

COMMUNICATIONS RESOURCE TOOLKIT  
2010

**Government  
of Alberta ■**

Presented by the Office of Traffic Safety, Alberta Transportation  
and the Office of Traffic Safety Communications Committee



# 2010

## Alberta Traffic Safety Plan Calendar



January

Intersection  
Safety



February

Distracted  
Driving



March

Occupant  
Restraints



April

Speed



May

Young Drivers



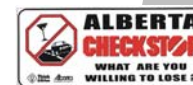
June

Commercial  
Vehicle Safety



July

Motorcycle  
Safety



August

Impaired  
Driving



September

Back to School



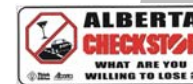
October

Occupant  
Restraints



November

Pedestrian  
Safety



December

Impaired  
Driving

The calendar was developed using targets from the Alberta Traffic Safety Action Plan, collision information and the public's perception of issues.



# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>January - Intersection Safety .....</b>	<b>6</b>
I. Key Messages.....	6
II. Fact Sheet.....	6
III. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) .....	7
IV. Advertising for Intersection Safety .....	8
<b>February - Distracted Driving .....</b>	<b>10</b>
I. Key Messages.....	10
II. Fact Sheet.....	10
III. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) .....	11
IV. Advertising for Distracted Driving.....	12
<b>March - Occupant Restraints .....</b>	<b>14</b>
I. Key Messages.....	14
II. Fact Sheet.....	14
III. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) .....	15
IV. Advertising for Occupant Restraints .....	16
<b>April - Speed .....</b>	<b>18</b>
I. Key Messages.....	18
II. Fact Sheet.....	18
III. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) .....	19
IV. Advertising for Speed.....	20
<b>May - Young Drivers.....</b>	<b>22</b>
I. Key Messages.....	22
II. Fact Sheet.....	22
III. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) .....	23
IV. Advertising for Young Drivers .....	24
<b>June - Commercial Vehicle Safety .....</b>	<b>26</b>
I. Key Messages.....	26
II. Fact Sheet.....	26
III. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) .....	27
IV. Advertising for Commercial Vehicle Safety.....	29
<b>July - Motorcycle Safety .....</b>	<b>30</b>
I. Key Messages.....	30
II. Fact Sheet.....	30
III. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) .....	31
IV. Advertising for Motorcycle Safety .....	31

<b>August - Impaired Driving .....</b>	<b>32</b>
I. Key Messages.....	32
II. Fact Sheet.....	32
III. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ).....	33
IV. Advertising for Impaired Driving Campaign .....	34
<b>September - Back to School.....</b>	<b>36</b>
I. Key Messages.....	36
II. Fact Sheet.....	36
III. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ).....	37
IV. Advertising for Back to School .....	38
<b>October - Occupant Restraints .....</b>	<b>40</b>
I. Key Messages.....	40
II. Fact Sheet.....	40
III. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ).....	41
IV. Advertising for Occupant Restraints .....	42
<b>November - Pedestrian Safety .....</b>	<b>44</b>
I. Key Messages.....	44
II. Fact Sheet.....	44
III. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ).....	45
IV. Advertising for Pedestrian Safety.....	46
<b>December – Impaired Driving.....</b>	<b>48</b>
I. Key Messages.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
II. Fact Sheet.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
III. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ).....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
IV. Advertising for Impaired Driving Campaign .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
<b>Tips for Writing a Media Notice.....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Sample Media Notice .....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Tips for Writing a News Release .....</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>News Release Sample.....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>List of Stakeholders and Partners .....</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>The Alberta Traffic Safety Context.....</b>	<b>62</b>

## Introduction

---

To support the monthly activities of the 2010 Alberta Traffic Safety Calendar, a Communications Resource Toolkit has been developed for each month by the Traffic Safety Communications Committee. These toolkits are intended to help you develop communications materials in your community to support the Traffic Safety Calendar advertising campaigns.

The media is our primary source for information on what is happening in communities throughout Alberta. When it comes to traffic safety, the media can play a critical role in providing information for Albertans. With this in mind, we're providing you with relevant, up to date information to help you develop your own communications initiatives.

To customize your news releases and media notices for each monthly campaign, we are providing key messages, fact sheets, frequently asked questions as well as guidelines for each monthly traffic safety topic for the complete 2010 calendar year.

These key messages should be used to provide consistency and obtain the most impact to support calendar topics.

This Communications Resource Toolkit also includes resources to help you craft media notices and news releases relevant to your community.

The communication supports are still in the planning stages and are listed as "to be determined." We will provide information about monthly advertising campaigns as soon as they have been confirmed.

Office of Traffic Safety  
Alberta Transportation  
TSP Communications Committee  
Phone: 780-427-6775



# January - Intersection Safety

## I. Key Messages

---

The following key messages can be used to support the Intersection Safety Communication Campaign:

*For Drivers:*

1. Intersections can be dangerous – pay close attention to your driving and others’.
2. Watch out for other drivers and pedestrians.
3. Always look before proceeding through intersections regardless of the traffic light colour.
4. Be prepared for the unexpected and share the road safely.
5. Do not:
  - Run red lights.
  - Roll through a stop sign.
  - Speed through intersections.
  - Follow too closely.
  - Make unsafe left-hand turns.
  - Rely on having the right of way.

*For Pedestrians:*

1. POINT, PAUSE, and PROCEED. Be alert at intersections and always look out for possible dangers when crossing the street.
2. Make eye contact with drivers before you cross the street.
3. Abide by traffic signs and signals. They are in place to protect your safety.

**The following fact sheet and frequently asked questions (FAQ) can assist you in building news releases and media notices. The information below can also help you to answer any possible questions that arise from the media.**

## II. Fact Sheet

---

In 2008, 89 people were killed and 9,134 people were injured in collisions at intersections in Alberta. About 90 per cent of collisions are attributable to driver error. Driving properly and safely is important to reducing collisions.

### Facts to Know

- In Alberta, in 2008, three of the top five most frequently identified improper driver actions were making a left turn across the path of an on-coming vehicle (12.5%), committing a stop sign violation (8.6%), and disobeying a traffic signal (7.4%).

- In Canada, 30% of fatalities and 40% of serious injuries from collisions involved an intersection.
- In Canada, more than half of all intersection fatalities and almost three-quarters of serious injuries occur in urban areas.
- Failure to stop at a stop sign results in a \$287 fine and 3 demerits. At a stop sign, drivers are required to come to a complete stop, which means the wheels of the vehicle must not be moving, before proceeding safely through the intersection. This complete stop gives drivers the opportunity to look for oncoming traffic, pedestrians, or cyclists.
- A sidewalk acts as a stop sign. Before entering a main street from a road, service road, alley, driveway, or parking lot a vehicle must stop unless marked otherwise.
- Keep intersections clear so that other traffic may proceed if the light changes colour.
- When vehicles arrive at a four way stop sign, courtesy is to allow the vehicle that arrived first to proceed first. If vehicles arrive simultaneously, right of way is given to the vehicle on the right, while left turning vehicles yield to approaching traffic. Just because one has the right of way does not mean it is safe to proceed through the intersection. Keep watching for oncoming traffic.
- The proper procedure for executing a turn is to signal in order to provide reasonable warning to other drivers of your intention to turn, check traffic and conditions on both left and right and left again before making the turn. Check for vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian traffic. Maintain your lane through the turn.
- Failing to yield to a pedestrian in a crosswalk carries a fine of \$575 plus 4 demerit points.
- Pedestrians always have right of way at an unmarked intersection or stop sign unless otherwise indicated by signage.
- Give elderly pedestrians or disabled people more time to cross the road, as they may be less aware of their surroundings and unable to react quickly to sudden danger.
- Pedestrians may indicate their intention to cross the road by holding their arm straight and pointing across the road in the direction they intend to cross.
- Pay attention! Remove headphones; put away cell phones or other electronic devices when crossing the street.

