

NHTSA Update for NCPSB In Person Meeting --- Fall 2023

October 24-26, 2023

NHTSA Proposes Seat Belt Warning System Expansion

On August 21, The U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has issued a [proposed rule](#) which requires automobile manufacturers to equip vehicles with seat belt use warning systems for the right front passenger and rear seats to increase seat belt use. The new requirements would apply to passenger cars, trucks, most buses, and multipurpose passenger vehicles with a gross vehicle weight rating of 10,000 pounds or less. Seat belt warning systems use visual and audible alerts to encourage seat belt use. The proposed rule would amend Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 208 "Occupant Crash Protection," which currently requires a seat belt warning for the driver's seat but does not require a warning for other seating positions. The proposed rule would also update current driver seat belt warning system requirements. To learn more about this proposed rule and read the entire press release, visit [NHTSA.gov](https://www.nhtsa.gov).

2023 Early Estimate of Traffic Fatalities

On September 28th, The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration released its [early estimates of traffic fatalities for the first half of 2023](#), estimating that traffic fatalities declined for the fifth straight quarter. An estimated 19,515 people died in motor vehicle traffic crashes, representing a decrease of about 3.3% as compared to 20,190 fatalities in the first half of 2022. Fatalities declined in both the first and second quarters of 2023. NHTSA estimates a decrease in fatalities in 29 states, while 21 states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia, are projected to have experienced increases. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law invests billions into roadway safety, including programs to help states improve driver behavior and prevent traffic crashes and fatalities. In Fiscal Year 2023, states received \$886 million in highway safety formula grants and are using those funds to address risky driving behaviors, protect vulnerable road users, and engage new partners to strengthen their programs. To learn more about this recent report and read the entire press release, visit [NHTSA.gov](https://www.nhtsa.gov).

Buckle Up, Every Trip, Every Time campaign will run November 22-26, 2023

During Thanksgiving, millions will hit our nation's roads, eager to spend time with family and friends. It's one of the busiest travel times of the year. Unfortunately, more people on the roadways means the potential for more vehicle crashes.

- During the Thanksgiving holiday weekend in 2021, there were 361 passenger vehicle occupants killed in traffic crashes across the nation. Half (50%) were unrestrained.

- No matter the time of day, driving without a seat belt is deadly. During the 2021 Thanksgiving weekend, 52% of passenger vehicle occupants killed in crashes at night were unbuckled, compared to 46% during the day.

Campaign materials are available for [Thanksgiving – Buckle Up](#) and [Thanksgiving – Click It or Ticket](#) on Traffic Safety Marketing. Please use these marketing tools, which can be distributed to fit your local needs and objectives. These materials can help your office partner with other States, communities, and organizations on this seat belt safety initiative.

NHTSA Releases 2024 Communications Calendars

Looking ahead to 2024? NHTSA’s Office of Communications and Consumer Information released the [2024 Communications Calendar](#) and [Highway Traffic Safety Events Calendar](#). These annual calendars highlights events, observances, campaigns that NHTSA supports throughout the year.

Recent NHTSA Publications

Recent Publications from NHTSA’s Occupant Protection Division

[Electronic Device Use: A Review of the Literature on Addictive Behaviors](#) (DOT HS 813 461): This report is a state-of-knowledge report on excessive device use while driving. The purpose of this report is to determine if excessive device use while driving is the result of an addiction, why this behavior persists, and what countermeasures to consider. Over 270 sources were reviewed, with 155 sources critically reviewed using a structured document summary template. Reviewers found that electronic device use does not qualify for the formal definition of addiction described in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th edition.

[A Guide for Traffic Safety Practitioners: Best Practices for Increasing Seat Belt Use In Rural Communities](#) (DOT HS 813 464): The Best Practices Guide for Increasing Seat Belt Use in Rural Communities is designed for rural traffic safety practitioners to plan, implement, and evaluate programs to increase seat belt use in rural communities. The guide describes evidence-based and promising seat belt programs, and shares lessons learned from traffic safety practitioners and experts. It also includes examples of seat belt programs that have been successfully adapted for use in different settings, including rural communities.

