

Traffic Safety Innovations 2011-2012

INSIGHTS FROM NATIONAL
LAW ENFORCEMENT
CHALLENGE SPECIAL
CATEGORY AWARD
WINNERS



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The National Law Enforcement Challenge focuses on three major traffic safety priorities: occupant protection, impaired driving, and speed. For the 2011–2012 Challenge more than 400 applications were received containing many innovative traffic safety ideas. The International Association of Chiefs of Police contacted some of the award winners to learn what innovative ideas they are employing that have had a positive impact on their community.

This booklet provides you with a snapshot of what some agencies are doing. The goal of this document is to provide helpful ideas that your agency can use or modify to fit your community's policing needs.

Of the more than 50,000 bicyclists and nearly 60,000 pedestrians that are injured each year, more than 20,000 of them are younger than age 14. After having the highest number of bicycle collisions out of 106 cities in California, the NPD took significant education and enforcement measures to reduce cycling injuries on its roads.

EDUCATION

Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Presentations.

Knowing that a repeated message is an effective one, the NPD launched an aggressive education campaign. In 2011, officers got word out through 39 bicycle safety workshops, 25 bike and pedestrian safety presentations, 11 community gatherings, and eight bicycle rodeos. More than 5,000 people—approximately 10 percent of the city's population—attended one of these events.

Adoption of Bicycle Policies in Schools. Aware that the majority of biking collisions in Novato involve cyclists younger than age 15, the NPD worked with the school district to get biking policies in all nine elementary schools. The project involved educating students on bike safety and having them sign contracts agreeing to follow the rules of the road and to wear a helmet. The payoff was two-fold: The project spurred an increase of students safely biking to school, and this, in turn, reduced vehicular traffic in school parking lots at drop off and pick up times.

Parent Notification Program. Any juvenile who was issued his or her first citation for not wearing a helmet was given the opportunity to opt into the Parent Notification Program. Parents were sent a letter stating their child had been issued a citation, but that this citation would be void if a two-hour educational class was attended. Every child given the choice attended, for a total of 113 participants throughout the year.

Helmet Fittings and Giveaways. The NPD offered helmet fittings at many of its events and arranged for free helmets to be given to any child who did not have or could not afford one. The NPD also partnered with local bike shops to provide free minor maintenance, such as tire pressure and brake checks.

Bike/Pedestrian Safety

Novato Police Department
(NPD)

California

2011 Winner

Agency Size: The NPD has 53 sworn officers.

Community Makeup: Located just north of San Francisco, Novato has more than 52,000 residents who take to the trails in the nearby Marin County hills, and walk and ride through the city's downtown district.

Partners: California Office of Traffic Safety, local schools, Marin County Bicycle Coalition, civic groups, Boy Scouts of America, and Girl Scouts of U.S.A.



During its educational outreach, the NPD took the opportunity to educate both children and parents at the same time. Buy-in from parents helped increase safety compliance.

ENFORCEMENT/PROTECTION

Special Enforcement Operations. Throughout the year, the NPD ran 48 enforcement operations targeting areas highly trafficked by bicyclists and pedestrians. The result: More than 500 citations were issued for vehicle violations hazardous to bike riders and those traveling on foot, and more than 113 helmet citations were issued to cyclists younger than 18.

Pedestrian Safety in School Zones: To alert drivers of approaching school zones, four solar-powered radar units with display signs flash the speed of approaching vehicles. In addition, officers target enforcement efforts near schools during peak times, including before and after school and during lunch breaks.

INSIGHTS FOR OTHER AGENCIES

- Partner with your community. Your reach will be far greater if you have support from civic groups, non-profits, local businesses, and community members.
- Make your commitment clear. Once people understand your dedication to improving safety numbers, they will make an equally strong commitment.
- Get word out in smaller venues. Although it requires a greater number of presentations, smaller group environments are more effective for getting your message across, especially with youth.

RESULTS

Due to the NPD's determination to reduce cycling injuries, Novato went from being ranked no. 1 out of 103 cities for bicycle collisions to 59. Helmet compliance rose from 70 percent to 84 percent, and more than 5,000 people—approximately 10 percent of the city's population—participated in bicycle and pedestrian safety events.



Each year, safety restraints save the lives of more than 300 children younger than age five. *Through year-round efforts, the FPD educates its community about child passenger safety laws and takes extra measures to keep unsafe child restraint systems out of vehicles.*

EDUCATION

Unsafe Seat Project. Many parents are unaware that car safety seats have expiration dates, and that if a safety seat has been in a crash, it is no longer safe to use. In an effort to get second-hand car seats out of circulation, the FPD encourages parents to bring in old or damaged ones to the station. Safety seats that are brought in are destroyed, so there is no chance of them being pulled from the trash and resold or reused. In a related effort, the FPD works in partnership with Meharry Medical College and the Middle Tennessee Child Passenger Safety Center to provide low income families that cannot afford a new car seat with a free one.

