motorcycle Safety Grant, and Section 2011 Child Safety and Booster Seat Incentive Grant. Monies received under these sections of Title 23 funded projects in the following areas: alcohol and other drug countermeasures, occupant protection, pedestrian and bicycle safety, community traffic safety programs, police traffic services, motorcycle safety, roadway safety, and traffic records. A total of 822 projects were funded at the state and local level. DHTS also continued to oversee and coordinate the state Drunk Driving Enforcement Fund, N.J.S.A. 39:4-50.8.

The cooperation and participation of DHTS' governmental and private sector partners is critical to the overall success of the highway safety program. The principal forum for these traffic safety partners is the Highway Traffic Safety Policy Advisory Council (HTSPAC), which consists of 21 members, appointed by the Governor, who assist in recommending and developing traffic safety policy and programs. In addition, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the Federal Highway Administration provide leadership and technical assistance to DHTS. State agencies including the Division of State Police, Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control, Department of Transportation, Department of Education, Department of Health and Senior Services, Office of Emergency Medical Services, Department of Community Affairs; local law enforcement agencies, including the Association of Chiefs of Police and the Traffic Officers Association; schools; advocacy groups, including the New Jersey State Safety Council, AAA and MADD; and other private sector businesses and organizations play a key role in the implementation of New Jersey's traffic safety programs.

Proactive involvement at the local, state and national level allows New Jersey to stay in the forefront of advances in highway safety. Key public policy initiatives are also essential for stemming the tide of crashes in the State. DHTS is calling for passage of S18, which would close the backseat loophole in the state's primary safety belt law by requiring all passengers 18 years of age and older, regardless of seating position, to buckle up while riding in a motor vehicle. DHTS will also continue its efforts to implement the recommendations of the Teen Driver Study Commission, with a focus on passage of S2848/A3068. Dubbed the "permit" bill, it would mandate participation in a parent/teen orientation as a prerequisite for obtaining a permit, lengthen the permit from 6 to 12 months, mandate supervised practice driving, and ensure private, one-on-one behind the wheel training. Enacting legislative initiatives is essential for achieving DHTS' goal of zero fatalities on the state's roadways.

TRAFFIC CRASH DATA

In keeping with recent trends, traffic fatalities decreased from 724 in 2007 to 590 in 2008, an overall decline of 19 percent and the lowest number of recorded deaths in the State since 1948. The total number of persons injured in motor vehicle-related crashes also declined nearly 4 percent to 94,343. The State's death rate per 100 million miles traveled was the lowest ever recorded at 0.87. Based on preliminary data received for the current year, this downward trend is expected to continue in 2009.

While New Jersey experienced another year of record front seat belt usage, the rate increased for the 13th consecutive year to 92.67 percent, backseat belt use by adults stands as just 32 percent. Increasing back seat belt use is critical since nearly half of motor vehicle occupants killed in crashes between 2000 and 2008 were unrestrained. Alcohol consumption continues, as in previous years, to play a significant role in motor vehicle crashes. The percentage of alcohol related fatalities dropped to 26 percent in 2008 and that trend is expected to continue in 2009. However, one in four motor vehicle crashes are still caused by impaired drivers. Pedestrian fatalities account for 26 percent of all traffic fatalities which is thirteen percentage points higher than the national average.

Teen driver and teen passenger (16-20 years old) fatalities have declined every year since 2001 with the exception of 2006. Teen drivers and their passengers involved in crashes decreased by 3 percent in 2008 from 58,522 in 2007 to 56,962. Older driver (65 and older) crashes have decreased by 36 percent from 2002 to 2008 despite a growing 65 plus population. Both of these trends are expected to continue in 2009.

Although there has been an upward trend in motorcyclist fatalities since 2000, over the last three years (2006-2008), fatalities have decreased by 14 percent and preliminary data for 2009 indicates another decrease in motorcycle fatalities for this year. Bicycle fatalities, after remaining stable for several years, increased to

20 in 2008 compared to 12 the previous year, but they are on track to drop in 2009.

Driver distractions are a leading cause of motor vehicle crashes and near-crashes. Secondary activities have become an everyday occurrence behind the wheel of many motorists. Despite strong enforcement, with an average of 10,000 tickets written a month, the use of hand-held cell phones and texting by drivers persists. According to a study conducted by Fairleigh Dickinson University's Public Mind Poll, 21 percent of New Jersey motorists admit to sending text messages while driving and 18 percent of respondents use hand-held phones when driving.

Annually, over 20,000 crashes are caused by unsafe speed on the state's roadways. Speed coupled with unsafe aggressive driving behaviors such as tailgating, running red lights and stop signs, and weaving in and out of traffic are dangerous and contribute to crashes.

Great strides have been made in improving highway safety, but much remains to be done. DHTS will continue to work with its partners to reduce the number of people killed or injured on our roadways. As a lead state agency in this effort, DHTS will increase its focus on implementing programs that increase occupant restraint (seat belts, car and booster seats); curtail impaired, distracted and aggressive driving; improve pedestrian, bicycle and motorcycle safety; and reduce the incidence of crashes among teens and older drivers.



PROGRAM FUNDING

Federally Funded Programs

A. Section 402 Program

The State and Community Highway Safety Grant program is administered at the federal level primarily by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and partially by the Federal Highway Administration. The funds are intended to be used as seed money for innovative programs and as leverage to garner other

state, local and private resources. The 402 program provides funds to improve the enforcement of existing laws, change public attitudes through education, and build state and local leadership in highway safety. DHTS awarded 205 grants, totaling \$6,105,029.

