

VT State Highway Safety Office

Behavioral Safety Unit Newsletter

Message from Keith Flynn, Manager of the State Highway Safety Office

As we approach the last quarter of the calendar year, the number of fatalities in Vermont is trending far below historical rates. I have been asked by many people, both in Vermont and by my colleagues in other states, “how are we doing it?” My response is always the same: as of this writing, 25 people have died on our roadways. That is 25 families that have suffered the loss of a loved one. Vermont’s reduction in the number of fatalities is not a victory; at best, it is an indication that we are trending in the right direction. Although we are seeing a reduction in the number of fatal crashes when compared to the last 3 years at this time, we still have a lot of work to do. The data on the 2019 crashes to date tells us where that work is needed.

So far this year we have had 23 fatal crashes that resulted in the death of 25 people. Last year at this time we had 41 fatal crashes in which 47 people died. The number of fatal crashes has decreased by 44% from last year. This is what we know about Vermont’s fatal crashes this year:

- 12 operators suspected of DUI alcohol and/or drugs *
 - 5 Delta 9 THC on board
- 10 operators were suspected to be speeding
- 5 motorcycle fatalities
- 3 involving “older drivers” (operators 65 years or older)

We know that impaired driving continues to be a major contributing factor to deaths on our roadways. In 2018, drugs and alcohol impairment contributed to 65% of all traffic fatalities. Based on information to date, it is estimated that impaired operation will be a contributing factor in over 50% of crashes in 2019.

Further, the lack of occupant restraints, or improper usage (seat belts) continues to be prevalent in fatal crashes. Of the 69 fatalities documented in 2018, 61% of the decedents were unrestrained. Based on current crash and restraint usage data it is estimated that the unrestrained fatality count will again exceed 50% of all car and truck fatalities.

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(Message from Keith Flynn, continued)

In addition, speed continues to be a contributing factor in approximately 50% of all fatalities. Likewise, we are learning that the prevalence of distracted driving is increasingly becoming a contributing factor to both our fatality and serious bodily injury rates. Those factors are also playing a significant role in the alarming number of work zone crashes that are occurring.

As the State Highway Safety Office is prepared to kick off the 2020 Federal Fiscal Year, our focus will be sharpened in these areas. We are pleased to recognize that NHTSA has recently awarded the State Highway Safety Office \$2.4 million dollars in 405e funds to assist our program in confronting the growing distracted driving epidemic and when appropriate to flex those funds for other initiatives such as speed enforcement. This office will be providing more information about uses for these funds after the beginning of the new calendar year.

Thank you to all our partners for all the work you do making Vermont roadways among the safest in the country to travel.

*Based on toxicology reports through the end of July. Toxicology results for 8 crashes has yet to be received.

Drive Sober and School Bus Safety Promotional Cookout

On August 19th Lt. Allen Fortin of the Chittenden County Sheriff's Department and Sgt. Paul Locke of the Milton Police Department hosted a free public cookout to promote the Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over Labor Day HVE Campaign; and to remind everyone about school bus safety. Lt. Fortin supplied the food and Sgt. Locke did a great job cooking the burgers and hot dogs. The cookout was held in the town of Milton, and approximately 75 to 100 people stopped in for a bite to eat and some Highway Safety Education. The event was covered by the media and was aired on the Channel 5 news that night. A big thank you to Lt. Fortin as the cookout was his idea, and we hope it continues to grow and be successful in future years.



The Vermont Highway Safety Alliance (VHSA) Promotes Safe Driving at the Champlain Valley Fair

The Vermont Highway Safety Alliance (VHSA) with its many partners joined forces to promote highway safety at the Champlain Valley Expo for the full ten days of the fair at the end of August 2019. The goal was to change driver behavior focused on impaired driving, speed, aggressive driving, distracted driving, rail safety, and seat belt use in order to save lives on Vermont's roadways.



Over fifty-five safety advocates from the many VHSA partners engaged the public and distributed information on critical areas for safety behind the



wheel. Popular displays were the kids quiz wheel and the driver trivia challenge for teens and adults. The Sheriff's Department ran the rollover display, a car that spins showing the danger of being ejected out of a vehicle during a crash when not wearing a seat belt. Operation Lifesaver, rail safety, engaged the public with safety tips on what to do if your car stalls on the tracks, and how to safely negotiate rail crossings. "Monty," the historic Vermont State police car was also on display as well as a large variable message board flashing safety information.

New this year was a driver simulator and display with information on the VTrans interchange improvement project at I-89 Exit 16 in Colchester that is scheduled to start in Spring of 2020.