Safety Seat Installations. The FPD is an official fitting station for the Middle Tennessee area. Installations are offered on a daily basis at the police station, as well as through special car safety seat checkup events, which the FPD hosts with the Franklin Fire Department throughout the year.

Booster Seat Awareness. The FPD goes to schools and daycare centers with a friendly companion—Ollie Otter, Tennessee’s booster seat and seat belt safety mascot. With the slogan “Under 4’9”? It’s booster time,” Ollie educates children in pre-K through fourth grade about booster seats and seat belts.

Safety Messaging. Press releases, newsletters, television spots, newspaper columns, signs, bumper stickers, presentations at schools, and demonstrations at community events—these are all venues the FPD uses to increase public knowledge of child passenger safety laws and to promote proper installation and use of restraint systems. The FPD also provides local children’s stores brochures on child passenger safety to distribute to customers.

Child Passenger Safety

Franklin Police Department
(FPD)

Tennessee

2011 Winner

Agency Size: The FPD has 124 sworn officers, including 85 uniformed officers on the streets. In 2011, all street patrol officers received training in the state’s child passenger laws.

Community Makeup: More than 4,600 children younger than age five live in the City of Franklin, which saw its population increase from less than 42,000 people in 2000 to more than 62,000 in 2010.

Partners in Child Passenger Safety: Tennessee Road Builders Association, Tennessee Tech University, Meharry Medical College, The Middle Tennessee Child Passenger Safety Center, Franklin Fire Department, local schools, YMCA, and citizen volunteers.



Through presentations in daycare centers and schools, FPD officers start seat belt education with children as young as age two.

Latino Outreach. The FPD reaches out to Franklin's Hispanic community about child passenger safety through presentations at churches, speaking on the local Spanish radio station, and having bilingual officers at safety seat checkup events. Officers make safety presentations in civilian clothes to diminish any fear of police that might keep community members from participating. In a related effort, the FPD is working to expand its car safety seat education in the coming years to families who have recently immigrated from Japan by working with cultural groups and enlisting the help of a translator.

ENFORCEMENT/PROTECTION

School Patrol. As part of an ongoing effort to make sure parents are properly using booster seats, the FPD patrols near schools. During initial checks, drivers are given a verbal warning and children are secured properly before drivers are allowed to get back on the road; citations are issued during follow-up patrols. In 2011, 102 child restraint violations were issued.

Foot Patrol. During enforcement efforts, officers can be seen throughout Franklin standing at intersections to observe whether motorists are wearing seat belts and whether children are properly restrained. Using foot patrols allows a clear view into vehicles and the opportunity to educate parents who have safety seats but have not properly installed them. In 2011, the FPD participated in 29 special occupant safety enforcement efforts.

INSIGHTS FOR OTHER AGENCIES

- Start with how to get funded. Then use partnerships within your community to expand your efforts.
- Outreach to different ethnic populations. People coming from other countries don't know about child passenger safety laws and need to be informed.
- Expand your resources by enlisting the help of citizen volunteers at child passenger safety events.

RESULTS

In 2011, the FPD participated in eight checkup events, installed 373 child restraint systems, and provided 48 families in need with a new child safety seat.



Each year, there are more than 3,000 fatalities and 74,000 injuries from crashes involving a large truck. *The CHP has increased commercial vehicle safety through a dynamic program focusing on internal and external education, strong partnerships, and targeted enforcement.*

EDUCATION

Commercial Vehicle Safety Summit. This one-day forum provides an opportunity for hundreds of safety managers, drivers, and mechanics to discuss safety issues with experts from the CHP, the California Department of Motor Vehicles, and U.S. Department of Transportation. The CHP also takes this opportunity to recognize motor carriers with the highest safety records with a formal award.

Mexican Commercial Industry Education Program (MCIEP). Approximately 1.3 million Mexico-based commercial vehicles enter the country through California annually. To ensure these vehicles adhere to the same safety standards as carriers based in the United States, the CHP facilitates presentations in Spanish at terminals in Mexico. Topics include vehicle maintenance, credentialing, and driver safety.

Farm Labor Vehicle Safety and Education Program. During harvest in California's Central Valley, more than half a million workers migrate to the area. To reduce injuries from collisions between farm labor vehicles, the CHP gives presentations in English and Spanish about safe transportation, seat belt use, and DUI laws. Since the program's inception, no CHP-certified farm labor vehicle has been the cause of a fatal crash.

Commercial Inspection and Education Program. To combat the "us vs. them" culture, the CHP goes into commercial vehicle work places to provide safety information and encourage compliance. The CHP also opens lines of communication between regulatory agencies and the commercial industry by hosting an annual Trucker Appreciation Day at commercial facilities statewide.

Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety

California Highway Patrol (CHP)

2011 Winner

Agency Size: The CHP is the largest state law enforcement agency in the nation, comprised of 7,618 uniformed personnel.

Community Makeup: The CHP patrols all freeways in California's 58 counties, which include 105,000 miles of roadways. More than 7.4 million commercial vehicles operate on California roads each year.