### **III. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

---

#### **What is the safest way to execute a left turn?**

Enter intersection; keep wheels straight so that you do not cross in front of oncoming traffic if struck from behind. When there is suitable space, make sure the turning path is clear of traffic, including pedestrians, and it is safe to go before proceeding through the turn. Be sure to stay on the right side of the center line through the turn. Only one car should be in the intersection to execute a left turn at a time.

#### **What do I do in an uncontrolled intersection?**

An uncontrolled intersection is any intersection that does not have any traffic signs or signals. When approaching an uncontrolled intersection check left and right for traffic, slow

down and be prepared to stop. Yield right of way to the vehicle on the right. Be alert as other drivers may not be expecting any traffic at the intersection and that could result in a collision.

**What do I do if an emergency vehicle approaches a red light with lights flashing and sirens engaged?**

Stop and give up right of way to emergency vehicles until they have passed through the intersection. Failure to do so is a \$172 fine plus 3 demerits.

**What do I do at a T intersection?**

At uncontrolled and 3-way stop intersections, drivers must always yield to the vehicle on the right.

**When can I ignore traffic signals at an intersection?**

Directions given by a police officer overrule traffic signs or signals. If you are in a funeral procession you may follow the convoy through intersections without stopping for red lights or stop signs provided you have headlights on, are not the lead vehicle and are following the vehicle ahead closely.

**What do flashing red and flashing amber lights mean at an intersection?**

Flashing red acts as a stop sign, vehicles must come to a stop before crossing the stop line or crosswalk. Vehicles facing a flashing amber light may proceed with caution after yielding to pedestrians and traffic in the intersection.

**Where can I find more information about Intersection Safety in Alberta?**

Additional information and resources can be found on the Saferoads web site at: <http://www.saferoads.com>.

**IV. Advertising for Intersection Safety**

---

To be determined



## February - Distracted Driving

### I. Key Messages

---

The following key messages can be used to support the Distracted Driving Communication Campaign:

1. It only takes a second and a collision can occur.
2. Keep your eyes on the road, hands on the wheel – put your focus where it should be.
3. Multi-tasking while driving could prove to be a fatal error in judgment.
4. Distracted driving literally impairs your driving ability.

**The following fact sheet and frequently asked questions (FAQ) can assist you in building news releases and media notices. The information below can also help you to answer any possible questions that arise from the media.**

### II. Fact Sheet

---

Distracted driving is defined as the diversion of attention from driving as a result of the driver focusing on a non-driving object, activity, event, or person. This diversion reduces awareness, decision-making or performance leading to increased risk of driver error and collisions.

#### Facts to Know

- Research indicates that driver distraction contributes to 20 to 30 per cent of all collisions.
- Distracted drivers are three times more likely to be involved in a collision than attentive drivers.
- Reaching for a moving object in the vehicle increased the risk of a collision or near collision by nine times; insects in the vehicle increased the risk by a factor of six; reading, applying make up, and dialing a hand-held device tripled the odds, and listening and talking on a handheld device increased the risk by 1.3 times.
- A study of collisions involving distracted drivers found that the most common distractions were things outside the car, adjusting a CD or the radio, other occupants in the car, and moving objects in the car.
- A driver in rush hour traffic needs to keep track of 3000 items including signs, traffic lights, other vehicles, passengers, pedestrians, and road and weather conditions. Compare that with a fighter pilot who only needs to keep track of 300 items in a regular non-combat mission.
- A car going 50 km/h travels about 13.9 meters (45 feet) in one second. One second is enough to be distracted, leading to a collision.
- Music volume should not be so loud that you cannot hear the sounds your vehicle makes, emergency vehicle sirens, or the ringing bells of trains when approaching railroad crossing.

- Section 115 of the *Alberta Traffic Safety Act* prohibits drivers to operate vehicles without due care and attention, or without reasonable consideration for persons using the highway. These offenses are punishable by a \$402 fine and 6 demerits.

### **III. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

---

#### **What can I do to avoid distractions while driving?**

- Pre-set the temperature, radio or CD player. Do not make adjustments unless the vehicle is stopped.
- Make sure children are comfortable and properly buckled up before leaving. Prepare safe activities for the trip so they don't get restless.
- Know the itinerary before leaving. Do not attempt to read a map while driving.
- Finish grooming before leaving home. Do not comb your hair, shave or apply make-up while driving.
- Do not read while driving. Put newspapers and other reading materials out of sight and out of reach so you won't be tempted.
- Be sure there is nothing in the vehicle that will slide around or tip over while on the road.

#### **What can I do to minimize distractions that may arise while driving?**

- Use a cellular phone only if the vehicle is parked in a safe place. If the phone rings while driving, have a passenger take the call or let it go to voice mail.
- Take a rest stop to eat or drink.
- Avoid emotionally charged conversations with passengers as it may lead to erratic driving behaviour.
- Never take notes or use a laptop while driving. Always find a safe place to stop before writing things down.
- Be prepared for the unexpected actions of other motorists or poor driving conditions.
- If you need to attend to a child, find a safe spot to park the vehicle before doing so.
- Avoid programming electronic devices like mp3 players and GPS units while driving.

#### **Why is distracted driving becoming more of an issue?**

Many factors have contributed to this issue including the technological advances over the last 20 years, a preconceived notion that one must be connected to work and home at all times, perceptions that driving is an unproductive task, and people trying to accomplish more in less time.

#### **Does driver experience make using cell phones while driving less of an issue?**

No. The University of Calgary investigated cell phone use while driving and found that collision risk increased for all drivers regardless of driving experience.

### **Don't cell phones actually contribute to highway safety?**

Cell phones do allow drivers to rapidly report collisions, bad driving and other problematic situations. However, the value lies in having the phone available in the car, not in using the phone while driving. When reporting an emergency situation, pull over so that your vehicle is not posing a risk to others and so that you can adequately report the details and answer any questions. When using the phone for non-emergency situations - to report that you're running late, for example - find a safe spot to park to make a quick call, or let a passenger make the call, so you can concentrate on driving.

### **What about using a hands-free device?**

Research shows that hands-free phones are no safer than hand-held phones. Hands-free units free you from having to physically manipulate the device, but don't reduce your need to think about the conversation you are having, which is a cognitive distraction. Trying to find various components of your hands-free phone; putting on a headset, or changing phone settings while driving can take your attention away from the driving task, and can increase your chances of being in a crash. If you use a hands-free cell phone, it is still better to pull over to take or place a call.

### **What is the difference in talking on a cell phone compared to talking to another passenger in the vehicle?**

Passengers are more aware of the driving situation and may choose to delay conversations during challenging driving conditions while a person on the other end of a phone call will not be aware of the driver's condition and may continue with the conversation when inappropriate.

### **Where can I find more information about Distracted Driving in Alberta?**

Additional information and resources can be found on the Saferoads web site at: <http://www.saferoads.com>.

## **IV. Advertising for Distracted Driving**

---

To be determined



## March - Occupant Restraints

### I. Key Messages

---

The following key messages can be used to support the Occupant Restraint Communication Campaign:

1. What's holding you back?
2. Protect yourself against the unpredictable.
3. Seatbelts save lives.
4. Buckle up in all seats of the vehicle.
5. If you do not buckle up – you become a deadly weapon to others in the vehicle.
6. Don't wait until a collision happens, it may be too late.
7. It takes seconds to buckle up and a lifetime to make up for a loss.
8. You can drive without wearing one, but you might not be here to drive again.
9. Seatbelts are the single most cost effective life saving device we have to protect us in a motor vehicle collision.

**The following fact sheet and frequently asked questions (FAQ) can assist you in building news releases and media notices. The information below can also help you to answer any possible questions that arise from the media.**

### II. Fact Sheet

---

The use of occupant restraints reduces the likelihood of sustaining an injury and the severity of injury decreases as well. Research and collision investigations show that seat belts increase the chances of survival in a collision by 50 per cent. According to Transport Canada, almost 40 per cent of drivers and passengers killed in collisions were not wearing their seatbelt at the time of the crash.