B. Section 405 Program

The Section 405 Occupant Protection Incentive Grant program funds initiatives that address proper restraint

by all motor vehicle occupants. DHTS awarded 155 grants, totaling \$792,293.

C. Section 406 Program

The Section 406 Safety Belt Performance Grant provides incentive grants to encourage the enactment and enforcement of safety belt laws. Grant funds may be used for any safety purpose under Title 23

or for any project that proactively addresses highway safety problems. DHTS awarded 80 grants, totaling \$1,998,694.

D. Section 408 Program

The Section 408 Grant establishes a state traffic safety information system improvement grant program. The program encourages the coordination of safety data systems across agencies and the development and maintenance of a comprehensive traffic safety

information system. Projects that improve the timeliness, completeness, uniformity, accessibility, and quality of crash data qualify for funding. DHTS awarded three grants, totaling \$690,889.

E. Section 410 Program

The Section 410 Grant funds programs that address driving under the influence of alcohol and drugs.

DHTS awarded 357 grants, totaling \$3,743,415.

F. Section 1906 Program

The Section 1906 Grant provides funds to enact and enforce laws that prohibit the use of racial profiling in the enforcement of traffic laws on Federal aid highways, and to implement and allow for public

inspection of statistics on motor vehicle stops. DHTS awarded two grants, totaling \$386,609, to the Office of State Police Affairs and the Clinton Township Police Department to establish a pilot program.

G. Section 2010

The Section 2010 Grant provides funds to implement programs that will reduce the number of single and multi-vehicle crashes involving motorcyclists. DHTS

awarded one grant, totaling \$127,179 under this program to the Motor Vehicle Commission.

H. Section 2011 Program

The Section 2011 Grant establishes an incentive grant program that allows for the enforcement of child safety seat laws and public education programs focusing

on the proper use and installation of child restraints. DHTS awarded 19 grants, totaling \$1,168,665.

PROGRAM FUNDING **State Programs**

A. Drunk Driving Enforcement Fund

The Drunk Driving Enforcement Fund (DDEF) established a \$100 surcharge on each drunk driving conviction. Monies in this fund are distributed to municipal, county, State, and interstate police agencies to increase enforcement of drunk driving laws. Every law enforcement agency whose officers make arrests leading to DWI convictions and imposition of the surcharge are entitled to grants representing its proportionate contribution to the

fund. Law enforcement agencies, through application to DHTS and approval of the Director, may use DDEF monies for DWI enforcement patrols and any other appropriate DWI countermeasures. DDEF funds totaling \$4,288,786 were distributed to law enforcement agencies during FY2009 (July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2009) to help reduce alcohol-related crashes and fatalities.

B. Motorcycle Safety Education Program

The motorcycle safety education program provides for a course of instruction and training designed to develop and instill the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and habits necessary for the safe operation of a motorcycle. Beginner and advanced rider training programs are conducted throughout the State. In 2009, training was offered solely at private locations by public and private educational institutions. The New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission, while continuing to administer the statewide program, discontinued offering the

motorcycle safety education course. A total of 7,100 riders were trained in 2009 compared to 7,201 the previous year.

In response to the increase in motorcycle crashes in New Jersey, the Washington Township Police Department in Bergen County created a modified version of the basic and experienced rider courses. Three rider classes provided training for 43 participants.

DRUNK DRIVING
OVER THE LIMIT. UNDER ARREST.



PROGRAM REPORTS

Highlights of projects and activities conducted by DHTS during the past year are detailed below:

REPORT I. Alcohol and Other Drug Countermeasures

The *Over the Limit, Under Arrest* 2008 year-end crackdown raised awareness about the dangers of impaired driving during a time of the year when impaired driving increases by as much as 10 percent. DHTS invited 499 police agencies to participate in the holiday campaign, which ran from December 8, 2008 to January 2, 2009, and provided \$5,000 in overtime grant funding to 92 departments. Agencies not receiving funds were also asked to support the crackdown with their own resources. In addition to the enforcement effort, earned media was utilized to deliver the *Over the Limit, Under Arrest* message. A statewide press release was issued to print and broadcast media and police department grantees were asked to engage their local media in covering the mobilization, resulting in significant newspaper and radio coverage across the state. The year-end crackdown resulted in 1,909 DWI arrests. In addition, participating police agencies issued 12,734 and 5,199 speeding and seat belt summonses, respectively. Police agency participation was strong with 424 agencies taking part in the crackdown, up from 333 during the same time period in 2007.

From August 21 to September 7, 2009, DHTS participated in the national *Over the Limit, Under Arrest* impaired driving crackdown. The goal of this crackdown was to mobilize all police agencies in the state to raise awareness about the dangers of impaired driving through a combination of stepped-up enforcement and media activities. DHTS again invited 499 police agencies to support the initiative with 236 receiving overtime enforcement grants in the amount of \$6,000 each. Similar to the year-end crackdown, the remaining agencies were asked to support the campaign through the use of their

own resources. To help spread the *Over the Limit, Under Arrest* message, a statewide press release was issued just prior to the start of the crackdown. The statewide crackdown resulted in 1,528 DWI arrests, down slightly from 1,589 arrests during the 2008 end of summer campaign. Participating police agencies issued 8,051 and 4,964 speeding and seat belt summonses, respectively. Eighty percent (399) of the state's police agencies participated in the crackdown.

