



SAFETY MATTERS!

SPRING 2009



David A. Paterson
Governor

David J. Swarts
GTSC Chair

Governor - State of New York

David A. Paterson

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Eric Dinallo – INS

John Buono – NYSTA

Daniel Boyle – SLA

Robert Maccarone – DPCA

GTSC Unofficial Members:

Carol Ash – OPRHP

Michael Burgess – SOFA

GTSC Contact Information:

6 Empire State Plaza, Room 414

Albany, NY 12228

518-474-5111 (phone)

518-474-6946 (fax)

Dear Safety Partner,

I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome our new safety coordinators and share a few of our current traffic safety initiatives at GTSC.

GTSC has a new statewide law enforcement coordinator for the Buckle Up New York (BUNY) campaign – Sergeant Todd R. Engwer of the New York State Police. Robert Ashford became the state coordinator for the Child Passenger Safety Program and our motorcycle safety representative. In March, we implemented our new electronic grant management system called eGrants. For more information on this system please refer to page two of this newsletter.

New developments in traffic safety include modification of the Vehicle and Traffic Law concerning slow moving vehicles. Details can be found on page five of this issue. June has been designated Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Month to coincide with the large number of motorcyclists that take to the streets in the month of June, as well as the annual Americade event in Lake George. A kick-off media event is being planned for late May in the Capital Region and will be announced when finalized. Please make note of the change on your calendars and alert any traffic safety partners not reached by this newsletter.

Sincerely,

Charles R. DeWeese

GTSC Assistant Commissioner

**eGRANTS HAS ARRIVED!**

The Governor's Traffic Safety Committee (GTSC) is happy to announce the implementation of eGrants; an online grant management system that will improve both efficiency and traffic safety. GTSC staff have been hard at work over the past 6 months working with our contractor (Agate Software) to develop a web-based system that will allow our grantees to submit applications and manage their grants from the comfort of their computer. A total of six training sessions were held throughout the state in mid March with over 500 potential grantees trained on the new system. Applicants for FFY 2010 funding will be required to submit applications via the new on-line system.

GTSC awards approximately \$26 million annually to more than 800 grantees. Since the inception of the program, grant applications, vouchers, semi and annual reports were received via paper and the processes of applying for, reviewing, managing and monitoring grants has been cumbersome.

The Governor's Traffic Safety Committee's (GTSC) Electronic Grants Management System (eGrants) will make managing highway safety programs easier for grantees and will allow GTSC staff to more efficiently allocate limited resources. Grantees will be able to

apply online and manage their financial and progress reporting throughout the grant year. Through eGrants, they will be able to confirm if applications, vouchers and reports have been received by the GTSC. They will be able to access the balance of their grant budgets throughout the grant cycle. Communication between the GTSC and grantees will be facilitated through the messaging feature in eGrants. GTSC staff will be able to track the progress of the grantee programs through the system and will be able to see how the grantee is managing its grant finances and if the reports are up to date. The eGrant system will not only improve traffic safety by allowing GTSC staff to spend more time in the field working with grantees but will also help us to improve customer service and ensure the integrity of our programs.

You can access the new system via the GTSC website at www.safeny.com. The new system contains training video links, a list of frequently asked questions, and an applicant manual. For additional information, please call your GTSC Highway Safety Program Representative at (518) 474-5111. Our goal is to make this system responsive to your needs and we would like to know how we can meet your expectations.

Article provided by GTSC staff.



2009 TRAFFIC SAFETY PROMOTIONAL EVENTS

The Governor's Traffic Safety Committee (GTSC) spearheaded a new venture and partnership this winter with the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) and the National Hockey League (NHL). Working in cooperation with the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) Division of Field Investigations (DFI), the NYS Department of Transportation, County STOP-DWI and Traffic Safety Coordinators, and local law enforcement agencies, the GTSC sponsored five sporting events across the state. The promotional events provided venues to assist the GTSC in delivering traffic safety messages to thousands of drivers and passengers alike, to heighten awareness, and to provide information on occupant restraint use as well as the risks and consequences associated with impaired driving. The GTSC's commitment and efforts were further supported by DMV Commissioner David Swarts and the DMV executive staff who attended and participated in the events. Local police agencies also conducted enforcement activities surrounding these events.

In collaboration with the MAAC, the GTSC hosted four "STOP-DWI Promotional Events" at college basketball games. These were held on:

- Saturday, January 24th - Times Union Center in Albany (Siena vs. Niagara)
- Monday, February 2nd - Marist College in Poughkeepsie (Marist vs. Manhattan)
- Friday, February 27th - Niagara University in Lewiston (Niagara vs. Siena)
- Monday, March 9th - Times Union Center in Albany - MAAC Basketball Tournament Finals Championship Game (Siena College vs. Niagara University)

The GTSC partnership with the National Hockey League featured a "Buckle Up New York -Click It or Ticket" Promotional Night on Thursday, March 5th. This event took place at the Nassau County Coliseum where a sell out crowd watched the New York Islanders host the New York Rangers.