#### Facts to Know

- In Alberta, wearing a seatbelt is required by law.
- In Alberta, the fine for not wearing a seatbelt is \$115. Drivers are also responsible for the proper restraint of children under 16.
- Passengers are not exempt from the consequences of fines, injuries or deaths resulting from not wearing a seatbelt.
- Occupants using a restraint reduce the likelihood of sustaining an injury and the severity of injury decreases.
- Seatbelts save about a 1000 lives per year in Canada.
- Seat belts distribute the force of a collision evenly to the stronger parts of a person's body. In a crash, a vehicle traveling 50 kilometers per hour comes to an abrupt stop in

1/100<sup>th</sup> of a second. At 50 kilometers per hour, an unrestrained person, weighing 80 kilograms (176 pounds), will strike whatever they hit first with a force of 2,785 kilograms (6,215 pounds).

- Airbags only function properly if the occupant is restrained in a proper position by a seat belt. Airbags deploy at an explosive speed and can cause injury if the occupant is not properly positioned. Airbags are a supplemental device.
- Vehicles are designed with an engineered life space which can withstand the force of most impacts. Seatbelts keep occupants in this space where they are safest.
- In a collision, one unrestrained occupant increases the risk for all occupants in the vehicle. An unrestrained occupant may hit something or someone inside the vehicle; or they may be thrown from their vehicle into another object.
- Child safety restraints are required by law for children under the age of 6 who weigh less than 18 kilograms (40 pounds).
- A child under 10 kilograms (22 pounds) and one year of age is safest in a rear facing child restraint seat. Be sure to consult the owner's manual for guidelines.
- Forward facing child restraint seats should have shoulder straps that originate above the shoulders and should not have a back lower than the middle of the child's ears.
- Booster seats are recommended for children under the age of 9, 18 to 36 kilograms (80 pounds) or 145 centimeters (58 inches).
- Without a booster seat, a child is four times more likely to suffer a significant injury or to suffer a head injury in the event of a collision.
- Children under the age of 12 are safest in the back seat of a vehicle in proper restraints based on their age, height and weight.

### **III. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

---

#### **I am a good driver. Do I still need to wear a seatbelt, even for a short distance?**

You cannot control every one else's behaviour on the road. Seatbelts dramatically increase your chances of survival in a collision, regardless of who is driving the other vehicle.

#### **What is the proper position of a seatbelt? What if the seatbelt is uncomfortable?**

The seat belt should be positioned securely across the hip bones and across the shoulder. A properly positioned seatbelt should not be uncomfortable. Never put the shoulder belt under the arm or behind the back. In a collision this could cause fatal injuries.

#### **What if there are more people in a vehicle than seatbelts?**

A driver cannot transport more people in a vehicle than there are seatbelts. Sharing seatbelts is dangerous as occupants will hit each other during a collision increasing the likelihood of injury.

### **When is it time to place children in a forward facing child restraint?**

Always follow the weight and height guidelines in the manufacturer's instructions. Even if a child's feet are touching the back of the vehicle seat in a rear facing restraint it does not mean they should be moved to a forward facing seat. Infants should remain rear facing until one year of age and they can pull themselves into a standing position.

### **Can a child restraint that has been used in a collision continue to be used?**

No, this is not recommended. While the child restraint may appear to be fine, there could be microscopic cracks in the shell, weakened areas in the harness or seat frame and the restraint would not hold together in a subsequent collision.

### **Can a second hand child restraint seat be used?**

Although it is not recommended, a second hand car seat can be used. First, make sure it is not more than 10 years old, check the expiry date for the seat, ensure that it has not been used in a collision and that all parts are in good condition.

### **Why should parents ensure their children are properly secured in booster seats?**

Booster seats position the seatbelt over the strongest bones in the child's body. It helps position the lap belt across the bones of the hips, not across the soft abdomen. It also places the shoulder belt across the chest, preventing the upper body and head from slamming forward during a collision.

### **What about using an after market seatbelt adjuster?**

The use of after market seatbelt adjusters for adults or for children, are not recommended as they are not government regulated.

### **Should pregnant women wear a seatbelt?**

Yes, seatbelts are the best protection for both mother and unborn child. Pregnant women should sit as upright as possible with the shoulder belt across their chest above the belly, and the lap belt low so that it pulls downward on their pelvic bones and not on their abdomen.

### **Where can I find more information about occupant restraint in Alberta?**

Additional information and resources can be found on the Saferoads web site at:

<http://www.saferoads.com/vehicles/restraints.html> and

<http://www.saferoads.com/vehicles/seatbelts.html>.

Another valuable source of information is the Alberta Occupant Restraint Program web site:

<http://albertaseatbelts.ca> and <http://www.boosterseats.ca>.

## **IV. Advertising for Occupant Restraints**

---

To be determined



## April - Speed

### I. Key Messages

---

The following key messages can be used to support the Speed Communication Campaign:

1. Speed limits save lives everyday – maybe today it's yours.
2. The faster you go, the longer it takes to stop.
3. The faster you drive, the harder you hit.
4. By the time you realize you're going too fast, it may be too late.
5. Speeding saves little time.

**The following fact sheet and frequently asked questions (FAQ) can assist you in building news releases and media notices. The information below can also help you to answer any possible questions that arise from the media.**

### II. Fact Sheet

---

#### **Driving a few km/h over the posted speed limit:**

- Reduces your ability to steer safely around curves or objects on the road.
- Decreases your field of vision and your peripheral vision.
- Extends the distance required to stop your vehicle in emergency situations.
- Reduces your ability to obey traffic control devices such as red lights and stop signs.
- Increases the chances that you will lose control of your vehicle.
- Reduces the effectiveness of seat belts and other safety devices such as airbags and side impact beams.
- Increases probability of death or injury if there is a crash.
- Reduces the effectiveness of roadside hardware such as barriers, crash cushions and bridge rails.

#### **Speed limit in school and playground zones:**

- The speed limit in both urban and rural school zones is 30 km/h unless otherwise posted and is in effect on school days from 8 a.m. to 9:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. and 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. unless other times are posted.
- The speed limit in a playground zone is 30 km/h unless otherwise posted and is in effect from 8:30 a.m. to one hour after sunset.
- A vehicle is not permitted to pass another vehicle traveling in the same direction in either school or playground zones during the times that these zones are in effect.

### **Emergency vehicles and construction zones:**

- Motorists must slow to 60 km/h, **or less** if the posted speed is lower, when passing emergency vehicles or tow trucks stopped with their lights flashing. Fines for speeding in these areas will be double the regular amount.
- If there are two or more traffic lanes in the same direction as the emergency vehicle or tow truck, passing vehicles need only slow down in the lane immediately beside the stopped emergency vehicle. Vehicles traveling in other lanes, including oncoming lanes, may maintain their speed but should proceed with caution.
- Emergency vehicles include fire, police, ambulance, tow trucks, and a vehicle used by a gas disconnection unit of a public utility or a designated emergency response unit.
- In construction zones, motorists must observe the posted speed. When workers are present, fines for speeding in these areas will be doubled. This is where workers are on or near the road, operating heavy equipment, directing traffic, or using hand tools within the construction zone. Drivers need to look out for workers who could be less visible behind construction equipment.

### **III. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

---

#### **What percentage of fatal crashes involves speeding?**

One out of every four fatal crashes, or 26 per cent, involves driving at a speed unsafe for the prevailing road conditions.

#### **What does the maximum speed limit mean?**

Posted speed limits are the maximum speeds permitted if conditions are favourable.

#### **What can you do?**

- Obey all posted speed limits on roads as well as in school zones and playground areas, construction zones, and when passing emergency vehicles.
- Use common sense—slow down in bad weather, at night, and when driving on poorly lit roads.
- Slow down on unfamiliar roads.