The Alcohol/Drug Test Unit (ADTU) coordinators trained 679 new breathalyzer operators at four-day Breathalyzer Operator Courses. ADTU coordinators also re-certified 2,379 breathalyzer operators and conducted training for 3,162 police officers in the Alcotest 7110 conversion class. ADTU coordinators trained 727 police officers in DWI identification, apprehension, processing, and prosecution at five-day Standardized Field Sobriety courses. Additionally, 239 officers were trained at the one-day Standardized Field Sobriety Test refresher course and 135 probation officers received training at a one-day Drug Recognition Expert training class.

A comprehensive law enforcement and public awareness effort by the Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control and DHTS was implemented to combat drinking in Jersey Shore resort areas over the summer. Thirty Shore municipalities participated in the *Cops In Shops* program, with over \$60,000 in funding provided by DHTS. Under the *Cops In Shops* program, local police officers work undercover in participating retail locations posing as store employees or outside establishments to apprehend adults who attempt to purchase alcohol for underage drinkers. Retail outlets displayed posters and decals on doors, windows

and counter tops warning underage drinkers that a police officer may be working undercover in the establishment. The following towns participated in the 2009 *Cops In Shops* summer program: Absecon, Avalon, Barnegat Township, Beach Haven, Belmar, Cape May, Egg Harbor Township, Harvey Cedars, Holmdel, Lake Como, Lakehurst, Lakewood, Lavallette, Long Beach Township, Lower Township, Manchester, Margate, Middle Township, Neptune, North Wildwood, Ocean Township (Monmouth and Ocean Counties), Point Pleasant Beach, Point Pleasant, Sea Isle City, Seaside Heights, Ship Bottom, Stafford Township, Toms River, and Wildwood.

This program was also implemented in the following communities near college campuses during the fall semester: Absecon, Cherry Hill, Deptford, Eatontown, Egg Harbor Township, Galloway Township, Glassboro, Hanover Township, Long Branch, Madison, Mahwah, Morris Township, North Brunswick, Ocean Township (Monmouth County), Piscataway, Princeton, Ramsey, Rutherford, South Bound Brook, South Brunswick, South Orange, Summit, and Teaneck. A total of 396 arrests were made as a result of the *Cops in Shops* college and summer programs. During the Fall initiative, 151 arrests were made in connection with the program, while the summer initiative resulted in another 245 arrests.

Funds were provided to enforce Alcoholic Beverage Control and other related laws pertaining to underage alcohol use and/or intoxicated patrons. Investigative personnel conducted operations in 645 licensed establishments. A total of 2,057 patrons were carded resulting in 172 arrests (an increase of 58 percent from the previous year). In addition to the administrative charges filed against the licensed establishments for serving patrons under the legal age, investigative personnel detected 101 administrative violations.

Additional efforts to combat underage drinking included a public service announcement competition entitled "Proms and Alcohol Don't Mix." High school students throughout the state were invited to develop 30-second public service announcements depicting the consequences of underage alcohol use. Working with the State Department of Education and the Office of the Attorney General, the Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control received more than 75 scripts. The winning entries were submitted by Emerson Junior-Senior High School in Bergen County and Eastern Senior High School in Voorhees Township. The public service announcements were professionally produced and aired on local cable stations.

Grants were awarded to FOCUS Hispanic Community Center in Newark, the Puerto Rican Action Committee of Southern New Jersey in Penns Grove, and Puerto Rican Unity for Progress in Camden to develop and deliver a teen driving community outreach program for Hispanic youth, 17-20 years of age. The three agencies wrote, produced and distributed public service announcements addressing the dangers of underage drinking and driving.

A cooperative law enforcement effort designed to combat drunk driving was conducted by six towns in Northern Burlington County. Bordentown City and Township, Burlington City and Township, Florence Township, and Mansfield Township shared law enforcement resources to conduct drunk driving saturation patrols. Under the initiative, officers from all six jurisdictions patrolled across municipal lines to stop and arrest drunk drivers. The cooperative program enhanced the efforts of these smaller towns to apprehend drunk drivers by increasing law enforcement visibility. Twenty-six drunk driving arrests were made in the six participating towns.

REPORT II. Occupant Protection

The *Click It or Ticket* campaign was conducted May 18-31, 2009. Key components of the campaign included targeted seat belt enforcement by police agencies in the state, 190 of which received \$4,000 overtime enforcement grants. Awareness about the campaign and the importance of wearing a seat belt were further enhanced by the distribution of educational materials by partner agencies statewide and earned media efforts. Of the 499 police agencies, 443 (89 percent) participated in the mobilization. The 443 participating agencies issued 41,442 seat belt citations during the two-week campaign. In addition to seat belt citations, police officers wrote 891 child restraint and 6,833 speeding citations, and made 866 DWI arrests.