Partners in Commercial Vehicle Safety: California Trucking Association, Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance, various commercial vehicle specialty associations, and local law enforcement.



The CHP authors an "Ask the Law" column, which allows commercial truck drivers to anonymously ask questions. The column is published in a commercial vehicle industry magazine with a nationwide circulation of 30,000 and is available at all major truck stops.

ENFORCEMENT/PROTECTION

Commercial Vehicle Strike Force Operations. With a mission of identifying dangerous drivers and vehicles before catastrophic events occur, the CHP uses strike force operations. In 2011, 240 operations were conducted, resulting in 24,682 vehicle inspections and 3,089 vehicles being placed out of service for mechanical and safety violations.

Mobile Road Enforcement Officers. Operating throughout the state with specially equipped pick-up trucks, including portable truck scales and other items necessary to conduct in-depth safety inspections, teams of specially trained officers randomly select and inspect commercial vehicles in high-collision areas.

Biennial Inspection of Terminals Program. The CHP instructs truck maintenance facilities at least once every 25 months. The focus of these inspections is to determine whether a carrier's maintenance program is adequate to prevent collisions and mechanical breakdowns, to ensure that driver records are maintained, and to promote safety.

Commercial Bus Strike Force Operations. Both in-route and destination strike force inspections of commercial passenger vehicles allow for the identification of unsafe conditions and vehicle registration/driver's license checks, which would not otherwise be routinely inspected. The CHP also runs "party bus" strike force operations, which target commercial passenger vehicles transporting intoxicated minors and operating without proper authority or licensing.

INSIGHTS FOR OTHER AGENCIES

- Educate the industry of expectations and create accountability through enforcement.
- Build trust with the trucking community by educating everyone—drivers, mechanics, safety managers—on what your agency does during an inspection.
- Create accountability with both roving and fixed facility on-highway enforcement and a comprehensive off-highway inspection program.

RESULTS

Over a four year span, seat belt use has increased by 3.4 percent, truck-at-fault fatal collisions have been reduced by more than 40 percent, and bus-related fatal collisions have been cut nearly in half.



In 2010, more than 10,000 people died in alcohol-impaired driving crashes, including nearly 200 who were younger than 14. *The TCSO and its Crime Suppression Unit aggressively enforce impaired driving law through saturation patrols, road checks, and targeted campaigns during peak travel periods.*

EDUCATION

Public Information Outreach. The TCSO uses multiple channels to inform the public of its commitment to remove impaired drivers from the road. Local media are routinely notified of both mobilization efforts and their results. Public service announcements that feature the sheriff reminding drivers to never drink and drive air on the local radio station during high travel periods, summertime, and prom season. The TCSO also distributes stickers, posters, and brochures throughout the community during enforcement campaigns.

Educating Youth. In 2011, the TCSO launched its “Impaired Driving & Drinking Underage Program,” a new effort focused solely on preventing youth from drinking and getting behind the wheel. In addition to a lecture, youth in church groups and at the local high schools are shown a DVD documenting the life-and-death consequences of impaired driving. The TCSO doesn’t stop there. Hundreds of students also receive information on impaired driving through its Traffic Safety Awareness Program and a rollover vehicle demonstration is given during prom week. In addition, high school students are asked to create a traffic safety campaign as part of TCSO’s annual Richard Lynn Daniels Traffic Safety Essay Challenge.

Officer Training. One hundred percent of patrol deputies in the Twiggs County Sheriff’s Office receive service training in the area of impaired driving. Topics include case preparedness and courtroom presentation, DUI chain of custody, drugs that impair driving, intoximeter certifications and recertification, and standardized field sobriety testing.

Impaired Driving

Twiggs County Sheriff’s Office
(TCSO)

Georgia

2011 Winner

Agency Size: The TCSO has 23 sworn officers, including a patrol division of 11 and a dedicated Crime Suppression Unit of five.

Community Makeup: Twiggs County is located in the center of the state and has one interstate highway and two major state highways running through its 360 square miles.

Partners in Impaired Driving: Middle Georgia Traffic Enforcement Network, Governor’s Office of Highway Safety, and local schools.



A National Highway Traffic Safety Administration study found 10 percent of fatally injured drivers tested positive for at least one drug. Recognizing that not all drivers are aware of the dangers of drugged driving, especially when it comes to prescription medications, the TCSO highlights this topic in its public education efforts.

ENFORCEMENT/PROTECTION

Middle Georgia Traffic Enforcement Network. TCSO is an active member of this state-wide multi-agency collaboration, which enhances traffic enforcement through networking, training, and legislation. Monthly meetings allow officers to voice concerns, share ideas, and participate in trainings. Each meeting is followed by a road check in the host's jurisdiction.