#### **What are the demerits for speeding?**

Speeding / exceeding limit by more than 50 km/h (mandatory court appearance required)	6 points
Speeding / exceeding limit by more than 30 km/h but not more than 50 km/h	4 points
Speeding / unreasonable rate	4 points
Speeding / exceeding limit by more than 15 km/h but not more than 30 km/h	3 points
Speeding / exceeding limit by up to 15 km/h	2 points

### **How many demerit points can a driver lose before their licence is automatically suspended?**

Anyone who accumulates 15 or more demerit points in a two-year period will have their licence automatically suspended for one month. At eight demerits, the motorist will receive a courtesy notice. When a driver under the Graduated Driver Licensing program accumulates four or more, but less than eight points, they receive a courtesy notice of point standing. When an accumulation of eight or more points occurs within a two-year period, a Graduated Driver's licence will be automatically suspended for one month.

### **Is it more acceptable to speed if you are an experienced driver?**

No. Speeding increases the distance necessary to stop a vehicle. In fact, just a small increase in speed greatly increases the amount of room you will need to stop; for example at 110 km/h, a vehicle in proper working order takes 126 metres to stop, while at 50 km/h a vehicle can stop in 37 metres.

Driving too fast doesn't allow drivers enough time to react to traffic signals such as red lights or stop signs, or other potential hazards that may be present, like children darting into traffic.

### **What is the speed limit at a crosswalk with flashing lights?**

If the lights are flashing at a crosswalk, the maximum speed is 30 km/h, even if the pedestrian has finished crossing the road. As long as the lights are flashing, drivers must slow down.

### **What are the rules of driving through a construction zone?**

When driving through a construction zone, motorists must observe the posted speed limit. When workers are present, the fines for speeding in these areas are doubled.

### **Why should a driver slow down for construction zones when there is no work being done?**

Even if it seems there is no activity in a construction zone, there may be other less obvious hazards such as loose gravel chips and uneven pavement that can be dangerous and cause damage to vehicles traveling at high speeds.

### **Where can I find more information about speeding?**

Log on to [www.saferoads.com](http://www.saferoads.com).

## **IV. Advertising for Speed**

---

To be determined



## May - Young Drivers

### I. Key Messages

---

The following key messages can be used to support the Young Drivers Communication Campaign:

1. Motor vehicle collisions are the leading cause of death and injury among Alberta's youth.
2. Parents can influence the driving behaviour of their children through positive role modeling.
3. Parents can set rules for young drivers to reinforce good driving behavior. Young drivers overestimate their driving abilities and underestimate the risks of driving.
4. You've got a lot to lose. Drive responsibly.
5. You can lose your license.
6. Insurance costs will increase.
7. You will wreck or lose your car.
8. You will have to live with the guilt for the rest of your life.
9. A criminal record is forever.
10. Live to see your graduation – do not drive drunk or high.

**The following fact sheet and frequently asked questions (FAQ) can assist you in building news releases and media notices. The information below can also help you to answer any possible questions that arise from the media.**

### II. Fact Sheet

---

Over the five years, 2004 - 2008, 257 young drivers (between 14 - 24 years of age) were killed and 18,174 young drivers were injured in collisions. Although young drivers represent only a small percentage of the province's licensed drivers, they have the highest casualty collision rates.

#### Facts to Know

- One in every five new drivers is involved in a collision in their first two years of driving.
- Crash rates for young drivers are highest when there are teen passengers in the vehicle and at night.
- In terms of involvement per 1,000 licensed drivers, males aged 18-24 are consistently more likely to have consumed alcohol prior to a casualty collision than any other age group.
- Another high-risk behaviour that significantly contributes to young driver road crashes in Alberta is driver intoxication (including drugs and alcohol).

- Other factors associated with young driver road crashes:
  - **Driver inexperience:** Often young drivers don't realize that it takes time and a lot of practice to develop safe driving skills.
  - **Overconfidence and risk taking:** Young drivers can be over confident about their driving ability and underestimate dangers on the road.
  - **Having friends as passengers:** Young drivers may be distracted by passengers or may feel pressured to take risks, such as speeding.
  - **Alcohol and other drugs:** Young people often do not understand that alcohol and other drugs affect a driver's skills, mood and most importantly behaviour, putting the driver at greater risk of crashing. Safe driving requires clear judgment, concentration and the ability to react to what's happening on the road.
  - **Busy lifestyles:** Work, study and extracurricular activities often mean busy lifestyles for young people, which may cause them to drive when tired – especially late at night. Driving tired significantly impairs driving, even if the driver does not feel sleepy.

### **III. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

---

#### **When do collisions involving young drivers occur?**

Almost one-half of casualty collisions involving a young driver (aged 14 - 24) occurred in the warmer months of June through October. Fatal collisions involving a young driver occur more often in the months of July and September.

More casualty collisions involving young drivers (aged 14 - 24) occurred on Friday than on other days. More than half of the fatal collisions involving young drivers occurred on Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

Approximately one third of casualty collisions involving a young driver (aged 14 - 24) occurred during the afternoon rush hour period between 3:00 pm - 6:59 pm. Roughly, 35 per cent of fatal collisions involving a young driver occurs between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m.

#### **What are the common mistakes that young drivers make?**

Young drivers aged 14 - 24 are more likely to commit a driver error than other drivers. The most common errors committed by young drivers include following too closely, running off the road and making a left turn across the path of an oncoming vehicle. Running off the road and driving left of centre are common improper actions of young drivers involved in fatal collisions.

#### **Are young drivers wearing seatbelts?**

Over one third of young drivers killed in a collision were not wearing their seatbelt.

#### **What is Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL)?**

Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) is a program designed to improve road safety by creating a low risk, controlled environment for new drivers, regardless of age. The GDL program

ensures that the new drivers get the support, skills and experience they need to handle the complex task of driving.

**What are the goals of the GDL program?**

- To reduce collisions, injuries and deaths in Alberta.
- To reinforce driving as a privilege **not** a right.
- To foster a generation of safe young drivers by giving them the opportunity to practise responsible driving with a licensed mentor.

All provinces that have implemented a GDL program have experienced significant decreases in the collision rates of new drivers.

**What will happen if GDL program conditions or restrictions are violated?**

Violating a program condition or restriction may result in a new driver being charged with an offence as outlined below:

<b>Violation</b>	<b>Penalty</b>
Alcohol consumption	Immediate 30 day suspension
More passengers than seat belts	\$100 fine and two demerit points
Driving after midnight (learners only)	\$100 fine and two demerit points
No accompanying driver	\$200 fine and two demerit points

**Where can I find more information about Alberta’s GDL program?**

Additional information and resources can be found on the Saferoads web site at: [http://www.saferoads.com/drivers/drivers\\_newdrivers.html](http://www.saferoads.com/drivers/drivers_newdrivers.html).

**IV. Advertising for Young Drivers**

---

To be determined



# June - Commercial Vehicle Safety

## I. Key Messages

---

The following key messages can be used to support the Commercial Vehicle Safety Communication Campaign:

*For drivers of passenger vehicles:*

1. Stay out of blind spots! Stay far enough behind big trucks so that you can see both side mirrors on the truck. If you can't see the truck driver, he can't see you either!
2. Never cut in front of these vehicles.
3. Allow yourself extra time to pass a big rig.
4. Signal well in advance when planning to turn or change lanes.
5. If you are driving beside a truck, watch for turn signals as trucks require a wide turning radius.

*For drivers of commercial vehicles:*

1. Pull over when feeling tired – it could save your life or someone else's.
2. Be alert to the actions of oncoming drivers and other drivers at intersections.
3. Complete proper pre and post trip inspections to ensure your vehicle is in good operating condition.
4. Ensure your vehicle is within the allowed weight limit to prevent damage to the infrastructure.
5. Signal well in advance when planning to turn or change lanes.

**The following fact sheet and frequently asked questions (FAQ) can assist you in building news releases and media notices. The information below can also help you to answer any possible questions that arise from the media.**

## II. Fact Sheet

---

Trucks are not large cars. Whether they are accelerating, braking, climbing a hill, switching lanes or turning onto a side street, big trucks must perform certain maneuvers that drivers of passenger vehicles are generally not familiar with.