The annual statewide seat belt usage survey, conducted by the New Jersey Institute of Technology following the *Click It or Ticket* campaign, found the state's front seat belt usage rate rose for the thirteenth consecutive year from 91.75 percent in 2008 to 92.67 percent in 2009. This equates to 79,000 more New Jerseyans buckling up, seven additional lives saved, a reduction of more than 200 serious injuries, and an annual savings to the state of \$50 million. The three counties with the greatest increase in belt usage from 2008 to 2009 are: Hudson, up 5.9 percent to 93.87 percent; Passaic, up 4.4 percent to 92.66 percent; and Ocean, up 3.9 percent to 90.05 percent. The five counties with the highest belt usage rates for 2009 are: Mercer at 94.53 percent; Bergen at 94.45 percent, Hudson at 93.87 percent; Middlesex at 93.14 percent; and Morris at 93.13 percent.



National Child Passenger Safety Week, September 12-18, kicked-off with a series of car seat inspections designed to help parents and caregivers learn how to properly transport children in their vehicles. On September 12, known throughout the nation as "Seat Check Saturday," certified technicians were available at locations around the State to offer instruction in the proper use of child restraints in motor vehicles. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration; DHTS; the New York Governor's Traffic Safety Committee; the Pennsylvania Traffic Injury Prevention Project; the AAA Clubs of New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania; and SafeKids New Jersey and New York hosted the 8th Annual Child Passenger Safety Technical Conference, the largest such conference of its type in the nation. The three-day conference, held September 9-11 in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, was attended by more than 700 child safety advocates from throughout the northeast, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and a number of other states.

A new web site, www.njbackseatbullets.com, was developed by the New Jersey Child Passenger Safety Coalition to educate the public about the dangers of riding unbuckled in the back seat. The site explains, through text and video clips, what can happen to an unbelted backseat passenger in the event of a crash. It also calls for passage of a bill (S18/A870) that would close the backseat loophole in New Jersey's primary seat belt law.

A pilot program was developed to educate elementary school-age children about the life-saving importance of proper seat belt fit. The interactive program highlights the proper use of booster seats, typically used by children under the age of eight, who have outgrown child safety seats. DHTS is now developing a train-the-trainer program for certified child passenger safety technicians, school teachers and law enforcement officials for roll-out in the spring of 2010.

REPORT III. Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety

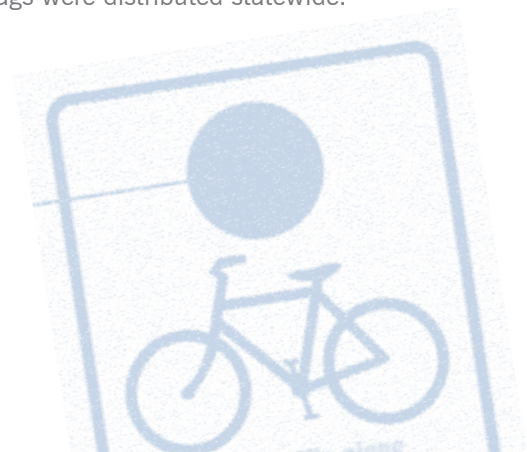
The *Brainy Bunch* campaign, conducted by the Brain Injury Association of New Jersey, has been successful in educating thousands of individuals of all ages about the importance of preventing brain injuries through helmet use. The association's Brainy Bunch website, www.brainybunch.info, was overhauled this year and includes prevention pages and downloadable resources in both English and Spanish. In addition to Web based resources, the association visited schools, community centers, health fairs, hospitals, day care centers, and senior centers to provide traffic safety education presentations to individuals of all ages. This included the distribution of 2,000 helmets to children in need.

Researchers at the Voorhees Transportation Center at Rutgers, in partnership with bicycle advocates (Bike NY) and educators (New Jersey Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance Teachers), partnered with four communities to educate children about bicycle rider safety. The program was pilot tested in the summer of 2009 in Hanover Township, Pemberton, Camden, and Medford. Students have since been administered a test on their knowledge of skills, helmet use, and cycling safety. Staff at the Voorhees Transportation Center will be evaluating the program to determine how best to deliver it to elementary school-age students across the state beginning in the 2010-2011 school year.

Twenty comprehensive pedestrian safety grants for education and enforcement were awarded during the past year. The enforcement grants paid for overtime so that police officers could patrol high pedestrian crash locations and issue summonses to motor vehicle violators whose actions put pedestrians at risk. The educational grants funded the purchase of materials for high-risk populations including children, the elderly and non-English speaking individuals. These comprehensive grants have helped to increase awareness of pedestrian safety and reduce pedestrian-car conflicts.

Law enforcement agencies in Southern New Jersey participated in a month-long public awareness and education initiative designed to educate motorists about safely sharing the road with pedestrians. *Cops in Crosswalks* provided funds to 19 police agencies in Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, and Gloucester Counties to place undercover police officers, posing as pedestrians, in crosswalks between August 17 and September 13. Motorists who failed to yield to the undercover officers crossing the street were stopped and either warned or ticketed by uniformed officers. A total of 1,049 summonses and 2,977 warnings were issued to motorists during the month-long effort. This program was initially implemented in the State's seven northern counties in 2008 and has since been expanded statewide to include the southern counties and the busy corridors in central New Jersey. DHTS, in partnership with police agencies, is promoting the message that pedestrian safety is a "Shared Responsibility" requiring both pedestrians and motorists to do their part to prevent pedestrian/vehicle conflicts.

In response to a significant increase in bicycle fatalities involving adult riders in 2008, a hang tag was developed to educate bicyclists of all ages about bicycle safety. The hang tags were distributed via bicycle retail and rental shops, and bicycling clubs and were made available at and around colleges and transit centers where bicyclists are often found. More than 100,000 hang tags were distributed statewide.