Operation Zero Tolerance. Through concentrated patrols and road checks, the TCSO removes impaired drivers from the road during this high visibility campaign. In 2011, the effort ran in three phases, which included the weeks surrounding July 4, Labor Day, and the winter holiday. The TCSO also participates in Georgia's 100 Days of Summer H.E.A.T. (Highway Enforcement of Aggressive Traffic) crackdown, a multi-jurisdiction effort to reduce high-fatality crash counts from Memorial Day through Labor Day. A core component of the program is sending impaired drivers straight to jail.

Crime Suppression Unit. This dedicated traffic unit seeks out motorists violating traffic and criminal laws on both state and local highways. Thirty percent of sworn personnel are assigned patrol duties solely dedicated to impaired, aggressive, and unsafe drivers. All members receive extensive training in impaired driving.

INSIGHTS FOR OTHER AGENCIES

- Aggressively enforce impaired driving violations. Your agency's reputation on enforcement will keep impaired motorists off the streets.
- Make sure your traffic unit members are highly trained, highly motivated, and are given the necessary equipment and resources.
- Make sure your unit devotes just as much enforcement efforts to your local streets and roadways as your state highways and interstates.

RESULTS

In 2011, the TCSO conducted a record number of special enforcement operations—more than any other year in the agency's history. The result: zero DUI related fatalities and a 33 percent reduction in both impaired driving crashes and injuries.



In 2010, more than 4,500 people were killed in a motorcycle crash. *The LPD makes big efforts at the local and state level to help reduce motorcycle-related injuries and deaths.*

EDUCATION

Annual Motorcycle Safety Event. What began as a small gathering in front of the police station four years ago has more than quadrupled in size, attracting motorcyclists from across the state. The 2011 event—which featured riding demonstrations by LPD motor officers, safety inspections, and a civilian rider course in the city’s downtown— attracted more than 1,000 attendees. The LPD promoted the effort through press releases, motorcycle dealers, and posting information on websites popular to the motorcycle community.

Presentations in the Schools. The LPD brings motorcycle safety education to the local high schools, reaching 300 to 500 students at a time. Presentations focus on obtaining proper licensing and training, using the right safety gear, making good decisions, and riding safely.

Motorcycle Safety Awareness (MSA) Trailer. After a fatal motorcycle crash in 2008, the LPD wanted to create an educational tool that could help others avoid a similar fate. Using a design concept similar to the MADD anti-impaired driving trailer, the LPD built the MSA Trailer. The portable display houses two motorcycles from fatal crashes. Flat screen monitors on the outside of the unit play presentations about what contributed to the collisions and how they could have been avoided. The LPD makes the MSA trailer available to all law enforcement agencies to use for their own educational purposes. In 2011, eight agencies used it at different events in their jurisdiction.

Helmet Exchange Program. Many riders choose to wear novelty helmets, which do not provide adequate protection. Using grant funds, the LPD purchased more than 150 Department of Transportation (DOT) compliant helmets. Through this program, any motorcyclist can exchange his or her non-compliant helmet for a new, compliant one.

Motorcycle Safety

Livermore Police Department
(LPD)
California
2011 Winner

Agency Size: The LPD has 83 officers and a dedicated traffic unit and patrol team.

Community Makeup: Located in the Tri-Valley region, the LPD provides services to 81,000 residents in an area that spans 25 square miles. With an average temperature that only briefly dips below 60 degrees in winter, Livermore’s climate attracts many motorcyclists.

Partners in Motorcycle Safety: Bay Area Riders Forum, California Office of Traffic Safety, Motorcycle Safety Foundation, and SNELL Memorial Foundation.



The LPD has a strong partnership with the Bay Area Riders Forum, one of the world's largest online communities dedicated to the sport of motorcycling. The Forum allows for conversation about law enforcement as it relates to riding and is a place to share resources about traffic safety.

ENFORCEMENT/PROTECTION

Enforcement Operations. In 2011, the LPD conducted 11 enforcement operations targeting motorcycle riders, as well as motorists putting riders at risk. The LPD used the targeted efforts to provide riders and motorists with education about how to share the road safely.

Officer Training on Helmets. California has a mandatory helmet law; everyone is required to wear a DOT compliant helmet while riding a motorcycle. All motor officers in the LPD's Traffic Unit received training on DOT compliant helmets, which has proven beneficial when officers need to testify in traffic court regarding citations issued to riders wearing noncompliant helmets.

Motorcycle Safety and Enforcement Class. When Sergeant Hurd learned about a motorcycle safety and enforcement class for patrol officers that was being developed by the International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards in Training, he worked to bring the class to California. The first two instructor training courses took place in 2011, and in the coming year, grant funding will allow the eight-hour course to be taught 30 times in California, reaching more than 600 officers.

INSIGHTS FOR OTHER AGENCIES

- Any agency can make an impact on motorcycle safety by simply getting involved. Providing motorcycle safety information at community events is an easy way to get started. Agencies can contact the Motorcycle Safety Foundation at www.msf-usa.org to get handouts, brochures, and bumper stickers at no cost.
- Work with local riding clubs to get information directly to motorists.
- Apply for grants and get community stakeholders involved to help fund your agency's motorcycle safety efforts.