The partnerships allowed the GTSC to deliver traffic safety messages both live to the spectators and to viewers at home. The events provided multiple opportunities to distribute messages through public service announcements, signage, educational materials, promotional giveaways, programs, posters, and PA announcements during the games. In addition, spectators had the opportunity to drive the new DMV Driving Simulator and could experience, first hand, the effects of alcohol impairment by wearing the Fatal Vision Goggles.

Upcoming traffic safety promotional events include:

- May 8, 2009 - Buffalo Bisons Baseball Game
- June 13, 2009 - Riverhead Raceway on Long Island
- July 15, 2009 - Tri-City Valleycats Baseball Game

We are also planning a second raceway night at the Dunn Tire Raceway Park in Lancaster, NY~date to be announced.



Article and photo provided by DMV staff.



9th ANNUAL HOLIDAY FOOD DRIVE

The Department of Motor Vehicles once again participated in the 9th Annual Holiday Food Drive in honor of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. This event was sponsored by the NYS Office of General Services and the Food Bank Association of New York State.

Nineteen DMV field offices conducted food drive campaigns during the period from December 18, 2008 through January 29, 2009. A total of 2,444 pounds of food items and \$605.50 was donated by DMV associates in these offices to various food banks, food pantries and soup kitchens around the state.

The Central Office staff contributed a total of 1,468 pounds of food items and \$125.00 in cash donations to the food drive campaign. This year, central office units competed against each other to see which would contribute the most food items by weight on a per capita basis. Based on this criterion, the leading three central office units were:

- GTSC with 22 staff contributing 179 pounds (8.1 lbs/capita)

- Real I.D. Unit with 6 staff contributing 46 pounds (7.6 lbs/capita)
- Executive Mgt. with 10 staff contributing 58 pounds (5.8 lbs/capita)

Overall, the Call Center Unit with a staff count of 60 contributed 181 pounds (or 3.0 lbs/capita). The donated food items and cash contributions were delivered to the Northeastern Regional Food Bank in Albany. The Albany Rescue Mission and the Church of God in Christ Food Pantry also received food donations.

The statewide grand total food donations from DMV associates amounted to 3,911 pounds and \$730.50 in cash contributions. Last year, the DMV total contributions were 3,310 pounds of food and \$905.00 in cash donations. Commissioner David Swarts wishes to thank all DMV associates for their generosity in making this food drive campaign a stellar success. The gift of sharing is happening everyday because of folks like you.



From l to r: Asst. Commissioner Chuck Deweese, Deputy Commissioner Gregory Kline, Exec. Deputy Commissioner Wayne Benjamin, Commissioner David Swarts, Deputy Commissioner Terri Egan, Deputy Commissioner Neal Schoen, Deputy Commissioner Timothy Lennon, Diversity Outreach Coordinator Booker Brown and Program Manager Tom Saccone.

Article and photo provided by Booker Brown, Diversity Outreach Coordinator for DMV.



NEW VEHICLE AND TRAFFIC LAW REGARDING SLOW MOVING VEHICLES

On July 21, 2008, in reaction to a fatal crash in Otsego County involving a motorist and agricultural equipment, Governor Paterson signed legislation modifying the New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law regarding slow-moving vehicles.

The changes became effective January 1, 2009 and include the following:

- Article 1, Section 100D provides the definition of Agricultural Equipment.
- Article 9, Section 375, Subdivision 36, Paragraph (b) states that all slow moving vehicles whether self propelled or used in combination shall each separately display a slow moving vehicle emblem.
- Article 9, Section 376, Subdivision 1, Paragraph (a) requires the use of lamps when operating a slow moving vehicle between one half hour after dusk and one half hour before dawn or when visibility is not clear 1000 feet ahead or behind Agricultural Equipment due to inclement weather.

The bill also required the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee's member agencies to create a slow-moving vehicle public outreach campaign. The campaign is to: inform the general public of the proper use of the slow moving vehicle emblem; educate motorists about traffic safety pertaining to agricultural equipment; and include recommendations for operating vehicles safely when encountering agricultural equipment on roadways.

As part of the outreach campaign, a press release including the changes was distributed by the New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets on February 25, 2009. In addition, the information was made available to visitors at the New York Center for Agriculture Medicine and Health booth at the New York

State Farm Show in Syracuse on February 26. Currently, a "Sharing the Road with Slow-Moving Vehicles" brochure is being created that will be distributed to motorists at different venues throughout the state. Also a press event was held on Wednesday, April 8, 2009 in Syracuse. At this event, April was declared as Slow-Moving Vehicle Awareness Month. The goal is to encourage motorists to drive safely when sharing the road with slow-moving vehicles.