### Facts to Know

- From 2004 to 2008 there were 3,188 large trucks involved in casualty collisions in Alberta. There were 336 people killed and 3779 people injured in these collisions. The deaths include 47 truck drivers, 17 of these were killed in single vehicle rollover crashes.
- The occupants of a passenger vehicle are more likely to be seriously injured or killed in a crash with a big rig because of the physical differences in weight, stopping distance and rollover potential.

- Fatigue can play a role in large vehicle collisions. Truck drivers were more likely than all drivers in casualty collisions to be fatigued or asleep at the time of the crash. Almost half (45%) of the truckers who were fatigued and involved in a casualty collision crashed between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m.
- Trucks will usually swing to the left before making a right hand turn; do not assume that the driver is turning left.
- Leave at least three metres between your vehicle and the rear of a truck stopped at a light or stop sign, especially on a hill.
- Maintaining a position beside large trucks is not a safe habit. Trucks have large blind spots and the driver might not be able to see you.
- Big rigs take longer to stop than passenger vehicles. The reasons for the increased braking time are due to a number of factors including: size and weight of vehicles, condition of brakes, temperature of brakes, etc.
- Maintain an increased (4-6 second) following distance between you and the vehicle in front of you when a large truck is behind you. Trucks have longer stopping distances, and this may allow you enough time to stop in an emergency without being rear-ended by the truck.

### **III. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

---

#### **When do collisions involving large trucks occur?**

From 2004 to 2008, January experienced the highest number of casualty collisions involving a truck tractor. Seventy one per cent (71%) of all casualty collisions were recorded between 7:00 am and 7:00 pm.

#### **What are the common mistakes that drivers of other vehicles make?**

Almost two-thirds (69%) of the drivers of other vehicles involved in fatal collisions with truck tractors were indicated as committing a driving error. The most common were being left of centre or violating a stop sign.

Of the drivers of other vehicles involved in injury collisions with truck tractors, 45% were indicated as having committed some driving error. The most common were following too closely, violating a stop sign and being left of centre.

#### **What are the common mistakes that drivers of large trucks make?**

The most commonly identified driving errors on the part of the truck tractor driver in casualty collisions are running off the road and following too closely. Compared to all drivers in casualty collisions, truck tractor drivers are more likely to run off the road or make an improper lane change.

### **What are “No Zones”?**

"No Zones" are a truck's blind spots. These are the areas along both sides of the truck not covered by the rear-view and side mirrors, the space immediately in front of and behind the truck and the right front of the cab. These blind spots are much larger than those of a passenger vehicle.

### **How do I stay visible?**

If you are driving behind a truck and cannot see both of its side mirrors, then you are too close. If you can see the truck driver's face in the side mirrors then he/she can see you.

### **How do I safely pass a commercial vehicle?**

Passing a commercial vehicle requires more time and space than passing a car. On a two-lane road, signal your intention to pass and once the way is clear don't hesitate. It is safe to move back into the right-hand lane when you can see the entire truck in your rear-view mirror.

### **What do I do if it's raining and I have to pass a commercial vehicle?**

You should set your windshield wipers to the highest speed before passing on rainy days.

### **What other tips can you give me?**

Remember that the bigger the truck the bigger their blind spots; the more room they need to maneuver; the longer it takes them to stop and the longer it takes you to pass them.

### **What is the average stopping distance for a passenger car versus a commercial vehicle?**

It takes a commercial vehicle longer to stop than a passenger vehicle.

#### *Passenger car:*

Cool brakes	40.55 metres
Hot brakes	40.55 metres

#### *Commercial vehicle:*

Loaded – cool brakes	59.75 metres
Loaded – hot brakes	112.78 metres
Empty	57.61 metres
Truck only	55.78 metres

### **Who does commercial vehicle enforcement in Alberta?**

Transport Officers with the Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Branch of Alberta Transportation are trained to conduct a North American Standard Inspection as per the

Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA), which is an international organization of provincial, state and federal agencies. Alberta Transportation has entered into Memorandums of Understanding with other Alberta enforcement agencies to train their officers to conduct these inspections.

**Where can I find more information about commercial vehicle safety in Alberta?**

Additional information and resources can be found on the Saferoads website at:  
<http://www.saferoads.com/vehicles/sbcv.html>.

**IV. Advertising for Commercial Vehicle Safety**

---

To be determined

# July - Motorcycle Safety

## I. Key Messages

---

The following key messages can be used to support the Motorcycle Safety Communication Campaign:

*For motorcycle operators:*

1. Stay out of blind spots! Make sure other drivers see you.
2. Be alert at intersections. Make eye contact with other drivers/riders before making your move.
3. Protect yourself with the right gear and an approved motorcycle helmet.
4. When it comes to other drivers, your speed can be easily misjudged
5. Ride defensively and make every effort to enhance your visibility.
6. Be aware of what is going on behind you to avoid deadly rear end collisions.
7. Showing off and speeding do not pay off.

*For drivers of other vehicles:*

1. Share the road – look twice for motorcyclists at intersections or when changing lanes.
2. Never underestimate the speed of a motorcycle. Their size makes their speed deceptive.

**The following fact sheet and frequently asked questions (FAQ) can assist you in building news releases and media notices. The information below can also help you to answer any possible questions that arise from the media.**

## II. Fact Sheet

---

Drivers play a large role in motorcycle safety. On a motorcycle, a rider is vulnerable. Be aware of motorcyclists on the road and give them the space they need.

Motorcycle riders need to concentrate on the road and make sure other drivers see them. Sharing the road is one of the keys to having other road users respect you as a motorcyclist.

### Facts to Know

- Between 2004 and 2008, 3,879 motorcycles were involved in casualty collisions. These collisions resulted in 152 deaths and 4,001 injuries.
- Motorcycles are less stable and less visible than cars and often have high performance capabilities. When motorcycles crash, their riders lack the protection of an enclosed vehicle, so they are more likely to get injured or killed.

- Nearly two thirds of the collisions involving a motorcycle resulted in death or injury. This compares to approximately one in ten for all collisions.
- In Alberta, wearing a helmet is the law when you are on a motorcycle. Head injury is a leading cause of death in motorcycle crashes. A rider without a helmet is 40 per cent more likely to incur a fatal injury in a crash than a helmeted rider.
- Replace a helmet that has been damaged, and avoid buying a used one. A used helmet may have been involved in a crash and could be damaged in ways that are not obvious.
- Motorcycles demand a high degree of skill - proper training and preparation are essential to having a safe trip.

### **III. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

---

#### **When do collisions involving motorcycles occur?**

Between 2004 and 2008, motorcycle crashes were more likely to occur during the summer months, in particular the month of July. Almost half occurred on weekends. One third of the collisions involving a motorcycle occurred in the afternoon rush hour period (3 p.m. - 6:59 p.m.).

#### **Who are the motorcyclists involved in these crashes?**

The younger the motorcyclist, the higher the collision rate. In particular, motorcycle operators under the age of 25 were most likely to be involved in collisions. The vast majority of motorcyclists involved in collisions were males.

#### **What are the common mistakes that motorcyclists make?**

Between 2004 and 2008, almost half (45%) of the motorcyclists involved in casualty collisions committed an improper action. More than half of these errors were running off the road or following too closely.

More than one quarter of motorcyclists involved in casualty collisions were indicated by the police as having been travelling at a speed too great for the given conditions. In fatal collisions, two-thirds of motorcyclists were travelling at unsafe speeds.

#### **What are the common mistakes of the other drivers?**

The most common errors that were committed by other drivers were making a left turn across the path of the oncoming motorcycle, making an improper lane change or committing a stop sign violation.

#### **Where do motorcycle collisions occur?**

The majority of motorcycle collisions occur in urban areas on dry roads.

#### **Where can I find more information about motorcycle safety in Alberta?**

Additional information and resources can be found on the Saferoads web site at: <http://www.saferoads.com/vehicles/motorcycle.html>.

