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## MOTORCYCLE SAFETY: NEVADA'S NEWEST CRITICAL EMPHASIS AREA



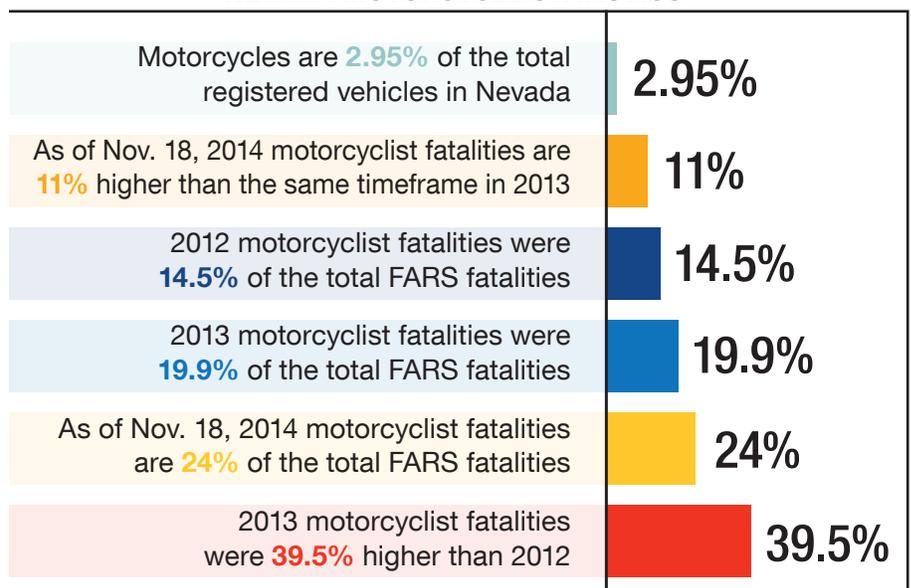
During their September 2014 meeting, the Nevada Executive Committee on Traffic Safety unanimously approved the creation of a Motorcycle Critical Emphasis Area (CEA) under the Strategic Highway Safety Plan.

In Nevada, after a high of 59 motorcyclist fatalities in 2008, fatalities dropped to a low of 41 in 2011. Unfortunately, since that year motorcyclist **fatalities have risen to 57 in 2013** and if the current year-to-date (YTD) trend continues, it appears 2014 **fatalities may eclipse the high of 59 in 2008**. Even more alarming is that even though motorcycles are just 2.95% of the registered vehicles on Nevada roadways, the **2014 YTD fatalities of motorcyclists represent 22.0% of all roadway fatalities**.

The FHWA reports in 2012 motorcycles made up three percent of all registered vehicles in the United States and accounted for only 0.7 percent of all vehicle miles traveled, yet motorcyclist fatalities accounted for 15 percent of total vehicle related fatalities. Motorcyclist fatalities increased from **4,612 in 2011 to 4,957 (7.5%) in 2012**; injuries also increased from **81,000 in 2011 to 93,000 (15%) in 2012**.

From the 2011 Leading Practices for Motorcyclist Safety-Scan Report: ***“Simple mistakes while operating a motorcycle can lead to a fatality for riders, while the same mistake in a car or truck yields few or no consequences. Thus, we must be especially sensitive to the vulnerability of motorcyclists and make our infrastructure design, construction, and maintenance practices more accommodating and forgiving for riders.”***

### NEVADA MOTORCYCLE STATISTICS



Source: Fatality Analysis Reporting System November 18, 2014



A 2011 NHTSA Technical Assessment of the Nevada Rider Motorcycle Safety Program recommended that the state, “integrate motorcycle safety activities into the Strategic Highway Safety Plan, as well as into other related highway safety activities, including impaired driving, occupant protection, speed management, and driver licensing programs.”

Although motorcycles can and should be considered in the strategies and action steps for all CEAs, the unique characteristics of this mode of transportation, the demographic representation and personal values of people attracted to the sport, and the fact that motorcyclist fatalities are a large percentage of total fatalities requires a new, different, and more focused approach.

Over the next few months the Motorcycle CEA Team will review Nevada specific crash and fatality data to determine which proven countermeasures are most appropriate to drive down motorcycle fatalities and serious crashes in our State.

## CRASHES AREN'T ACCIDENTS

Motor vehicle crashes and injuries are predictable, preventable events. Use of the term “accident” related to traffic crashes promotes the concept that these events are outside of human influence or control, when, in fact, they are predictable results of specific actions.