Upwards of 10,000 people were engaged at the booths and the VHSA thanks both the volunteers and the public for helping to make the event a success.



Partners included were the Vermont Department of Health, Operation Lifesaver, Vermont State Police, AARP, AAA, Local Motion, VTrans, University of Vermont Medical Center, Ride Safe Vermont, Vermont Division of the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, Vermont Sheriff's Departments, and Driver Educators of Vermont.

Join Us: 2019 Northeast Transportation Safety Conference

"Northeast Highway Safety - Regional Challenges, Successes, and Opportunities"

Monday, October 28th
& Tuesday, October 29th

The Hilton
Burlington, VT

This conference brings together engineering, education, law enforcement and EMS highway safety specialists from across the North-

east to focus on a common goal: the reduction of fatalities and injuries on our roadways.



For more information, visit our website at: <https://ghsp.vermont.gov/content/events>

Workshops at a Glance				
Monday, October 28th				
Session 1	10:30am to 12:00pm	Automated Enforcement/Speed Management 1) John Tipaldo, NYC DOT 2) Craig Allred, FHWA	Pedestrian/Bike/Crosswalk Safety 1) Erik Atkins P.E., Green Int. Affiliates 2) Kayla Cabral & Skye Levin, VHB/RIDOT 3) Wayne Emington, FHWA ME	Crash Reconstruction and Traffic Stop Data 1) Sgt. Owen Ballinger, Vermont State Police 2) Capt. Garry Scott, Vermont State Police
Session 2	1:00pm to 2:30pm	Dynamic Speed Feedback Signs, ITS & Work Zones 1) Andrew Breck, VOLPE 2) William Scully P.E. & Wing Wong P.E. PTOE, Green Int. Affiliates	Crash e-manual and Data Integration 1) Robin Reissman, UMASS 2) Joe Ouellette, CT DOT	Teen/Young Driver Drowsy/Distracted Driving 1) Amy Eisenhauer, EMS Consulting Services 2) Sgt. Todd Engwer, New York State Police
Tuesday, October 29th				
Session 1	10:00am to 11:30am	Crash Investigations - Start to Finish 1) Sgt. Darren Foster, Maine State Police 2) Sgt. Bruce Beuerlein, Shelburne Police Department 3) Steven Brown, Deputy State's Attorney Windham Cty 4) Judge Brian Grearson	Mixed Detection Lab & Cannabis Trends 1) Scot Mattox, Dirigo Safety LLC 2) Sgt. Jay Riggen, Vermont State Police	Driver Assistance/Vehicle Technology & Safety 1) Dan Goodman, AAA 2) TBD - Engineering/Safety Topic
Session 2	1:30pm to 5:00pm	Drug Trends and Impairment Symptomatology Sgt. Jay Riggen, Vermont State Police		
Keynote Speakers				
Monday, October 28th				
	8:30am to 9:30am	Carlos Braceras, Executive Director Utah DOT, AASHTO President		
	3:00pm to 4:00pm	Avery Ash - Head of Autonomous Mobility, INRIX		
Tuesday, October 29th				
	8:00am to 9:30am	Sheriff Mike Lewis, Wicomico County Sheriff's Department		
	11:30am to 1:00pm	Ian Grossman, Vice President, Member Services & Public Affairs, AAMVA		

Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over Campaign



This year the Annual “Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over” Labor Day High Visibility Enforcement Campaign ran for 18 days, from August 16th through September 2nd. The Labor Day HVE Campaign is one of the four major enforcement campaigns that NHTSA and the Vermont SHSO promote each year. The others are: Christmas/New Years, Click it or Ticket, and Thanksgiving. Christmas and Labor Day emphasize Impaired Driving Enforcement, and CIOT and Thanksgiving focus on seat belts. Well over half of all Vermont Law Enforcement Agencies Registered and participated in this year’s enforcement effort which includes regular patrol, checkpoints and saturation patrols. A big thank you goes out to all the Troopers, Officers and Deputies that worked long hours to make the roadways safer.

Stay tuned for stats from the campaign in the next SHSO newsletter.

Upcoming NHTSA Communications Calendar:

October



State Highway Safety Office

Behavioral Safety Unit

Dill Building, Unit A
2178 Airport Road
Barre, VT 05641

Do you have something you’d like to share in the next newsletter? Please email

rachel.noyes@vermont.gov.

Thank you!

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6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

2 National Walk to School Day

21-25 National School Bus Safety Week

20-26 National Teen Driver Safety Week
TEEN DRIVING ISSUES

31 Halloween
IMPAIRED DRIVING
Primary Message: Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving

buzzed driving is drunk driving
designate a sober driver