### **IV. Advertising for Motorcycle Safety**

---

To be determined

# August - Impaired Driving

## I. Key Messages

---

The following key messages can be used to support the Impaired Driving Communication Campaign:

1. Impaired driving and refusing to provide a breath sample are both criminal offenses. Alberta is getting tough on impaired drivers. You will be caught!
2. Driving while impaired by drugs and refusing to comply with a demand for physical sobriety tests or to provide bodily fluid samples is a criminal offense.
3. You do not have to be legally drunk to be charged with impaired driving.
4. Make the right choice for everyone – don't drive if you have been drinking or using drugs.
5. Plan ahead for safe transportation. There are alternatives to impaired driving.
6. If you encounter a suspected impaired driver, record the vehicle license plate number and dial 911 anywhere in the province.
7. You have a lot to lose: your freedom, job, dignity, even your life.

**The following fact sheet and frequently asked questions (FAQ) can assist you in building news releases and media notices. The information below can also help you to answer any possible questions that arise from the media.**

## II. Fact Sheet

---

Impaired driving whether by alcohol or drugs imposes enormous costs on our society. Families, the health care system, the legal system, insurance companies and the general public all pay the price for impaired drivers.

Drivers who choose to drive impaired face not only the possibility of killing themselves, their friends or someone else, but also very serious legal, financial, social and other consequences. If you drive impaired, your luck will run out – you will get caught. Even worse, you may be involved in a severe collision that harms someone you love.

### Facts to Know

- Choosing to drive while impaired can get you a criminal record and will cost you: your freedom, your dignity; your job; your chance of future employment and even your life.
- If the police determine your ability to operate a vehicle has been impaired by alcohol or drugs, even if your Blood Alcohol Concentration is below 80 mg, you can be charged with impaired driving.
- Police may disqualify you from driving for 24 hours if they believe your ability to drive is impaired.

- If you are **charged** with an impaired driving offense, you will lose your licence automatically for at least three months. You will receive a six-month suspension if your alcohol related offense involves injury or death. Both drug-impaired and alcohol-impaired drivers will be treated equally, with equal severity.
- For more information on Alberta's Administrative Licence Suspension see <http://www.atsb.alberta.ca/503.htm>.
- If you are **convicted**, Alberta driver licence suspension periods are as follows:
  - First time offenders automatically receive a one-year driver licence suspension.
  - Second time offenders receive a three-year driver licence suspension.
  - Third time offenders receive a five-year driver licence suspension.
  - Drivers convicted of impaired driving causing injury or death, receive a mandatory five year licence suspension.
- Designated drivers should not consume **any** alcohol or use any drugs.
- On average over the past five years, approximately 7,600 people are convicted of impaired driving in Alberta each year.
- On average over the past five years, approximately 8,600 24-hour driving disqualifications are issued each year under section 89(1) of the *Traffic Safety Act* when police suspect a driver's physical or mental ability had been affected by alcohol, drugs or other substances.
- According to statistics, males between 18 and 24 years of age are most likely to have been drinking before the crash. Also, male drivers are much more likely to have consumed alcohol prior to a collision compared to female drivers.
- On average in Alberta, one in five drivers involved in fatal collisions have been drinking prior to the collision. This compares to an average of about one in 20 drivers involved in injury collisions. As the severity of the collision increases, so does the likelihood that the collision will involve a drinking driver.
- Warmer weather months (June to September) experience the highest number of casualty collisions involving alcohol.
- The most casualty collisions involving alcohol occur on the weekends. The most likely time period for these collisions, on any day of the week, is between 11 p.m. and 3 a.m.
- Drinking and driving collisions are often associated with long weekends.

### **III. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

---

#### **How many people are killed or injured in collisions involving drinking drivers?**

From 2004 to 2008, on average each year over 110 people were killed and almost 1900 people were injured in collisions involving at least one driver who had consumed alcohol prior to the crash. Specifically, in 2008, 107 people were killed and 1881 were injured.

### **How big of an issue is drug impaired driving?**

A recent Canadian study of alcohol and drug use among drivers found that drug use in nighttime drivers exceeded that of alcohol use.

### **How many drinks does it take to be impaired?**

Impairment begins with the first drink. The effects of alcoholic drinks vary greatly because the rate of absorption and blood alcohol concentration (BAC) attained vary from person to person due to factors such as weight, amount of fat tissue, and stomach contents.

### **Is beer or wine less impairing than hard liquor?**

Impairment is not determined by the type of drink but rather by the amount of alcohol ingested over a specific period of time. There is a similar amount of alcohol in such standard drinks as a 12-ounce glass of beer, a 4-ounce glass of wine, and 1.25 ounces of 80-proof liquor.

### **What happens if you refuse to comply with a lawful demand made by a Peace Officer?**

Refusing to comply with a lawful demand can result in a Criminal Code charge under section 254 of the Criminal Code. A lawful demand includes a demand for breath, both at the roadside and for a breathalyzer test; a demand for blood sample; a demand for physical coordination tests, and a demand for a drug evaluation.

### **What is the Mandatory Ignition Interlock Program?**

Drivers who are convicted of having twice the legal limit or higher of alcohol in their bloodstreams will be required to attach alcohol sensors to their vehicle ignitions before they are allowed to drive again. This program will also apply to drivers convicted of refusing to provide a breath or blood sample as well as repeat offenders over the past 10 years.

### **How are drug-impaired drivers determined?**

Drivers who are pulled over on suspicion of drug impairment may be asked to complete the Standardized Field Sobriety Tests (SFST), which check for divided attention impairment. These tests help give an officer the reasonable and probable grounds to then ask for a drug recognition investigation.

### **Where can I find more information about impaired driving in Alberta?**

Additional information and resources can be found on the Saferoads website at: <http://www.saferoads.com/drivers/impaired.html>. Additional information can be found at: <http://www.aadac.com/default.asp> and <http://www.ccsa.ca/Eng/KnowledgeCentre/OurPublications/Pages/FAQsandFactSheets.aspx>

## **IV. Advertising for Impaired Driving Campaign**

---

To be determined



# September - Back to School

## I. Key Messages

---

The following key messages can be used to support the Back to School Safety Communication Campaign:

*For children and parents:*

1. Follow the bus safety rules - make sure you always ride the bus safely.
2. POINT, PAUSE, and PROCEED. Be alert at intersections and always look out for danger when crossing the street.
3. No helmet! No bike! Always wear your helmet when riding your bike.
4. Always wear your safety gear when rollerblading, skateboarding, or riding your scooter.

*For drivers:*

1. Always watch for children crossing roads. Be prepared to stop or slow down.
2. Alternating flashing yellow or amber lights means a bus is slowing down to stop. Do the same.
3. Stop when the school bus activates its alternately flashing red lights.
4. Know and obey the speed limits in school and playground zones.

**The following fact sheet and frequently asked questions (FAQ) can assist you in building news releases and media notices. The information below can also help you to answer any possible questions that arise from the media.**

## II. Fact Sheet

---

Drivers play a large role in back to school safety. Be alert and cautious. Watch out for children and school buses.

Young students need to be aware of traffic safety rules as pedestrians, bicyclists, skateboarders and as school bus passengers.

### Facts to Know

- From 2004 to 2008, on average each year, approximately 305 children under 15 are killed or injured as pedestrians or cyclists.
- Twice a day, everyday, during the school year, almost 6,000 school buses in Alberta safely transport about 265,000 children to and from school. School buses in Alberta travel an estimated 400,000 kilometres a day – that's about 10 times around the earth.

- Approximately 70 per cent of casualty collisions and over 90 per cent of property damage collisions involving a school bus occurred in urban areas. The large majority of injuries sustained by school bus occupants were reported as minor; not requiring hospital admittance.
- About half of the other drivers involved in collisions with school buses committed a driver error. The top three errors committed by other drivers were: following too closely, committing a stop sign violation, and backing up unsafely.

### **III. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

---

#### **When are school and playground zones in effect? What is the speed limit?**

When travelling in school and playground zones, drivers must pay attention to the posted signs.

The speed limit in both urban and rural school zones is 30 km/h unless otherwise posted and is in effect on school days from 8 a.m. to 9:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. and 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. unless other times are posted.

