



SAFETY MATTERS!

Winter 2009



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Governor

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Dear Safety Partner:

Happy Holidays from the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee. It is hard to believe that another year has passed. 2008 was a great year in terms of our combined accomplishments. New York's injuries and fatalities in most program areas are on a downward trend, and we have created a statewide, multidisciplinary impaired driving task force to significantly reduce instances of impaired driving. New York technicians continue to distribute child safety seats to low income families and educate users on proper installation. GTSC, in partnership with The Association of Traffic Safety Boards, has expanded its multicultural educational outreach program and is currently working with refugee camps in New York and providing education in traffic safety. In addition, our law enforcement agencies continue to value the importance of traffic enforcement and are working hard to reduce occurrences of speeding, impaired driving, and aggressive driving through educational campaigns and enforcement. This is only a partial listing of the many successes and wonderful programs being run in our state.

Trying economic times have already presented a new set of challenges for 2009, but I have confidence in the superb core of dedicated traffic safety professionals throughout the state and their ability to tackle these challenges head on. I would like to thank all of you for being a terrific partner over the past year and for helping us to achieve our goals. Your support and dedication to traffic safety is first class and all of us at GTSC look forward to a very successful 2009.

Happy Holidays,

Charles R. DeWeese
GTSC Assistant Commissioner



The "Walking School Bus"

One notable program new to New York State is the **Walking School Bus** in Niskayuna, Schenectady County.

A Walking School Bus (WSB) is simply a group of children who walk to school together under the supervision of an adult "driver." For each WSB route, a map and schedule must be established. Each morning the "driver" walks the route to school picking up each child at a designated walk stop. For those children who live too far away from school, designated "staging posts" are established for parents to drop their child to an awaiting "driver."

At Hillside Elementary School, it took the cooperative efforts of three entities, the Schenectady County Traffic Safety Program, Cornell Cooperative Extension's Eat Well Play Hard Project and the school's Community Education Associate (and avid parent volunteer) to organize and get the program off the ground. It started with a one day event, the Walk to School Day in October 2007 when 125 students and parents walked to school. The interest was high to continue this activity.

After many meetings, registrations, mapping routes, training "drivers" and seeking assistance from the Town and especially the Niskayuna Police Department, the Walking School Bus became a reality. A pilot WSB program was set up for May of 2008. A total of 10 routes were developed for morning students and afternoon kindergartners to walk to Hillside Elementary School. The students were given drawstring backpacks, safety blinkers, reflective tags and printed materials. The results--on each of four "Walking Wednesdays," 64 students walked to school along with 20 parent, faculty and staff volunteers. That represented 20% of the student body. The walks were an opportunity to learn about traffic safety, get out and have some fun, exercise and help our environment.



The program was repeated again in October 2008 for five Wednesdays. We were truly encouraged when this time 109 students signed up to walk! Twenty-seven "Drivers" took the lead with numerous other parents along for the walk. A competition even began with classes vying for the highest participation rate.

In this day and age, many parents drive their children to school due to their schedules, peace of mind and simply convenience. In addition many school districts provide eligibility for busing to elementary students regardless of how close they live to the school. The Walking School Program is a great example of how we can make the walk to school safe, convenient, healthy and fun.

For more information on this program, contact Jen Hogan of GTSC at (518) 474-5111 or Jhogan1@dmv.state.ny.us, or the author at Denise.Cashmere@schenectadycounty.com.

Article provided by Denise Cashmere, Schenectady County Traffic Safety Coordinator.



Establishing an Effective Motorcycle Safety Awareness Program in Your Community

Each year, motorcycle crashes continue to be an increasing problem for many communities, resulting in serious personal injuries and fatalities to local residents.

Establishing a comprehensive motorcycle safety and awareness program in your community may be one way to reduce the number of motorcycle crashes, provide a safer environment for motorcyclists and enhance the quality of life in your community. Following is an example of how one community addressed its motorcycle safety problem.

The Ontario County Traffic Safety Board- Motorcycle Safety Awareness Program

Ontario County's Traffic Safety Board is headed by Dru Malavase, who also serves as the Ontario County STOP-DWI Coordinator. Dru is no stranger to pioneering new approaches to address problems, so it was no surprise to learn she had already implemented an effective local motorcycle safety and awareness program in Ontario County without benefit of any special funding!

We were interested in the techniques they used and as a result, Dru was invited to present her program at the 2008 New York State Highway Safety Conference held in Syracuse. During the presentation, Dru, and two of her Traffic Safety Board associates, George Herren and Shawn Fenner, discussed how they established an effective motorcycle safety awareness program. After attending their presentation it was clear; the techniques they used could also be beneficial to other traffic safety professionals.

For those who could not attend their presentation, this article will share some of the techniques and activities they used. You may find this useful if you are looking for ways to reduce motorcycle crashes in your own community.