REPORT IV. Community Traffic Safety Programs / Teen Drivers

Community Traffic Safety Programs bring together public and private entities to identify and address traffic safety problems on a county-wide basis. The following counties received funds in 2009: Atlantic, Bergen, Burlington, Camden, Cumberland, Gloucester, Hudson, Morris, Ocean, Passaic, Salem, and Union. Safety areas addressed through comprehensive action plans included: pedestrian, bicycle and child passenger safety; aggressive, impaired, distracted, and teen driving; and seat belt use.

One of the most effective and popular tools used to educate the public about traffic safety is the "Safety Cruiser." The cruiser, a retired NJ Transit bus, traveled to 33 community-based events throughout the State bringing traffic safety information to nearly 6,000 citizens of all ages. The cruiser is equipped with video equipment, child safety seats and educational materials designed to convey important safety messages. Plans are underway to purchase a replacement vehicle featuring interactive educational stations that will significantly enhance the delivery of DHTS' critical safety messages to people of all ages.

A telephone survey of randomly selected drivers, 17 years of age and older, was once again conducted by Fairleigh Dickinson University's Public Mind Poll, on behalf of DHTS, between April 28 and June 1. The poll included a series of questions about driver distraction, an issue that DHTS is working diligently to address. The poll found that motorists who admit to sending text messages while driving increased by 40 percent from the previous year. In addition, 21 percent of motorists say they have sent a text message while driving, up from 15 percent a year ago. However, the number of motorists who use hand-held phones while driving has stabilized, after a large decline from 2007 and 2008. Four out of five (80 percent) drivers say they "rarely" or "never" use a hand-held phone while behind the wheel, unchanged from last year, and improved from 71 percent in 2007. Nonetheless, 18 percent of respondents reported they hold cell phones

while driving "very often" or "sometimes." This year's poll also addressed driver knowledge and attitudes about speeding, aggressive driving, drinking and driving, and personal driving skills. A summary of the findings can be found on the DHTS website at www.njsaferoads.com.

DHTS once again coordinated a statewide effort to engage the public and media during the national observance of *Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day*, held annually on October 10. On this day, motorists across the nation are asked to slow down, buckle-up, avoid distractions, and follow all the rules of the road in an effort to achieve a 24-hour period without a fatal crash on the state's highways. A total of 356 police departments participated by reporting to DHTS all traffic crashes, injuries and fatalities that occurred on October 10, 2009. This information was shared with the media and posted on the DHTS website. In addition, the state's three Metropolitan Planning Organizations, eight Transportation Management Associations, the AAA Clubs of New Jersey, and many businesses, schools and safety organizations partnered with DHTS to generate awareness about the day and the magnitude of the state's crash problem. DOT and police agencies also promoted the observance through variable message boards on state and local roadways.

The third statewide driver education forum was held in May, bringing together more than 300 driver education teachers, school resource officers, State and local law enforcement agencies, and traffic safety officials. Sponsored by Rutgers University, the one-day event updated participants on the work of the Teen Driver Study Commission, changes to the Graduated Driver License (GDL) law, driver education core curriculum content standards, and new Web resources.

DHTS is leading the effort to implement the recommendations in the Teen Driver Study Commission Report, issued to Governor Corzine and the Legislature in March

2008. During the past 12 months, DHTS, in partnership with government and private sector agencies, has made progress in implementing the 14 essential recommendations detailed in the report, as well as a number of others. Most notably, two bills were signed into law by Governor Corzine on April 15, 2009 that will require Graduated Driver License holders under 21 to display a decal on their vehicles to aid with enforcement (New Jersey is the first state in the nation to enact such a requirement dubbed Kyleigh's Law) and adhere to an earlier curfew (11:01 p.m.) and a more stringent passenger restriction (one only). These changes to the current GDL law go into effect on May 1, 2010. An update on the Commission's recommendations can be found on the DHTS website at www.njsaferoads.com.

The Brain Injury Association's website, www.UGotBrains.com, engages teens in understanding how their behaviors impact safety behind the wheel. A new website, www.njteendriving.com, launched in May, is helping to educate parents about the risks associated with teen driving, New Jersey's Graduated Driver License (GDL) law, and other teen driving related issues. A third website, www.NJdrivereducator.com, which will serve as a one-stop shop for traffic safety and driver education resources for teachers in grades K-12, is currently under development with a projected launch date of early 2010. Social networking is also a vital aspect of marketing teen driver safety to young people. Twitter and Facebook are also being used to spread messages quickly and efficiently to this target audience.

Forty schools in the northern, central and southern region of the State received training in the delivery of the National Safety Council's *Alive At 25* teen driver safety program. The program identifies the risks teens face while driving and reinforces basic driving skills and good decision making to help teens become safe, responsible drivers. Many schools are now requiring teens and their parents (sophomores and/or juniors) to participate in the program as a prerequisite for completing driver education and/or obtaining parking privileges on school grounds.

