

## **Drive Time -- Safety Tips for VT Drivers**

*Information, tips and reminders from those who work to keep Vermont drivers safe – VT State Police, VT Department of Motor Vehicles, VT Agency of Transportation, VT Sheriffs Association, and AARP Driver Safety, members of the Vermont Highway Safety Alliance.*

### **Speed Still Kills – Slow Down!**

Fatalities on Vermont’s highways have taken an alarming turn for the worse this year. As of mid-June, there have been 31 deaths on the road, the highest since 2012 and almost double the total of 16 at this point last year. There are many well-known reasons for crashes, like distracted or impaired drivers, for example. But one common cause that doesn’t get its share of the attention is speeding, which in Vermont this year has been the second most noted contributing factor in traffic fatalities, after failure to use safety belts. Nationwide, speed is a factor in 30 percent of all fatal car crashes, according to National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

Excess speed causes double trouble by making a crash both more likely and more severe. First, higher speed shortens the time a driver has to react and increases the distance a vehicle needs to stop, leaving precious little time to avoid the danger. And second, more speed increases the force of a collision exponentially, putting severe strain on the body and the safety features meant to protect it both inside and outside the vehicle. At higher speeds, restraint systems like seat belts and air bags or roadway hardware like guard rails and other crash barriers are less effective at preventing death and destruction.

NHTSA offers the best advice: Stop speeding before it stops you!