Ontario County Techniques and Activities:

- Established motorcyclist representation on the Traffic Safety Board.
- Established partnerships with enforcement, local and state police and the Sheriff's Office, ABATE (American Bikers Aimed Toward Education), Rotary- "Adopt a Highway", NYS DOT & local highway departments, Finger Lakes Community College, Motorcycle Dealerships, special motorcycle event organizers and others who share common goals.

- Conducted voluntary motorcycle safety checks in a "ticket free environment" in conjunction with the Ontario County Sheriff's Office and local dealerships. Motorcycles were checked and safety deficiencies were noted for correction by the rider.
- Created publicity and motorcycle awareness campaigns through ABATE, including portable event signage.
- Demonstrated the use of "Fatal Vision Goggles" to show the dramatic effect of impairment to new and existing riders.
- Developed a PowerPoint presentation as a shared resource.
- Created and posted roadside signage that is patterned after the popular 1960's "Burma-Shave" signs, featuring motorcycle specific safety messages.



Results:

- Increased public awareness of motorcycles.
- Increased promotion of the rider training courses for motorcyclists.
- Displayed the importance of maintaining motorcycle safety equipment in a voluntary and ticket free setting
- Increased awareness of the negative effects of alcohol and drugs on safe motorcycle operation.
- Enhanced the relationship between police and local motorcycle clubs.
- And perhaps most importantly, reduced the number of serious motorcycle crashes.

If you would like a copy of the Ontario County TSB's PowerPoint program on CD, please contact Brad Swartz-DMV Motorcycle Safety Program @ 518 474-9830 or by email: bswar@dmv.state.ny.us (quantities are limited).



Tips for Creating a Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Program in Your Community! It's as simple as 1, 2, 3!

1) Establish Partnerships

Begin with your County Traffic Safety Board (TSB)

Do you have a TSB? Do they meet regularly? Do they discuss traffic safety problems in the county? Are you a member or do you attend their meetings? If you don't already have one, Article 43 of the New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law allows for the establishment of a local Traffic Safety Board. If your county has a Traffic Safety Board you may consider seeking membership or attending their meetings.

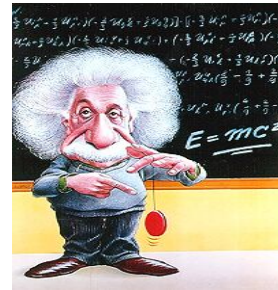
It is helpful for TSBs to have members with specific knowledge of motorcycles as well as DMV's Motorcycle Safety Program. This specialized knowledge will allow TSBs to properly analyze and respond to motorcycle related injuries and fatalities as they occur and take steps to counteract specific crash types.

Consider establishing partnerships with: the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee; DMV Motorcycle Safety Program staff; your local Traffic Safety Board; your county STOP-DWI Coordinator; law enforcement agencies; high school driver education programs; rider groups/ clubs; rider training organizations; local employers; and state/ county/local highway superintendents to name a few. Find the common ground that makes them a stakeholder in reducing motorcycle crashes. Remember, due to the wide variety of rider types, motorcycling is a sport that can yield some unlikely partnerships!

The interaction of the Traffic Safety Board and STOP-DWI Coordinator, in conjunction with local motorcycle clubs, dealerships and other local partnerships is paramount to the success of these efforts. For example; when planning for a local motorcycle safety event, you may wish to contact your local NYS DOT Field Office and request the use of a Variable Message Board (VMB) to display a traffic safety message that is consistent with your event. DOT also has an interest in reducing crashes within their regions.

2) Promote Formal Motorcycle Safety Training- DMV's Motorcycle Safety Program

It doesn't take an "Einstein" to understand the relationship of motorcycle rider training and rider safety in the time- space continuum called travel!



The New York State Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) supports a Motorcycle Safety Foundation beginner motorcycle rider training education program in the form of Basic RiderCourseSM (BRC) training. Successful completion of the BRCSM leads to a Road Test Waiver and a Class M license endorsement. DMV also supports an Experienced RiderCourseSM (ERC) for seasoned riders. These experienced riders comprise a large percentage of New York's motorcycle related injuries and fatalities.

In addition to administering a formal rider education program, another goal of DMV's Motorcycle Safety Program is to provide assistance with establishing local motorcycle safety and awareness programs in counties throughout New York utilizing GTSC funding.

Motorcycle safety training is important for all age groups and should be openly promoted at the local level.