RESULTS

In the past six years, the number of motorcycle collisions in Livermore dropped by more than 20 percent. The LPD believes these results are closely tied their local and state education and enforcement efforts surrounding motorcycle safety.



More than half of the people who are killed in motor vehicle crashes are not wearing seat belts. *The PPD has achieved 96.2 percent seat belt compliance and a significant reduction in its community's injury crash rate through sustained enforcement efforts paired with education.*

EDUCATION

Constant Messages to the Public. The PPD provides its community with ongoing safety messaging through both traditional and creative venues. Throughout the year, nine messages related to occupant protection were sent out in residents' water bills, seat belt reminders appeared on the marquee signs of local high schools, posters made by the PPD were displayed in windows, occupant protection was stressed in drivers' education classes, and seat belt-themed items (cups, pencils, and magnets) were distributed at events. The media was sent 18 press releases on the topic, including biannual notification of the top ten crash sites in the Village.

Officer Training. Every sworn officer within the department received occupant safety training in 2011. Videos, roll call training, and monthly e-news for car seat technicians all played a part. The PPD also used online training as a cost effective way to keep officers up-to-date on changing laws.

Child Safety Seat Program. During the year, hundreds of car seats were checked for proper installation through four large seat check events, where handouts were distributed on current recommendations and changes from the previous year. Seat belt checks were also available by appointment. To increase effectiveness and combine resources, the PPD works hand-in-hand with the Plainfield Fire Department on its child safety seat program.

Seat Belt Reminder Sign Design Contest. To involve the community's youngest members in occupant protection education, the PPD challenged elementary school children to design a sign reminding motorists to buckle up as they leave school parking lots. Seven elementary schools participated and hundreds of designs were submitted. The winning sign from each school was placed at all exits from the school's parking lot.

Occupant Protection

Plainfield Police Department (PPD)

Illinois

2011 Winner

Agency Size: The PPD has more than 50 sworn officers.

Community Makeup: The Village of Plainfield has a population of nearly 40,000 and covers 26 square miles. Bordered by some of the largest cities in Illinois, traffic in Plainfield reaches a weekday average of 40,000 vehicles.

Partners in Occupant Protection: Illinois Department of Transportation, local school districts, local businesses, Plainfield Fire Department, and Illinois State Police.



Harnessing the power of positive reinforcement, the PPD recognizes its officers throughout the year for their occupant protection efforts.

ENFORCEMENT/PROTECTION

Sustained Enforcement Campaigns. The PPD sends a strong message to motorists through continual enforcement of occupant restraint laws and a zero tolerance approach toward violators. Throughout the year, it participates in 10 holiday specific Click It or Ticket campaigns, as well the national campaign. Funding from traffic safety grants administered by the Illinois Department of Transportation help sustain these year-round efforts, and partnerships with businesses provide an additional low-cost way to get campaign messages out. Case in point, through a partnership with Clear Channel, buckle up messages were included on a digital billboard on Route 59, where the average weekday vehicular volume is 40,000.

Seat Belt Enforcement Zones. The PPD increased safety on the road by focusing enforcement efforts in top crash and highly trafficked areas. Highlights include organizing a multi-jurisdictional enforcement campaign on U.S. Route 30 and conducting seat belt enforcement zones at night, since data shows motorists are least likely to be properly restrained after daylight hours.

Foot Patrol. The PPD credits an increase in foot patrols to their 2011 spike in child seat citations. By standing at stop signs, traffic lights and intersections, officers are able to see whether or not children are properly restrained in vehicles. The ultimate goal is to educate parents so all children are properly restrained. If seats are not installed properly, officers are able to correct the problem. If parents have been pulled over before, enforcement sends a message that ultimately could save a child's life.

INSIGHTS FOR OTHER AGENCIES

- Enforcement combined with education is the best tool to change a driver's future behavior.
- Use crash data to target efforts where they are most needed.
- Make it a year-round effort. Aggressive and consistent enforcement campaigns will increase voluntary compliance.

RESULTS

The number of occupant restraint citations issued by the PPD has increased by more than 400 percent over five years, while seat belt usage has jumped by more than 6 percent and the injury crash rate has been cut nearly in half.



More than 10,000 people lose their life in speeding-related crashes each year. *The YPD is a small agency taking big steps to reduce speed-related crashes in its community by conducting aggressive education and enforcement campaigns, and advocating for strong legislation.*

EDUCATION

Education Outreach to the Public. Through long-term relationships built with local media, the YPD achieves regular coverage of its traffic safety messaging. In addition, officers proactively hand out flyers in areas that have been identified as speeding “hot spots” and increase speed awareness at driver improvement classes, school presentations, and community events. Road-side messaging board, social media, posters, and brochures further the YPD’s reach.

Smart and Radar Trailers. Used by the YPD as a way to alert motorists of their speed, both types of trailers have been effective in increasing voluntary compliance and slowing motorists down. Smart trailers also record the speed of vehicles traveling in both directions, allowing the YPD to pinpoint areas and times of day when speeding is most prevalent.