Law enforcement agencies in Bergen and Union Counties conducted a series of checkpoint operations near high schools and other locations frequented by young drivers to ensure that teens are driving safely and in compliance with the state's GDL law. Launched in 2008 in Bergen County and expanded in 2009 to Union County, the program, which was conducted from April 6-24, was designed to help increase teen driver awareness of the consequences of unsafe driving behaviors. During the three-week initiative, all teen drivers who passed through the checkpoints received a handout outlining the GDL restrictions as well as tips for behind-the-wheel safety. Law enforcement officers from 80 police departments issued 642 summonses to teen drivers for GDL violations. In addition to the checkpoints, schools and police officers used posters, banners and written materials with DHTS's social marketing message, *Don't Drive Stupid*, to educate teens about those risky behaviors (i.e., speeding, driving impaired, texting or talking on cell phones, too many passengers, failure to buckle up) that cause them to crash.



REPORT V. Police Traffic Services / Speed Control

DHTS partnered with the law enforcement community to conduct a statewide speed crackdown in July. The *Obey the Signs or Pay the Fines* initiative calls attention to the dangers of excessive speed and aggressive driving. Two-hundred fifty police agencies participated in the four-week campaign issuing 18,087 speeding summonses compared to 9,643 for the previous year. In addition, 7,951 seat belt and 468 child restraint citations were issued and 1,372 DWI arrests were made. The campaign garnered extensive print and broadcast media coverage both statewide and locally thanks to the efforts of DHTS and municipal police departments.

The *Hang Up, Just Drive* initiative, conducted March 2-15, provided grants to 18 local police departments to identify, stop and ticket motorists observed texting or talking on a hand-held cell phone while driving. The two-week pilot program was designed to increase compliance with the State's primary cell phone/texting law, which has been in effect since March 1, 2008. As part of the initiative, police officers were positioned on the street and in vehicles at various intersections in their municipalities. When a violation was observed, the vehicle was pulled over and the driver issued a citation. Participating agencies also conducted illegal cell phone/texting usage surveys before and after the crackdown. As a result of the effort, 4,075 tickets were issued to motorists violating the state's cell phone/texting law. Participating police departments also issued 387 seat belt summonses and 185 speeding tickets, cited 27 motorists for driving while intoxicated and made 32 drug-related arrests. The before and after surveys revealed that motorists violating the state's cell phone law decreased from 12 percent to six percent in the towns participating in the enforcement crackdown. DHTS continues to promote the *Hang Up, Just Drive* message through its website and in partnership with many public and private sector organizations.

A law enforcement and public awareness initiative designed to deter motorists from running red lights was implemented in two communities. Law enforcement agencies in Freehold Township and Marlboro set up weekly surveillance sites at intersections on major roadways in these municipalities. Nearly 400 summonses were issued for disregarding traffic signals during the enforcement initiative.

New Jersey Transit Police conducted a year-long traffic enforcement campaign at its most problematic grade and light rail crossings resulting in an increase in the number of summonses issued for pedestrian violations and disregard of traffic control devices by motorists. In addition to enforcement, New Jersey Transit's communications office partnered with its police force to promote its *Look, Listen Up and Stay Alive* program to educate the public about the dangers associated with rail crossings.

State and local police personnel attended numerous highway traffic safety and crash investigation training courses funded by DHTS. Crash Investigation I, a basic at-scene course, which instructs officers on the proper techniques for recognizing and properly recording damages as a result of collisions on roadways, was attended by 285 police officers. Crash Investigation II, completed by 194 officers, places an emphasis on vehicle damage analysis and vehicle behavior during collisions. Vehicle Dynamics, attended by 118 police officers, focuses on advanced math as it applies to vehicular behavior. Three Traffic Crash Reconstruction classes were also offered and attended by 53 police officers. Specialized training classes in pedestrian/bicycle crash investigation; motorcycle crash investigation; digital photography; computerized collision diagramming; and commercial motor vehicle inspection/collision investigation were attended by 198 students.

REPORT VI. Roadway Safety

The Rutgers University Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Local Technical Assistance Program continued to offer its work zone safety trainings. Sixty-two workshops were presented to 4,208 participants who learned about traffic control, as well as work zone and roadway safety. A four-day, train-the-trainer program was also developed for municipal police officers to help them gain a better understanding of work zone enforcement. The workshop was offered on three dates to 55 police officers.

The Tenth Annual Work Zone Safety Awareness Conference was held April 9, 2009 at Rider University and attended by 304 participants. The morning session included presentations by state officials while the afternoon session promoted work zone safety

awareness through the recognition of best practices in New Jersey.

The pedestrian safety school crossing project provided for the installation of school crossing signs in Newark that is leading to increased safety for thousands of school-age children.

A traffic intern was hired in Warren County to review speed zoning on county roads and sections of roadways with significant traffic volume increases and crash rates. A speed survey report that identifies safety hazards and proposed modifications was developed by the intern and is now being used by the county engineer to assist municipalities in updating their speed zoning ordinances.

REPORT VII. Traffic Records

Traffic record projects are funded in an effort to expand statewide-integrated data collection and transmission systems that improve the timeliness, completeness, accessibility, accuracy, and linkage of safety information that will allow for an analysis of all traffic crashes for use in policy and program development. DHTS funded the following crash data-related initiatives:

The Office of Information Technology (OIT) has made progress in integrating crash data. Files have been uploaded from NJ Department of Transportation crash reports and EMS ambulance run reports. The OIT has been able to match approximately 50 percent of crash related EMS responses to specific motor vehicle crashes. The Motor Vehicle Commission's history files and fatal motor vehicle crash files maintained by the Fatality Analysis Reporting System have also been integrated to allow for more timely and accurate reporting.