3) Use Media and Other Resources

2009 New York State Highway Safety Strategic Plan- Motorcycle Safety (HSSP)

Local Motorcycle safety and awareness efforts have been limited even though Motorcycle Safety has been a component of the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee (GTSC) NYS Highway Safety Strategic



Tips for Creating a Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Program in Your Community! It's as simple as 1, 2, 3! (continued)

Plan for years. Traffic Safety partners should be familiar with the elements of this plan as a tool when developing their local highway safety program. The HSSP can be accessed on-line by visiting: <http://www.safeny.com/HS-Forms/NYS-HSSP-2009.pdf>

DMV Motorcycle Safety Proclamation:

Each May, the Governor issues a Proclamation- proclaiming May as "Motorcycle Awareness and You" (MAY) motorcycle awareness month. The Governor's proclamation is posted on the GTSC web site for public use in conjunction with local media events throughout the state to stress the importance of motorcycle awareness at the beginning of each riding season: <http://www.safeny.com/mc-proc.htm>

While the proclamation is issued at the beginning of each riding season, awareness of motorcycles on our roadways should be a reoccurring message to all motorists throughout the summer months reminding them of the presence of motorcycles on our roadways and to share the road safely with them!

DMV Publications:

The NYS Department of Motor Vehicles also offers several publications specific to motorcycle licensing, awareness and safety. DMV publishes both Motorcycle and Driver's Manuals (MV-21MC and MV-21), which both have content specific to motorcycle safety. Additionally, DMV publishes; Sharing the Road Safety Brochures (C-77), "Tips for Safer Motorcycling" (C-15) and on an annual basis DMV produces "Watch for Motorcycles" (C-95.3) bumper stickers for use throughout the state to increase public awareness of motorcycles. Spanish versions of most publications are available for multicultural outreach efforts.

Many of these publications are available on-line or at your local DMV office:

MV21-MC:

<http://www.nysdmv.com/mcmanual/mcmanual.htm>

MV-21 (see chapter 11- Sharing the Road):

<http://www.nydmv.state.ny.us/dmanual/default.html>

C-77- Sharing the Road Safely:

<http://www.safeny.com/media/share-road.htm>

C-15 Tips for Safer Motorcycling:

<http://www.nysdmv.com/broch/c15.htm>

DMV publications are **FREE** and printed publications may be ordered by faxing a request to the NYS DMV Records Center @ 518 861-6711. Please specify the form (publication) number (generally found on the back page of the form) and title, the quantity desired and a physical shipping address for UPS delivery.

Requests containing a Post Office Box address will not be processed.

Remember, establishing effective local partnerships, employing creative techniques and using media materials can provide the resources you'll need to establish a local motorcycle safety and awareness program in your community with a minimal budget.

If you have any questions or require additional information, the DMV Motorcycle Safety Program Staff will be happy to assist you.

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*Article and graphics provided by Brad Swartz,
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Cost-Effective and Proven in Practice, Safety Assessments Can Save Lives

Sixty percent of New York's reported crashes and over half of the fatalities in the state occur on local roads. The Safety Assessment (SA) developed by the New York State Metropolitan Planning Organization Association (NYSMPO) delivers a process that is proven effective in practice, easy to administer and low-cost to implement. The SA is a formal safety performance examination conducted by an independent, qualified, multidisciplinary team and is meant to address safety on all types of local transportation facilities.

Safety Assessment Implementation - Town of Granville, Washington County

In 2004, at the request of the Washington County Department of Public Works, the Adirondack/Glens Falls Transportation Council (A/GFTC) prepared a report which identified the intersection of County Route 12 and Hatch Hill Road in Granville and its approaches as having the highest number of accident occurrences of any location in Washington County. Engineers and staff from Washington County DPW, A/GFTC, Bergmann Associates and Synectics participated in a Safety Assessment at this location that included a field inventory, review of crash reports and identification of possible safety improvement alternatives.

After reviewing the SA report, Washington County DPW elected to pursue funding for safety improvements at the CR12/Hatch Hill Road intersection utilizing a creative funding process developed by NYSDOT Region 1, A/GFTC and the Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC). Working collaboratively, the agencies are able to deliver low-cost safety improvement projects at locations where historical crash data indicates existing safety issues in a timely manner, potentially reducing property damage, injuries and fatalities.



In summary, the Granville project included:

- ☛ **Signing Improvements**
At least 10 signing deficiencies will be addressed at a cost of \$3,000.
- ☛ **Regrade Ditches and Clear Zones**
Driving surface deficiencies will be corrected at a cost of \$6,000.
- ☛ **Intersection Geometry and Super elevation**
Super elevation and alignment deficiencies will be corrected at a cost of \$72,000.
- ☛ **Total Project cost:** \$81,000

For More Information:

For more information on Safety Assessments and to learn how your MPO is working to improve highway safety, visit: www.nysmpos.org.

Article and photo submitted by the NYSMPO Association Safety Working Group.



A Full House for the Child Passenger Safety Conference

The Region II Child Passenger Safety (CPS) program rolled the dice by holding its 7th Annual Technical Conference in Atlantic City. This year the conference again exceeded the previous year in attendance and with the growing stature of the conference itself.