Neighborhood Patrol. Speeding violations are the no. 1 complaint among York citizens. When complaints are received regarding a particular neighborhood, the YPD sends a letter to residents alerting them of a planned heavier police presence and asking for compliance. The letter also shares facts about speeding and traffic safety.

Strong Legislation. With a belief that strong legislation is key to any effective speeding campaign, members of the YPD are active in educating and advising policy makers. The York Chief of Police has acted as the legislative liaison for the Maine Chiefs of Police, and YPD officers and command staff work with numerous agencies and stakeholders, including the Maine Bureau of Highway Safety, the Maine Strategic Highway Safety Plan, the Department of Health and Human Services Injury Prevention Program, and AAA.

Speed Awareness

York Police Department
(YPD)

Maine

2011 Winner

Agency Size: The YPD has 27 sworn officers, including a dedicated patrol unit of 13.

Community Makeup: A coastal community in Southern Maine, the Town of York spans 56 square miles and has two interstates running through it. Its population of 16,000 triples during tourist season.

Partners in Speed Awareness: Residents, local media, local schools, Maine Chiefs of Police Association, Maine Bureau of Highway Safety, Maine Transportation Safety Coalition, AAA.



Grant funding allows the YPD to supplement its normal speed enforcement program and aggressively attack the problem. Grant and patrol officers work together to target speed "hot spot" areas.

ENFORCEMENT/PROTECTION

Speed Details. Speed is one of the YPD's main focuses during special details conducted throughout the year. Officers are routinely assigned to locations determined to be problematic to aggressively enforce speeding violations. In 2011, enforcement efforts resulted in an increase in speed citations and a reduction in speed-related crashes.

Crash-Data Enforcement Strategies. The YPD has begun utilizing crash data to identify "hot spots" and effectively deploy officers where they are most needed. This data also has been used to advocate for engineering changes at two dangerous intersections, which resulted in new traffic lights.

Collection of Driving Habit Data. Through the use of an unobtrusive Jamar radar recorder, the YPD is able to collect accurate information about motorists' normal driving habits. The YPD uses this data to plan and alter their speed enforcement strategies. Upon the completion of enforcement activities, follow-up data is used to determine the effectiveness of efforts.

SAFEGuard Program. Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for teenagers. When a driver younger than 18 receives a traffic citation, YPD officers notify the parents of the driver as soon as possible. This state-wide program is meant to provide compassion, concern, and consequences for unsafe driving.

INSIGHTS FOR OTHER AGENCIES

- In addition to strong enforcement and education, you need strong legislation. Work with other agencies to educate policy makers about the dangers of speeding.
- Make it an expectation that all officers take an active role in speed enforcement.
- Use data to identify speeding "hot spots" and increase enforcement effectiveness.

RESULTS

In 2011, the YPD issued 36 percent more speeding citations and achieved a 7 percent reduction in speed-related crashes and a 40 percent reduction in injuries associated with speed-related crashes.



New and advanced technologies play an increasingly important role in traffic safety.

The VBPD uses technology to help officers perform duties more effectively and efficiently, which results in less time spent at the precinct and more time spent patrolling the streets.

EDUCATION

Twitter and Facebook. To get traffic safety messages to drivers ages 18 to 25 (the age group most likely to drive impaired), the VBPD uses Twitter and Facebook. Information about check points, saturation patrols, and special enforcement campaigns are pushed out through these social networks, as well as reminders to use designated drivers.

Crash Data Retrieval System. This technology provides the ability to reconstruct crash scenarios, rendering information that is often the difference between a guilty plea and a long trial. Specially trained officers use this system to gather vehicle pre-impact speed, driver’s seat belt status, driver braking or throttle position before impact, and crash severity.

Employee Performance Tracking System. Through this electronic database, officers can view appraisals, incident and crash investigations, arrests, and complaints, and supervisors can see comparison statistics on their squad. The system also houses awards, including letters of appreciation and acknowledgements for work well done by other members of the department.

Electronic Accelerometer Computers. The VBPD Fatal Crash Team uses this technology to precisely determine the coefficient of friction or drag factor of a roadway surface. This data can be used in combination with crash evidence to calculate speed loss of a vehicle and the exact speed of a vehicle before impact.

ENFORCEMENT/PROTECTION

Mobile Data Terminals. Computer-based reporting and a laptop with 3G wireless in every patrol vehicle allows officers more efficient access to arrest records, photos, and departmental data, as well as the ability to electronically submit reports directly from crash scenes. The omission of redundant paperwork and faster access to information has increased officer effectiveness.

Technology

Virginia Beach Police Department (VBPD)

Virginia

2011 Winner

Agency Size: The VBPD has 778 sworn officers, all of which receive training in traffic safety.

Community Makeup: With more than 437,000 residents, Virginia Beach is the most populous city in the Commonwealth, attracting more than 3 million visitors each year.