New York State has a strong tradition of agricultural production. Therefore, tractors and agricultural equipment are generally the most common slow-moving vehicles encountered. However, the public information campaign encourages motorists to be cognizant of slow-moving construction equipment and animal powered vehicles on the roadways as well.

When motorists encounter a slow-moving vehicle on the roadway they should:

- Slow down immediately.
- Increase traveling distance to create a safety cushion.
- Be alert and watch for turns into fields.
- Drive courteously.
- Pass with care when it is safe and legal to do so.
- Be aware that animal powered vehicles may make unanticipated movements.
- Remember slow-moving vehicle operators may have poor visibility due to loads and equipment in tow.

The coming of spring brings more traffic to the roadways. Warm weather leads to increased numbers of pedestrians, bicyclists, motorcycles and slow moving vehicles on the highways. With this in mind, motorists are encouraged to drive safely and with an increased awareness of others on the highway. Be Smart-Drive Smart.

Article provided by GTSC staff.





STATE PARTNERSHIP LAUNCHES DROWSY DRIVING PREVENTION RADIO CAMPAIGN – TARGETS SHIFT WORKERS AND YOUNG DRIVERS

New York's Partnership Against Drowsy Driving (NYPDD) announced the kick-off of a statewide public awareness radio campaign during National Sleep Awareness Week (March 1-8) to alert high-risk motorists to the dangers of driver fatigue.

Recorded public service announcements (PSAs) developed by the New York State Department of Health (DOH), with funding from the New York State Governor's Traffic Safety Committee (GTSC), were developed to raise awareness of the risks of drowsy driving among shift workers and 16- to 24-year-old drivers and offer preventive steps to reduce the risk of a drowsy driving-related crash. The PSAs were distributed to radio stations throughout the state and started airing during National Sleep Awareness Week. The PSAs will also be distributed to local traffic safety and public health partners to incorporate into community-level public awareness campaigns. The campaign announcement served as a timely reminder of the return to Daylight Saving Time on March 8 when people "lose" an hour of sleep.

According to 2007 New York State Police Crash Reports, young drivers, aged 16-24, have the highest rate of motor vehicle crashes attributed to drowsy driving. Male drivers aged 16 to 19 years are six times more likely to be involved in a drowsy driving crash as compared to drivers aged 35-64. Although young drivers require the most amount of sleep (8-10 hours per night), they typically get the least amount of sleep.

People who are employed in occupations requiring shift work are also at high risk for drowsy driving, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the National Sleep Foundation. Shift workers are employees who work off-hour work schedules, such as 3 p.m. -11 p.m. or 11 p.m.-7 a.m., and employees whose shifts change from week to week. Common examples of

shift workers include factory employees, police and fire personnel, or nurses and other hospital staff. Due to the increased chance of sleep deprivation, shift workers experience a higher number of fatigue-related motor vehicle crashes than the general population.

The DOH issued a press release to newspapers reminding New York drivers about the dangers of drowsy driving and promoting the adoption of risk-reduction strategies. The release included statements from New York State Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) Commissioner David J. Swarts, DOH Commissioner Richard F. Daines, M.D. and Superintendent Harry J. Corbitt of the New York State Police.

The NYPDD seeks to increase public awareness of the dangers of drowsy driving and to promote the adoption of preventive behaviors to reduce the incidence of fatigue-related crashes. The partnership, which is facilitated by the DOH Bureau of Injury Prevention, consists of representatives from GTSC, DMV, New York State Thruway Authority, New York State Police, New York State Motor Truck Association, New York State Movers & Warehousemen's Association, New York State Association of Traffic Safety Boards, Capital Region Sleep Wake Center, New York State Department of Transportation and AAA Hudson Valley.

For more information about drowsy driving prevention, visit the DMV's web site at www.nysdmv.com, GTSC's web site at www.safeny.com or DOH's website at www.nyhealth.gov/publications/3041. To obtain a supply of drowsy driving prevention publications for distribution to the public and high-risk groups, contact the DOH Bureau of Injury Prevention at injury@health.state.ny. or Mark Anduze from the NYS Thruway Authority at 518-436-2767 or mark_anduze@thruway.state.ny.us.

Article provided by Debra Douglass, NYS Dept. of Health.