The speed limit in a playground zone is 30 km/h unless otherwise posted and is in effect from 8:30 a.m. to one hour after sunset. A vehicle is not permitted to pass another vehicle traveling in the same direction in either school or playground zones during the times that these zones are in effect.

#### **What should I do when approaching a school bus?**

Motorists need to respect the flashing lights on a school bus, which create a safe area for children around the vehicle and are often the children's only defense when they get on or off the bus.

#### **Why do school buses have strobe lights?**

The use of strobe lights during conditions of reduced visibility, for example during a blizzard or in fog, increases the conspicuity of the school bus.

#### **What do flashing amber lights mean?**

Watch out for alternating flashing amber lights. They mean a school bus is slowing to stop and students will either be getting on or off the bus.

#### **What do alternately flashing red lights mean?**

Red means stop! The penalty for passing a school bus with its alternating flashing red lights activated is \$402 and 6 demerit points.

- Slow down and stop when the school bus activates its alternately flashing red lights. This means you must stop whether you are approaching an oncoming bus or following one. The only exception to this rule is when the bus is on the opposite side of a highway divided by a median.

- Some municipalities have passed bylaws not requiring school buses to activate their alternating flashing red lights when they stop. In this case, motorists do not need to stop but should still be cautious and watch for pedestrians when the buses are loading or unloading students.
- Proceed only when the red lights on the bus have stopped flashing.
- Watch for school buses loading and unloading children, even if the lights aren't flashing.

### **How can children cross the road safely?**

Practice the POINT, PAUSE, and PROCEED crossing system: look in all directions before crossing the street; scan for danger left, right, ahead and behind; then point across the road with your hand and arm extended out and proceed when you can safely do so.

In rural areas, all bus drivers must activate the front school bus crossing arm and direct students to cross the highway in front of the crossing arm. This prevents children from occupying the blind spot directly in front of the bus and allows the bus drivers to see the children.

### **What can I teach my children about getting to the school bus stop safely?**

Walk on the sidewalk; if there is no sidewalk, walk on the left side of the street facing traffic, staying as far away from the vehicles as possible.

- Be at the bus stop at least five minutes before the school bus arrives. Never run after the school bus to try to catch up.
- Wait for the bus at a safe place at least 10 giant steps away from the road. Have younger children practice the steps to become familiar with this rule and pick a designated spot.
- Remember that if you can't see the driver, the driver can't see you either.

### **What about seat belts on school buses?**

Many parents wonder why school buses don't have seat belts. This is a valid concern, but in fact, studies have found that lap belts in school buses may cause severe head and neck injuries in children during a collision.

### **Where can I find more information about back to school safety in Alberta?**

Additional information and resources can be found on the Saferoads web site at: <http://www.saferoads.com/vehicles/sbcv.html>.

## **IV. Advertising for Back to School**

---

To be determined



# October - Occupant Restraints

## I. Key Messages

---

The following key messages can be used to support the Occupant Restraint Communication Campaign:

1. What's holding you back?
2. Protect yourself against the unpredictable.
3. Seatbelts save lives.
4. Buckle up in all seats of the vehicle.
5. If you do not buckle up – you become a deadly weapon to others in the vehicle.
6. Don't wait until a collision happens, it may be too late.
7. It takes seconds to buckle up and a lifetime to make up for a loss.
8. You can drive without wearing one, but you might not be here to drive again.
9. Seatbelts are the single most cost effective life saving device we have to protect us in a motor vehicle collision.

**The following fact sheet and frequently asked questions (FAQ) can assist you in building news releases and media notices. The information below can also help you to answer any possible questions that arise from the media.**

## II. Fact Sheet

---

The use of occupant restraints reduces the likelihood of sustaining an injury and the severity of injury decreases as well. Research and collision investigations show that seat belts increase the chances of survival in a collision by 50 per cent. According to Transport Canada, almost 40 per cent of drivers and passengers killed in collisions were not wearing their seatbelt at the time of the crash.

### Facts to Know

- In Alberta, wearing a seatbelt is required by law.
- In Alberta, the fine for not wearing a seatbelt is \$115. Drivers are also responsible for the proper restraint of children under 16.
- Passengers are not exempt from the consequences of fines, injuries or deaths resulting from not wearing a seatbelt.
- Occupants using a restraint reduce the likelihood of sustaining an injury and the severity of injury decreases.
- Seatbelts save about a 1000 lives per year in Canada.

- Seat belts distribute the force of a collision evenly to the stronger parts of a person's body. In a crash, a vehicle traveling 50 kilometers per hour comes to an abrupt stop in 1/100<sup>th</sup> of a second. At 50 kilometers per hour, an unrestrained person, weighing 80 kilograms (176 pounds), will strike whatever they hit first with a force of 2,785 kilograms (6,215 pounds).
- Airbags only function properly if the occupant is restrained in a proper position by a seat belt. Airbags deploy at an explosive speed and can cause injury if the occupant is not properly positioned. Airbags are a supplemental device.
- Vehicles are designed with an engineered life space which can withstand the force of most impacts. Seatbelts keep occupants in this space where they are safest.
- In a collision, one unrestrained occupant increases the risk for all occupants in the vehicle. An unrestrained occupant may hit something or someone inside the vehicle; or they may be thrown from their vehicle into another object.
- Child safety restraints are required by law for children under the age of 6 who weigh less than 18 kilograms (40 pounds).
- A child under 10 kilograms (22 pounds) and one year of age is safest in a rear facing child restraint seat. Be sure to consult the owner's manual for guidelines.
- Forward facing child restraint seats should have shoulder straps that originate above the shoulders and should not have a back lower than the middle of the child's ears.
- Booster seats are recommended for children under the age of 9, 18 to 36 kilograms (80 pounds) or 145 centimeters (58 inches).
- Without a booster seat, a child is four times more likely to suffer a significant injury or to suffer a head injury in the event of a collision.
- Children under the age of 12 are safest in the back seat of a vehicle in proper restraints based on their age, height and weight.

### **III. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

---

#### **I am a good driver. Do I still need to wear a seatbelt, even for a short distance?**

You cannot control every one else's behaviour on the road. Seatbelts dramatically increase your chances of survival in a collision, regardless of who is driving the other vehicle.

#### **What is the proper position of a seatbelt? What if the seatbelt is uncomfortable?**

The seat belt should be positioned securely across the hip bones and across the shoulder. A properly positioned seatbelt should not be uncomfortable. Never put the shoulder belt under the arm or behind the back. In a collision this could cause fatal injuries.

#### **What if there are more people in a vehicle than seatbelts?**

A driver cannot transport more people in a vehicle than there are seatbelts. Sharing seatbelts is dangerous as occupants will hit each other during a collision increasing the likelihood of injury.

### **When is it time to place children in a forward facing child restraint?**

Always follow the weight and height guidelines in the manufacturer's instructions. Even if a child's feet are touching the back of the vehicle seat in a rear facing restraint it does not mean they should be moved to a forward facing seat. Infants should remain rear facing until one year of age and they can pull themselves into a standing position.

### **Can a child restraint that has been used in a collision continue to be used?**

No, this is not recommended. While the child restraint may appear to be fine, there could be microscopic cracks in the shell, weakened areas in the harness or seat frame and the restraint would not hold together in a subsequent collision.

### **Can a second hand child restraint seat be used?**

Although it is not recommended, a second hand car seat can be used. First, make sure it is not more than 10 years old, check the expiry date for the seat, ensure that it has not been used in a collision and that all parts are in good condition.

### **Why should parents ensure their children are properly secured in booster seats?**

Booster seats position the seatbelt over the strongest bones in the child's body. It helps position the lap belt across the bones of the hips, not across the soft abdomen. It also places the shoulder belt across the chest, preventing the upper body and head from slamming forward during a collision.

### **What about using an after market seatbelt adjuster?**

The use of after market seatbelt adjusters for adults or for children, are not recommended as they are not government regulated.