Partners in Technology: State Homeland Security Program, Verizon, local media, and Urban Securities Initiatives.



In 2011, the VBPD contributed more than 7 percent of DUI arrests for the entire Commonwealth of Virginia. The use of advanced technology preliminary breath testing devices helps them achieve such high enforcement rates by allowing breath samples to be collected passively through a cup attachment that can detect the odor of alcohol coming from a suspect or vehicle.

Automated Red Light Enforcement. The automated PHOTOSafe program uses 13 cameras at strategic intersections throughout the city. An important force multiplier, cameras monitor 106 lanes at 13 high-crash intersections. In 2011, this resulted in 160,415 red light violations, as well as a decrease in crashes and summonses written by officers.

Automated License Plate Reader. In 2011, VBPD acquired three automated license plate reader systems through a State Homeland Security Program and additional readers through the Urban Securities Initiative. This technology allows officers to input license plate numbers provided by dispatch in “Report All Intoxicated Drivers” (RAID) bulletins, which aids in the search and apprehension of intoxicated drivers.

Total Station Forensic Mapping. Using this advanced system, specially trained VBPD investigators are able to quickly and accurately document all evidence at the scene of a crash. This reduces the time officers are at the scene and allows the roadway to return to normal more quickly.

INSIGHTS FOR OTHER AGENCIES

- Have an open mind about advancements in our field. While new technologies may bring growing pains, once implemented, they can ultimately improve public safety.
- The new generation of officers is eager for faster and more efficient ways to do their job. Engage them in the process. Listen to their ideas.
- Do the research. See what other agencies are doing, and investigate what technologies will work best for your department.

RESULTS

The VBPD’s use of technology has resulted in faster response times, more efficient use of officer time, and an increase in public safety. Case in point: The combination of saturation patrols and red light enforcement cameras at high-collision intersections resulted in a 7.5 percent decrease in crashes from 2009 to 2011—the lowest number in 27 years.



Underage alcohol use costs the nation more than \$63 billion annually as a result of traffic crashes, crimes, alcohol poisoning, and abuse treatment. *The FCPD uses a coordinated education and enforcement efforts to prevent minors from drinking.*

EDUCATION

School Resource Officer Program. An officer is assigned to each high school and middle school in the county. By working closely with students, parents, and teachers, school resource officers are able to identify issues before they become problematic. Accomplishments from this proactive approach include raising alcohol and drug awareness and alcohol checks at football games.

Juvenile Driver's License Ceremony. All new drivers younger than 18 receive their driver's license from a judge during a formal presentation by the police and other partners, which includes strong messages about character building, maturity, peer pressure, the use of alcohol and drugs, decision making and fatalities on the road due to poor-decision making, inexperience, and distraction. Approximately 12,000 new drivers attend this ceremony each year.

Underage/Binge Drinking Community Forum. After showing "HAZE," a documentary about a college freshman who lost his life to heavy alcohol use, an expert panel discusses the problem of underage binge drinking in Fairfax County. The forum occurs during prom and graduation season, in hopes that the 13,000 plus graduating seniors and their parents receive the message that underage drinking kills.

Project Sticker Shock. Officers, adults, and teens visit local retailers near high schools and place stickers reminding patrons that it is illegal to purchase alcohol for minors on all multi-packs of beer and wine coolers. The stickers warn that convictions for providing alcohol to anyone younger than 21 can result in fines up to \$2,500 and one year in jail.

Underage Alcohol Prevention

Fairfax County Police Department (FCPD)

Virginia

2011 Winner

Agency Size: The FCPD has more than 1,300 officers and 500 civilian personnel.

Community Makeup: Northern Virginia's Fairfax County is the most populated jurisdiction in the Washington Metropolitan area.

Partners in the Prevention of Underage Drinking: Trauma Coalition, Safe Kids, Unified Prevention Coalition, MADD, Virginia Beverage Control, and Fairfax County Public Schools.



Teens say it is easy to buy alcohol. The FCPD believes that this speaks volumes and that enforcement is the answer. Education is not enough by itself.

ENFORCEMENT/PROTECTION

Undercover Buying Stings. To enforce minimum age purchase laws, the FCPD conducts underage buying stings, where a police cadet younger than 21 attempts to purchase alcohol from a retailer or restaurant. Stings occur regularly throughout the year, with heavier operations at the start of the school year, homecoming, winter holidays, prom season, and high school graduation weekends.

“Shoulder Tap” Operations. In an effort to stop adults from purchasing alcohol for underage youth, the FCPD conducts operations in the parking lots of businesses that sell alcoholic beverages. FCPD cadets younger than age 21 approach adults and ask them to purchase alcohol. If the sale or service of alcohol transpires, a police officer intervenes. This program was implemented after reports from students to school resource officers that friends and acquaintances older than 21 purchase alcohol on their behalf.