We can identify causes of crashes, and take action to alter the effect and avoid collisions. These events are predictable results of the laws of physics. The concept of an “accident” works against bringing all the appropriate resources to bear on the enormous problem of motor vehicle crashes. Continuous use of the term “accident” fosters the idea that the resulting injuries are an unavoidable part of life. “Crash”, and “collision” (for two moving vehicles) are more appropriate terms and are encouraged as substitutes for the word “accident”.



The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) ran a campaign back in 1997 to eliminate the word “accident” from the realm of unintentional injury, on the highway and across the nation, with our partners, with the media, and in all public contexts. This shifted the focus to the causes of crashes and what can be done to prevent collisions and resulting injuries.

The campaign was a success; NHTSA, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA), no longer use the word “accident” in materials published and distributed by the agencies. In addition, NHTSA does not use “accidents” in speeches or other public remarks, in communications with the news media, individuals, or groups in the public or private sector. It is believed by many that this effort contributes to changing safety culture and in term improving driver behavior.

## WHAT CAN NEVADA DO?

At the fall meeting held on September 16, 2014, the Nevada Executive Committee on Traffic Safety (NECTS) unanimously agreed that all safety partners in Nevada should move to the use of “crash” versus “accident”. The NECTS approved an action item for the SHSP Team to develop a communications plan to encourage safety partners, from legislators to media outlets, throughout Nevada to do the same.



## WHAT'S TRENDING

### TEEN DRIVING: DISTRACTED & DANGEROUS

A recent report published by the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) highlights the dangers of teens being distracted while driving. The report, [Distracted & Dangerous: Helping States Keep Teens Focused on the Road](#) examines the problem of distracted teen drivers nationally as well as policies, enforcement, and educational programs at the local, state, and national levels that will help to eliminate the problem.

Establishing guidelines and eliminating potentially deadly behaviors in young drivers is the center of nearly two dozen state policy, enforcement, and education initiatives featured in the report.

Examples include:

- » Effective November 1, the state of New York leads the nation in the toughest distracted driving law – for using a hand held cell phone or texting while driving for those under age 21 the penalty will be a 120-day license suspension for a first offense and a years suspension for a second.
- » California passed a law, SB194, the Teen Distracted Driving Prevention Act which took effect January 1, 2014, which clarifies that while it is legal for adults to use hands-free texting and voice activated devices, teens under the age of 18 are not allowed to use electronic devices of any kind while driving.
- » New Jersey approved a distracted driving bill in 2013 that provides for a charge of vehicular homicide if a death occurs as a result of a driver using a cell phone

Other programs highlighted in the report include state-of-the art simulators, a statewide summit, peer-to-peer outreach, monthly distracted driving events, high school campaigns, contests, phone apps, and grassroots advocacy, along with several teen advocacy groups and what they are doing to spread the word.

Nevada's Department of Public Safety, Office of Traffic Safety has rebranded the Zero Teen Fatalities, Staying Undead program for the 2015 academic year, tying incentives to safety-related activities for schools, advisors, and teens in exchange for their participation. Current challenges are open to all Nevada high school students and registered teens can participate in various teen-led traffic safety activities throughout the school year. More information is available at [www.stayingundead.com](http://www.stayingundead.com).

Talk to your teen about safe driving habits and engage them in local community programs that will help them to make better choices while driving. With the development of the 2016-2020 Strategic Highway Safety Plan, Nevada will take a close look at crashes related to younger drivers and distracted driving.



**SECONDS** is the minimal time your attention is taken away from the road if you are texting and driving.



**13 PERCENT** of drivers age 18-20 admit to texting or talking on their phones at the time of the wreck.



**27 PERCENT** of adults have sent or received a text message while driving.



**32 STATES** prohibit young drivers from using a cell phone while driving.



**82 PERCENT** of American teens, ages 16-17, own a cell phone.



## BUCKLE UP NEVADA!

Seat belt laws are not enforced to help officers meet quotas in issuing citations or to harass drivers. It saves lives. It's that simple.

Vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death in people under age 35. **In 2011, 43% of**

**Nevada's motor vehicle fatalities were not wearing seat belts.**



Nevada state law mandates that any person who is driving and all passengers ages 6 years or older or weigh more than 60 pounds must wear a seat belt at all times. Children under age 6 who weigh less than 60 pounds must be in an approved child restraint system. Drivers can be fined from \$25 in upwards of \$500.00 for being issued a seat belt or child safety seat citation.