For those of you who might not be aware of the importance of this conference for the certified technicians and instructors for New York's CPS program, here's some background information:

Currently the state of New York has over 1,255 certified technicians and 68 certified instructors, many of whom are unpaid volunteers. The certifying agency for these CPS professionals is Safe Kids Worldwide. Safe Kids has established a curriculum for certification which requires candidates to complete a week long training class. At the end of the course, technicians are certified in CPS best practices and in practical knowledge of safety seat installations of all types of child safety seats. Once the course work is successfully completed, a technician will be certified for a period of two years. Safe Kids Worldwide has also established recertifying requirements to renew certification. This requires that technicians and instructors complete a minimum of 6 continuing education units or CEU's. These are obtained by completing Safe Kids Worldwide sanctioned training classes as well as participating in sanctioned seat check events and completing installations of car seats for various types of car seats.

The challenge presented to the CPS program has been to be able to offer recertification opportunities for the CPS professionals. New York currently has a recertification rate approaching 50%, which makes us one of the leaders in the nation. While being a leader is commendable, 50% leaves a lot of room for improvement and that is where the CPS Technical conference comes into play. In 2000 GTSC, along with NYS CPS Advisory Board and the NYS Association of Traffic Safety Boards developed a regional technical conference with its partners in New Jersey, Connecticut and Pennsylvania. This conference provides an opportunity for technicians to attend classes, network and participate in sessions with their counterparts from the region. The Safe Kids sanctioned training classes and workshops provided at the conference enable technicians to get their required CEU's.

This year's conference was hosted by New Jersey. The keynote speaker was Pam Fischer of the New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety who spoke very highly of the achievements of the entire NHTSA Region II dedicated technicians. Other speakers included Michele Mount of AAA New Jersey, Tom Louizou, and Shannon Purdy of NHTSA, and New York GTSC's very own Assistant Commissioner, Chuck DeWeese.

There were 13 workshops offered where attendees could obtain CEU's for recertification. An example of the type of classes offered is a manufacturer's workshop where some of the leading child safety seat producers advised of new models and improvements made to their car seats and received feedback from the attendees on design improvements to make the seats safer or easier for the average person to install. Also offered was a class on the safe transportation of children with special needs, where a technician confronted with an installation of this type could problem-solve a way to safely secure a child. Some of the other topics were securing an infant with low birth weight, school bus and ambulance transport, and many others.

At the annual conference, there are opportunities for the state's program leaders to speak to their technicians, to update them on their state issues and to present awards for outstanding achievements during the year. This year, New York's group of over 300 technicians got the chance to acknowledge the achievements and guidance of the person largely responsible for the success of New York's CPS program today, our founding CPS state coordinator, Ms. Debbie Lotito.

As has been the case with each previous conference, the 7th Annual Technical Conference hit the jackpot in Atlantic City. The 2009 conference is being planned for Pennsylvania. Exact location and dates have not yet been determined.

Article provided by GTSC staff.



Used Car Safety Tip

Thinking of buying a used car? Before you do, read on for a safety tip that could save your life...

Most police officers can honestly say, "I've never unbuckled a dead person from a seatbelt." There's no doubt that some crashes are so catastrophic the seat belt would not have mattered – but in the vast majority they do!

The task of a seatbelt is to stop you *with* your car. When a vehicle suddenly stops in a crash the unrestrained occupant continues at the same speed the vehicle was traveling. If the belt is worn, a moderate amount of stretch in a seatbelt harness can extend the stopping distance and reduce the impact force on the occupant. The safety belt material stretches by a certain percentage of its length when subjected to forces experienced by a crash. They are designed to stretch slightly so your body doesn't stop abruptly. The seatbelt acts somewhat like a bungee cord except it does not retract to its original shape.

Previously owned vehicles purchased today may have been repaired as a result of a crash. The wise buyer will likely request a vehicle history report that indicates if the car has been involved in a collision. Most reputable shops will replace the seatbelt assemblies as a requirement of the repair. Seat belts are not designed to stretch a second time! They may snap under additional stress if involved in another collision. Be sure that the seatbelt assemblies of any "previously owned" vehicle have been replaced. The life you save could be your own.



Article and photo provided by the New York State Police.

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MARK YOUR CALENDARS

MAAC STOP-DWI events:

January 24 – Siena v Niagara at Times Union Center, Albany

February 2 – Manhattan v Marist at McCann Center, Poughkeepsie

February 27 – Siena v Niagara at Gallagher Center, Buffalo

March 9 – MAAC Tournament Championship Game at Times Union Center, Albany

NY Islanders BUNY event:

March 5 – NY Islanders v NY Rangers at Nassau Coliseum on Long Island

January 26 – February 2

National Impaired Driving Campaign for the Superbowl

March 9 – March 17

National Impaired Driving Campaign for St. Patrick's Day