Related Traffic Techs

Electronic Device Use: A Review of the Literature on Addictive Behaviors [[Traffic Tech](#)]
A Guide for Traffic Safety Practitioners: Best Practices for Increasing Seat Belt Use in Rural Communities [[Traffic Tech](#)]

Recent Publications from NHTSA’s Office of Behavioral Safety Research

[Review of Risk Communication Strategies and Existing Occupant Protection Safety Messages](#) (DOT HS 813 500): The primary project was designed to identify promising behavior change theories that can help increase the effectiveness of traffic safety campaigns and provide guidance on how to implement them in communication campaigns. This secondary project took place to include the topic of occupant protection (OP) use. OP includes both seat belts and child safety restraints. This report documents the supplemental activities and results. Twenty-nine behavior change theories and 14 OP campaigns were considered. An expert panel reviewed each selected OP campaign and assessed the observed applicability of each theory and its associated constructs in that campaign.

[Review of Risk Communication Strategies And Existing Alcohol-Impaired and Distracted Driving Safety Messages: Technical Report](#) (DOT HS 813 499): This project included tasks designed to identify psychological and communication theory to support traffic safety campaigns, identify campaigns currently using theory, obtain information from States about current traffic safety campaigns, and create resources for States and local jurisdictions to aid them in appropriately applying effective, theory-based campaign approaches for the prevention of distracted driving behavior (DDB) and alcohol-impaired driving (impaired driving).

Related Traffic Techs

Risk Communication Strategies and Existing Alcohol-Impaired and Distracted Driving Safety Messages [[Traffic Tech](#)]

To keep up-to-date on all publications from NHTSA’s Office of Behavioral Safety Research, visit the [National Transportation Library](#).

Recent Publications from NHTSA’s National Center for Statistics and Analysis (NCSA)

[Seat Belt Use in 2022 — Use Rates in the States and Territories](#) (DOT HS 813 487): In 2022 seat belt use in the United States ranged from 67 percent in the U.S. Virgin Islands to 96.5 percent in Oregon. Twenty-six States, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Northern Mariana Islands achieved seat belt use rates of 90 percent or higher.

[Traffic Safety Facts 2020 Data: Race and Ethnicity](#) (DOT HS 813 493): This fact sheet reports data on traffic fatalities by race and ethnicity, which might help develop countermeasures for those at risk. The term “race-ethnicity” is used to refer to the combined classification of race and ethnicity data.

[Traffic Safety Facts 2021 Data: Summary of Motor Vehicle Traffic Crashes](#) (DOT HS 813 515): In 2021 there were an estimated 6,102,936 police-reported traffic crashes in which 42,939 people were killed and an estimated 2,497,657 people were injured. Compared to 2020, this was a 10-percent increase in the number of traffic fatalities, and a 9.4-percent increase in the estimated number of people injured. The estimated number of police-reported traffic crashes increased by 16 percent.

[Traffic Safety Facts: Early Estimate of Motor Vehicle Traffic Fatalities For the First Half \(January–June\) of 2023](#) (DOT 813 514): A statistical projection of traffic fatalities for the first half of 2023 shows an estimated 19,515 people died in motor vehicle traffic crashes, a decrease of about 3.3 percent as compared to 20,190 fatalities projected to have occurred in the first half of 2022. The second quarter of 2023 represents the fifth consecutive quarterly decline in fatalities beginning with the second quarter of 2022.

[Traffic Safety Facts: 2021 State Traffic Data](#) (DOT HS 813 509): Traffic fatalities in the United States increased by 10 percent from 2020 to 2021 (39,007 to 42,939). The fatality rate per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT) was 1.37 in 2021, ranging from a high of 2.08 to a low of 0.71 among States.

[Traffic Safety Facts: Young Drivers](#) (DOT HS 813 492): In 2021 there were 2,116 young drivers who died in traffic crashes, an 11-percent increase from 1,899 in 2020. The number of licensed young drivers increased by 1.3 percent from 2020 to 2021. In 2021 there were an estimated 203,256 young drivers injured in traffic crashes, an increase of 7 percent from 189,959 in 2020.

To view all NCSA Reports, visit: <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/>