The Electronic Patient Care Reporting (ePCR) program, EMS Charts, operated by the Department of Health and Senior Services, has experienced tremendous growth. In June 2008, there were 94 agencies enrolled in the program. As of October

2009, the number of agencies registered for the program has increased to 384. Half of all EMS agencies in the state, including 161 licensed agencies and 223 volunteer agencies, have registered to use the ePCR data collection program. All EMS data is imported into the state's Crash Data Warehouse where over 335,000 electronic patient care records have been entered. Data stakeholders include the Department of Transportation, Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS), NHTSA, Rutgers University Transportation Safety Resource Center and the Motor Vehicle Commission.

The National Association of State EMS Directors, in conjunction with its federal partners at NHTSA and the Trauma/EMS Systems program of the Health Resources and Services Administration's Maternal Child Health Bureau, have developed a national EMS database referred to as the National Emergency Medical Services Information System (NEMSIS). In May, New Jersey became one of only 21 states in the nation to export electronic EMS data to NEMSIS. This system as well as the ePCR program is designed to receive both EMS and trauma data electronically

from volunteer and licensed EMS services in New Jersey. Injured patient data is linked with other data systems to assist state and local efforts in injury prevention related to traffic safety.

Under a project at Rutgers University, the percentage of geocoded crashes increased to 70 percent. Crashes that are geocoded help to pinpoint exactly where crashes are occurring and, in particular, high crash locations. This information is critical to DHTS, DOT and state and local police as they work to maximize resources to improve roadway safety. These records were shared with the Department of Transportation and used by safety professionals for crash analyses.

A growing number of agencies, including DHTS, are using the Plan4Safety software program developed by the Transportation Safety Research Center at Rutgers and funded by the New Jersey Department of Transportation. Plan4Safety is an online comprehensive crash analysis software application used to support safety professionals in making data-driven decisions. Plan4Safety provides detailed crash and injury data including cell phone use, alcohol impairment, seat belt use, property damage and injuries sustained, and driver age and gender. DHTS grantees are required to use Plan4Safety to analyze their local crash data to implement countermeasures that address their most critical traffic safety problems.

REPORT VIII. Incentive Grant Program to Prohibit Racial Profiling

DHTS received funds from NHTSA to help local police departments implement protocols, including the collection and reporting of race data to address potential racial profiling issues associated with motor vehicle stops. The Clinton Township Police Department was selected as the pilot site in 2008 and the Office of State Police Affairs (OSPA) in the Department of Law and Public Safety was responsible for overseeing the project. In the past year, OSPA has assisted in developing protocols to collect data, not only on traffic citations, but also law enforcement outcomes related to motor vehicle stops. Guidance has also been provided in developing protocols to conduct management reviews of video recordings of motor vehicle stops. The review protocol for stop videos is nearing completion and OSPA expects to conduct training addressing this protocol in FY 2010. The police department used the funds to update its mobile data computers in patrol cars to enter the gender, race and ethnicity of the driver, and to record whether a summons or warning was issued. A new "Motor Vehicle Stop Report" form was also made available to officers for use in patrol vehicles. Since

September 2008, a total of 9,214 incidents with a call type recorded as a "motor vehicle stop" were recorded. As the numbers of incidents requiring the new stop report information accrue, the data will be reviewed by the OSPA to assess any disproportion by race, ethnicity or gender in the rates of law enforcement procedures, such as frisks, searches and arrests.

Local police departments attempting to implement this program must be prepared to deal with sensitive issues within their department and the community. The Clinton Township Police Department appears to have managed these issues and demonstrated how to implement a variety of technical and policy reforms within a relatively short period of time. Clinton Township's experience over the last two years has demonstrated that implementing policies to help ensure bias-free policing requires an investment in technology in order to collect driver characteristics and motor vehicle stops data. The department has acquired the tools necessary to report on race and motor vehicle stops. In addition, they are identifying and correcting inappropriate policing.

PAID AND EARNED MEDIA

Paid advertisements, addressing the dangers of drinking and driving and the benefits of seat belts, were placed in the following Spanish language publications: *Nostros* (\$8,305, full page ad), a monthly with a circulation of 20,000 distributed throughout Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, and Ocean Counties; *Realidades* (\$8,000, full page ad), a monthly with a circulation of 15,000 distributed throughout Bergen, Camden, Essex, Hudson, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Passaic, and Union Counties; *Reporte Hispano* (\$14,400, full page ad), a bi-weekly with a circulation of 10,000 distributed throughout Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, and Somerset Counties; *Al Dia* (\$18,000, full page ad), a weekly with circulation throughout Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cumberland, Gloucester, Mercer, and Salem Counties; and *Hechos Positivos* (\$5,400), a monthly with circulation of 5,000 throughout Bergen, Morris, Hudson, and Passaic Counties. During the *Over the Limit, Under Arrest* campaign, television and radio advertisements were purchased at stations in the following markets: Radio - \$17,499 (New York Market - Univision HBC, Philadelphia Market - La Mega, Rumba Radio and LaVoz) Television - \$14,500 (Philadelphia Market - Univision and ZGS Telemundo).