DMV'S OFFICE FOR THE YOUNGER DRIVER

Motor vehicle crashes are the number one cause of death for drivers ages 16-24. During 2006, 206 young drivers in this age group died on New York's roadways, and in 2007 a number of high profile crashes in our state received national attention. In response to these tragedies and because young driver safety has always been a priority for Department of Motor Vehicles Commissioner David J. Swarts, in January of 2008 he created The Office for the Younger Driver. The mission of this office is to promote and coordinate efforts to raise awareness and reduce the incidence of young drivers involved in motor vehicle crashes. One of the ways the Office for the Younger Driver is working to achieve its mission is by forging partnerships with the many existing and dynamic traffic safety partners throughout New York State agencies, communities and county/local governments in order to promote best practices and make them available to others.

Since its formation, the office has been involved in several initiatives aimed at reducing the number of teen driving deaths. These initiatives include working with the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee (GTSC) on their "Be Smart, Drive Smart" campaign; participating in young driver education sessions; conducting research on methods for reducing young driver involved crashes; and creating two new brochures for teen drivers and their families: Graduated Driver Licensing for Teen Drivers in Upstate and Teen Driver Safety Tips (C-164 & C-165) brochures. Future initiatives will include development of a teen driver workbook and companion parent guide to teen driving, as well as development of a teen driver focused webpage accessible through the NYS DMV website.

The Office for the Younger Driver was also involved with the Temporary Special Advisory Panel on Driver Education created by Governor Paterson and the State Legislature in July of 2008. The panel, co-chaired by Commissioner of Motor Vehicles David J. Swarts and the Commissioner of Education Richard P. Mills, was charged with recommending ways to improve driver education and make driver education instruction more available in the state. As part of its deliberations, the panel held monthly meetings in Albany. It also sponsored a series of community forums in three different locations throughout the state to gather insight and practical ideas from teen drivers, their families and other community members who have a vested interest in this issue. The panel submitted a final report to the Governor and the State Legislature on December 31, 2008. In the report, the Panel points out that teen driver safety is a public health, education and safety priority. It concluded that New York must take a comprehensive, multi-pronged strategic approach that includes standards, an appropriate curriculum, use of technology, more certified driver education teachers, and making driver education available and affordable for all students. The final report may be viewed in its entirety at the DMV website: www.nysdmv.com

Projects undertaken by the Office for the Younger Driver will be designed to promote public awareness of the public health issue of teen driver safety, promote responsible decision making among teens and change the culture of risk-taking among young drivers. Through the efforts of this office, along with our safety partners and other stakeholders throughout New York, we hope to achieve our overall goal of reducing the incidence of young driver involved motor vehicle crashes in New York State.



IMPAIRED DRIVING IN THE CLASSROOM

Students in Madison County recently had the opportunity to experience the danger of impaired driving without leaving the classroom. Through coordination with the Governor’s Traffic Safety Committee, Morrisville-Eaton Jr/Sr High School and Hamilton High School utilized the Fully Integrated Driving Simulator as part of driver education and alcohol awareness prevention programs for teen drivers. Trooper Brian Derouchie, School Resource Officer for both school districts, coordinated the training sessions with assistance from Sergeant Todd Engwer, GTSC Law Enforcement Liaison, and Highway Safety Representatives Paul Overbaugh and Craig Whitten. During class, students were given the opportunity to “drive” in a variety of scenarios that simulated real life risks of operating a motor vehicle. The use of fatal vision goggles provided teen drivers the chance to experience the dangers of impaired driving. These goggles simulate alcohol impairment. The importance of using occupant restraint devices and avoiding distracted driving were also discussed with the students. The Governors Traffic Safety Committee is continuing its efforts to educate teen drivers by providing the simulator to several other school districts during the upcoming prom season.



Students at Morrisville-Eaton Jr/Sr High School

Article and photos provided by New York State Police.

*Deputy Commissioner for Safety,
Consumer Protection & Clean Air*
Terri Egan

Assistant Commissioner for GTSC
Chuck DeWeese

Publisher
GTSC

Newsletter Editor
Chuck DeWeese
Amy Pertgen

Send articles via email
Miriam.Reyes@dmv.state.ny.us

GTSC Contact Info.
GTSC
6 Empire State Plaza, Room 414
Albany, NY 12228
518-474-5111 (phone)
518-474-6946 (fax)

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

STOP-DWI events:

- May 8 – Buffalo Bisons baseball game
- June 13 – Riverhead Raceway on Long Island
- July 15 - Tri-City Valleycats baseball game

APRIL is Alcohol Awareness Month

April 15 – GTSC grantee semi-annual progress reports are due

April 23 – Operation Safe Stop Day

May is National Bicycle Month

May 5 – 6
Empire State Law Enforcement Traffic Safety (ESLETS) conference

May 15 – GTSC 2010 grant applications are due

June is New York State Motorcycle Safety and Awareness month

May 18 – 31
National Click It or Ticket enforcement mobilization