Strict Zero Tolerance Enforcement. The FCPD has a zero tolerance enforcement policy of all state and county codes pertaining to illegal alcohol use. In addition to aggressively patrolling roadways for impaired drivers of all ages, the FCPD implements regular sobriety checkpoints and encourages all members of the community to report parties where underage drinking occurs.

INSIGHTS FOR OTHER AGENCIES

- Conduct consistent and regular underage alcohol stings to send a message to businesses that minimum age purchase laws will be enforced.
- Target businesses and public areas based on information from schools, the community, and patrol knowledge of where alcohol use and abuse is suspected.
- Don’t just educate students about the dangers of underage drinking; also educate parents and the community at large.

RESULTS

In 2010 and 2011, Fairfax County had its lowest number of DWIs involving a motorist younger than 21 since 2006. Through undercover buying stings and “shoulder tap” operations, the FCPD made nearly 100 arrests for selling or providing alcohol to a minor.



The HCSO saves lives through its commitment to officer training, community outreach and education, and traffic enforcement. *In 2011, HCSO's efforts resulted in an increase of seat belt usage to 94 percent and a reduction of fatal crashes by 50 percent.*

EDUCATION

Child Safety. Knowing seven out of 10 child safety seats are not properly used, HCSO officers make community education on the topic a priority. In addition to having deputies available for car seat inspection on a daily basis, the HCSO partners with neighboring jurisdictions and businesses to conduct car seat check points.

Underage Impaired Driving. The HCSO hosts a driver education safety program that stresses the dangers of underage drinking and occupant protection to the community's youngest drivers. To demonstrate how alcohol affects vision and coordination, the HCSO invested in special vision goggles that simulate impairment. High school students are given the chance to drive through a course wearing the goggles. The HCSO also uses a rollover simulator to stress the importance of seat belts, and educates young drivers on the dangers of texting and driving.

Choosing Healthy Activities and Methods Promoting Safety (C.H.A.M.P.S.). A specially designated deputy has taught more than 3,000 children at area schools through this 12-week program, which focuses on making good decisions and avoiding destructive ones, such as using drugs and alcohol.

Facebook and Website. Keeping up with the latest ways to reach out to the community, the HCSO uses its website and its Facebook page to educate the public about changes in the law, educational programs, and traffic safety messages.

Clayton J. Hall Memorial Award

**Habersham County
Sheriff's Office (HCSO)**

Georgia

2011 Winner

Agency Size: The HCSO has 31 officers, including 14 uniformed officers working the street and a dedicated traffic enforcement unit.

Community Makeup: The county, which sits in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, is home to more than 43,000 people. Five major highways run through its 279 square miles, and the area is a popular destination for its lakes and Tallulah Gorge, the "Grand Canyon of the East."

Partners in Traffic Safety: Neighboring jurisdictions, Northeast Georgia Traffic Enforcement Network, local schools, and local businesses.



ENFORCEMENT/PROTECTION

Selective Traffic Enforcement Program (S.T.E.P.). The HCSO launched the Specialized Traffic Enforcement Program with the sole mission of reducing traffic crashes, injuries, and fatalities through increased education and enforcement. This unit is the first formal traffic unit of the HCSO. The unit has two dedicated deputies, one of which is a drug recognition expert.

Data-Driven Approach. Enforcement efforts are maximized by targeting patrols in high-collision areas, many of which are state routes. In 2011, the use of targeted safety checkpoints and saturation patrols throughout the county resulted in a 9 percent reduction of injury-related crashes.

Operation Zero Tolerance. To support its goal of reducing injuries and fatalities from impaired driving crashes, the HCSO makes this state-wide campaign a major emphasis in its overall enforcement strategy. This high visibility effort makes it clear: drive sober or get pulled over. While there were 130 arrests in the county for impaired driving in 2011, the total number of DUIs has decreased each year since 2009.

Occupant Safety. In 2011, the HCSO issued 524 seat belt citations—a 200 percent increase since 2008. At the same time, seat belt compliance increased to 94 percent. In addition to year-round seat belt enforcement efforts and strong participation in Click It or Ticket, the HCSO focused on the state's new booster seat legislation during the state-wide 100 Days of Summer H.E.A.T. (Highway Enforcement of Aggressive Traffic) campaign.

Northeast Georgia Traffic Enforcement Network. The HCSO participates in this state-wide, multi-agency collaboration, which enhances traffic enforcement through networking, training, and legislation. Monthly meetings allow officers to voice concerns, share ideas, and participate in trainings. Each meeting is followed by a road check in the host's jurisdiction. The HCSO's Commander of the Patrol Division acts as the assistant coordinator for the regional network.

INSIGHTS FOR OTHER AGENCIES

- Communicate with and unite efforts with other agencies, including local police, sheriffs' offices, state patrol, school police, and state departments of transportation.
- Provide officers with both training on traffic laws and with education about safety concerns that are applicable to their area.
- Reward your deputies and officers for doing a job well done. Recognition for hard work is important.
- Share details with the public about what traffic safety efforts have been successful in making your community safer and why.