November 10th began a statewide "Click It or Ticket It" campaign targeting the Reno and Las Vegas areas. There will be a heavy media concentration on the radio, TV, outdoors, and online including social media outlets with ads running now through December 22. For more information please visit [www.buckleupnv.com](http://www.buckleupnv.com). Buckle up and save a life Nevada!

### THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UGLY: REASONS TO WEAR YOUR SEAT BELT

Some reasons to wear your seat belt include:

- » Your face is less likely to hit the windshield, dashboard, or other parts of your car (like the steering wheel or seat in front of you) and save you from other injuries if you wear a seat belt because it stops your inertia.
- » Wearing a seat belt can keep you from being thrown from the car.
- » Airbags are less effective when not wearing a seat belt. You may still be thrown from the car or sustain injuries from being jolted around inside the vehicle when in a crash.
- » It's the law! Research has shown that simply enforcing seat belt laws makes a big difference in getting people to buckle up and it saves lives.
- » Buckling up can significantly reduce your chances of being seriously injured or dying in a crash.

What you can do:

- » Set an example! Make it a habit to wear a seat belt all the time, even on the shortest of drives.
- » Remind others to do the same, even if you are not the driver.
- » Always buckle up children! Children under the age of 12 should be in the back seat of a vehicle with young children in an approved car seat and those over 60 pounds buckled in.

(10 Reasons to Wear Seat Belts. Retrieved from [http://www.ehow.com/way\\_5157102\\_reasons-wear-seat-belts.html](http://www.ehow.com/way_5157102_reasons-wear-seat-belts.html))



## IT'S YOUR DECISION, BUT WHO PAYS?

Nevadans believe in personal freedom of choice and one of those choices is wearing or not wearing a seat belt. Many feel its worth the risk, but does this choice only effect that one person? Research has shown that **unbuckled passengers increase the risk of injuring or killing others in the vehicle with them by 40%** (MacLennan, P.A.; McGwin, Jr., G.; Metzger, J.; Moran, S.G.; and Rue III, L.W. 2004. Risk of injury for occupants of motor vehicle collisions from unbelted occupants. *Injury Prevention* 10(6):363-7.).



The Center for Traffic Safety Research (CTSR) has the ability to link crash data with trauma center records, providing insight into the effects of decisions such as the simple act of putting on a seat belt. **CTSR's**

**Nadia Fulkerson analyzed restrained and unrestrained trauma records from four Nevada trauma centers from 2005-2012 and the results show a cost to taxpayers of \$3.6 million over those eight years.** That's a little over \$450,000 each year Nevada taxpayers paid to cover the unrestrained/uninsured motor vehicle occupants involved in motor vehicle crashes.

### TRAFFIC SAFETY CALENDAR

**NOVEMBER 13 –  
DECEMBER 22, 2014**

Nevada Click It or Ticket

**DECEMBER 12, 2014 –  
JANUARY 1, 2015**

Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over  
National Crackdown

**JANUARY 16 – FEBRUARY 2, 2015**

Joining Forces – Impaired Drivers

**MARCH 24 – MARCH 25, 2015**

2015 Nevada Traffic Safety Summit, Reno

### HOW DID WE COME UP WITH THOSE NUMBERS?

Those who don't buckle up experience more severe injuries. For example, 22.8% of unrestrained patients experience critical injuries as opposed to 9.9% for those who buckle up, a difference of 12.9%. When you apply that percentage difference to the number of uninsured that were critically injured and multiply by the cost of treating a critical injury (\$107,490) you get \$2.9 million in additional cost. Include severe and serious injuries with that total you get \$3.6 million.

You might suspect these are not the only costs of personal driving choices that affect us all, and you would be right! The University of Nevada School of Medicine's (UNSOM) CTSR has provided reports on several aspects of personal driving decisions, such as the cost of healthcare for impaired driving crashes. To learn more visit the Zero Fatalities website at [http://www.zerofatalitiesnv.com/stats-true\\_cost.php](http://www.zerofatalitiesnv.com/stats-true_cost.php).

**SAVE THE DATE**

**2015 NEVADA TRAFFIC SAFETY SUMMIT**

MARCH 24 - 25, 2015  
PEPPERMILL HOTEL RESORT  
RENO, NEVADA

The purpose of the 2015 Nevada Traffic Safety Summit is for safety partners to work together to review existing, and define new Critical Emphasis Areas and Strategies for the 2016-2020 Strategic Highway Safety Plan.



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