DHTS has worked to effectively leverage earned media to promote traffic safety programs, initiatives and enforcement mobilizations, including those implemented by both DHTS and its more than 800 grantees. Using news releases, feature stories, op-ed pieces, opinion columns, and public service announcements that are regularly distributed to print and broadcast media outlets in the state, as well as New York and Philadelphia, the agency has been able to increase public awareness about a wide variety of traffic safety

issues. DHTS' use of trade publications, newsletters, and media blogs also helps to promote these efforts. Press conferences are also conducted to kick-off significant DHTS programs, including those related to drunk and underage drinking and driving; seat belt and child safety seat use; teen, aggressive and distracted driving; and pedestrian and bicycle safety.

In addition, coverage by radio, cable TV stations, and weekly newspapers has increased significantly during the past two years, with virtually not a day passing when a highway traffic safety issue is not featured in a news report. DHTS has also worked to develop cost-effective television public service announcements. To minimize costs, the state's public television station, NJN, is used to produce the spots, which are distributed through the cable association free of charge. Both radio and television spots are also distributed to minor league ball parks, colleges and universities, and entertainment venues, where large crowds can see and hear the various highway traffic safety messages.

Earned media is a critical component in every highway traffic safety program implemented by the DHTS. It's particularly important in light of a limited media budget, which does not allow for the purchase of air time for public service announcements on radio and TV stations, or advertisements in print publications. Print and broadcast media outlets throughout the state and region are helping DHTS deliver its message. This strong and effective use of earned media has also garnered attention from national media outlets, including MSNBC, FOX National News, NPR Radio, USA Today, the New York Times and many other major daily newspapers.

LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

The following highway safety legislation was enacted during calendar year 2009.

P.L. 2009, c. 5

Approved on January 27, 2009, this act became effective immediately and requires motor vehicle operators to reduce the speed of their vehicles and change lanes when approaching an authorized emergency vehicle, tow truck or highway maintenance or emergency service vehicle that is displaying flashing, blinking or alternating emergency lights. The operator of a motor vehicle should approach an authorized emergency vehicle with due caution and, absent any other direction by a law enforcement officer, move

into a lane not adjacent to the authorized emergency vehicle. If a lane change is not possible, prohibited by law or unsafe, the motorist is required to drive below the posted speed limit or stop if directed by a police officer. DHTS, in partnership with State and local police, EMS and fire safety organizations, the AAA Clubs of New Jersey, and DOT, is promoting the *Move Over for Emergency Vehicles* message via its website, public service announcements, posters, and EMS signage.

P.L. 2009, c. 37

Approved on April 15, 2009, this act designated as Kyleigh's Law, makes New Jersey the first state in the nation to require the use of an identifier on vehicles driven by Graduated Driver Licensees under 21 years of age holding either a permit or provisional license. The decal is currently under development by the Motor Vehicle Commission (MVC). The law goes into effect on May 1, 2010. DHTS is partnering with MVC

to develop a public education campaign to ensure that all teen GDL holders comply with the law. Information is also posted on the DHTS website and on www.njteendriving.com. DHTS staff is also working with driver education teachers and behind the wheel instructors to educate teens and parents about the requirement.

P.L. 2009, c. 38

Approved on April 15, 2009, this legislation prohibits provisional license holders under 21 years of age from driving between 11:01 p.m. and 5:00 a.m. and limits the number of passengers to one unless accompanied by a parent or guardian. The law also renames the provisional license "probationary." The new curfew and passenger restrictions go into effect on May 1, 2010. DHTS is partnering with

MVC to develop a public education campaign to ensure that all GDL holders comply with the law. Information is also posted on the DHTS website and on www.njteendriving.com. DHTS staff is also working with driver education teachers and behind the wheel instructors to educate teens and parents about the changes.

P.L. 2009, c. 133

Approved on October 1, 2009, this act, dubbed the 9-1-1 lifeline bill, will not prosecute an individual under age 21 years of age if he or she summons medical treatment for another underage person who has been consuming alcoholic beverages. This act

becomes effective immediately. DHTS is partnering with the prevention community to educate teens, parents, police officers, and driver education professionals about the new law, which is modeled after a similar law in effect in Colorado.

P.L. 2009, c. 138

Approved on October 19, 2009, but not in effect until October 20, 2010, this legislation requires drivers to make all reasonable efforts to remove ice or snow from vehicles, a proactive measure. Currently, a motorist may be stopped and cited for failure to clear ice and snow from his or her vehicle if it causes property damage or injury, a reactive measure. The legislation also requires DHTS to establish a public awareness campaign that educates motorists about the importance of removing snow and ice from motor vehicles prior to operation. DHTS implemented such a program, *Ice and Snow Remove It Before You Go*, in 2008 and is partnering with DOT, State and local police, the AAA Clubs of New Jersey, and MVC to promote the message again during the winter months of 2009 and 2010.

DHTS will also be responsible for administering the "Motor Vehicle Snow and Ice Removal Safety Fund" that will be established from the collection of fines imposed on violators of the amended law. The monies in the account are to be used to offset the costs associated with the public awareness campaign, maintain a data collection system to determine the number and seriousness of motor vehicle crashes caused by snow or ice dislodged from motor vehicles, and establish a grant program to allow private companies to purchase, install and maintain equipment that will be used to remove snow and ice from commercial motor vehicles.





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New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety

140 East Front Street • 7th Floor

P.O. Box 048 • Trenton, NJ 08625-0048

(800) 422-3750 • www.njsaferoads.com