### **Should pregnant women wear a seatbelt?**

Yes, seatbelts are the best protection for both mother and unborn child. Pregnant women should sit as upright as possible with the shoulder belt across their chest above the belly, and the lap belt low so that it pulls downward on their pelvic bones and not on their abdomen.

### **Where can I find more information about occupant restraint in Alberta?**

Additional information and resources can be found on the Saferoads web site at:

<http://www.saferoads.com/vehicles/restraints.html> and

<http://www.saferoads.com/vehicles/seatbelts.html>.

Another valuable source of information is the Alberta Occupant Restraint Program web site:

<http://albertaseatbelts.ca> and <http://www.boosterseats.ca>.

## **IV. Advertising for Occupant Restraints**

---

To be determined



# November - Pedestrian Safety

## I. Key Messages

---

The following key messages can be used to support the Pedestrian Safety Communication Campaign:

*For drivers:*

1. When approaching an intersection or crosswalk be alert for pedestrians.
2. Watch for vehicles stopped or slowing in the lane next to yours. They may be yielding to a pedestrian.
3. Failing to yield to a pedestrian in a crosswalk carries a fine of \$575 plus 4 demerit points.
4. Stay alert and slow down on residential streets and through school and playground zones.

*For pedestrians:*

1. POINT, PAUSE, and PROCEED. Be alert at intersections and always look out for danger when crossing the street.
2. Make eye contact with drivers before you cross the street.
3. Be seen! Wear bright coloured or reflective clothing especially when walking in low light or poor weather conditions.
4. If you are impaired seek assistance and alternative transportation.
5. Abide by traffic signs and signals. They are in place to protect your safety.

**The following fact sheet and frequently asked questions (FAQ) can assist you in building news releases and media notices. The information below can also help you to answer any possible questions that arise from the media.**

## II. Fact Sheet

---

Both drivers and pedestrians are responsible for safety. Pedestrians have the right of way in crosswalks, but pedestrians also have the responsibility to cross safely. From 2004 to 2008, on average each year in Alberta, more than 45 pedestrians were killed and about 1270 were injured.

### Facts to Know

- Don't assume drivers see you and will stop. Always be cautious and watch for vehicles that are not stopping.
- Be visible. More pedestrian collisions occur during months of low light conditions. Wear reflective clothing and carry a flashlight!

- Pay attention! Remove headphones; put away cell phones or other electronic devices when crossing the street.
- Walk on the sidewalk. If there is no sidewalk, walk off the road, facing traffic, staying as far away from the vehicles as possible.
- Pedestrian injuries are the third leading cause of injury-related death for children under 14 years of age.
- Alcohol is often a factor in serious pedestrian collisions. On average over one-third of pedestrians in fatal crashes and 15 per cent in injury crashes had consumed alcohol prior to the collision.

### **III. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

---

#### **Who are the pedestrians most at risk of being killed or injured?**

Pedestrian safety is for all ages. The casualty rates per 10,000 populations are highest for pedestrians between the ages of 15 and 24. However, more than 50 per cent of pedestrians killed are 25 and older.

Drinking pedestrians are also at risk of death or injury. On average each year, from 2004 to 2008, 12 of the pedestrians killed and 147 of those injured had consumed alcohol prior to the collision.

#### **Who contributes most to pedestrian/motor vehicle crashes?**

One study of pedestrian deaths found that pedestrians were more likely than drivers to have made an error (50 per cent versus 39 per cent). Pedestrians almost always made an error in mid-block and intersection dash crashes – when a pedestrian suddenly appears in the path of a vehicle. Drivers usually made an error in other crash types such as when a vehicle is turning or backing up, or when a vehicle leaves the road and strikes a pedestrian.

#### **Where and when do most pedestrian crashes occur?**

Most casualty collisions involving pedestrians occur in urban areas. More of these crashes occur on a Friday. The most likely time period for these collisions, on any day of the week, is between 3 and 7 p.m.

#### **What do pedestrians need to know about crossing safely?**

- Use the POINT, PAUSE and PROCEED pedestrian safety method to cross the street: Look all four ways: left, right, ahead and behind.
- Always use crosswalks and pedestrian-activated signals when they are available and cross only at intersections if they are not.
- Never jaywalk. Drivers are not anticipating pedestrians crossing in the middle of the street so they may not have enough time to avoid hitting you.
- Walk on the sidewalk. If there are no sidewalks, walk off the road, facing traffic.

- Watch for vehicles backing up in driveways or parking lots.
- When crossing driveways and alleys, always look left and right just as you would when crossing a street.
- When crossing a street, walk, don't run. This will allow drivers more time to see you and come to a safe stop.

**Where can I find more information about pedestrian safety in Alberta?**

Additional information and resources can be found on the Saferoads website at:  
[http://www.saferoads.com/drivers/tips\\_pedsafety.html](http://www.saferoads.com/drivers/tips_pedsafety.html).

**IV. Advertising for Pedestrian Safety**

---

To be determined



## December – Impaired Driving

### I. Key Messages

---

The following key messages can be used to support the Impaired Driving Communication Campaign:

1. Impaired driving and refusing to provide a breath sample are both criminal offenses. Alberta is getting tough on impaired drivers. You will be caught!
2. Driving while impaired by drugs and refusing to comply with a demand for physical sobriety tests or to provide bodily fluid samples is a criminal offense.
3. You do not have to be legally drunk to be charged with impaired driving.
4. Make the right choice for everyone – don't drive if you have been drinking or using drugs.
5. Plan ahead for safe transportation. There are alternatives to impaired driving.
6. If you encounter a suspected impaired driver, record the vehicle license plate number and dial 911 anywhere in the province.
7. You have a lot to lose: your freedom, job, dignity, even your life.

**The following fact sheet and frequently asked questions (FAQ) can assist you in building news releases and media notices. The information below can also help you to answer any possible questions that arise from the media.**

### II. Fact Sheet

---

Impaired driving whether by alcohol or drugs imposes enormous costs on our society. Families, the health care system, the legal system, insurance companies and the general public all pay the price for impaired drivers.

Drivers who choose to drive impaired face not only the possibility of killing themselves, their friends or someone else, but also very serious legal, financial, social and other consequences. If you drive impaired, your luck will run out – you will get caught. Even worse, you may be involved in a severe collision that harms someone you love.

#### Facts to Know

- Choosing to drive while impaired can get you a criminal record and will cost you: your freedom, your dignity; your job; your chance of future employment and even your life.
- If the police determine your ability to operate a vehicle has been impaired by alcohol or drugs, even if your Blood Alcohol Concentration is below 80 mg, you can be charged with impaired driving.
- Police may disqualify you from driving for 24 hours if they believe your ability to drive is impaired.

- If you are **charged** with an impaired driving offense, you will lose your licence automatically for at least three months. You will receive a six-month suspension if your alcohol related offense involves injury or death. Both drug-impaired and alcohol-impaired drivers will be treated equally, with equal severity.
- For more information on Alberta's Administrative Licence Suspension see <http://www.atsb.alberta.ca/503.htm>.
- If you are **convicted**, Alberta driver licence suspension periods are as follows:
  - First time offenders automatically receive a one-year driver licence suspension.
  - Second time offenders receive a three-year driver licence suspension.
  - Third time offenders receive a five-year driver licence suspension.
  - Drivers convicted of impaired driving causing injury or death, receive a mandatory five year licence suspension.
- Designated drivers should not consume **any** alcohol or use any drugs.
- On average over the past five years, approximately 7,600 people are convicted of impaired driving in Alberta each year.
- On average over the past five years, approximately 8,600 24-hour driving disqualifications are issued each year under section 89(1) of the *Traffic Safety Act* when police suspect a driver's physical or mental ability had been affected by alcohol, drugs or other substances.
- According to statistics, males between 18 and 24 years of age are most likely to have been drinking before the crash. Also, male drivers are much more likely to have consumed alcohol prior to a collision compared to female drivers.
- On average in Alberta, one in five drivers involved in fatal collisions have been drinking prior to the collision. This compares to an average of about one in 20 drivers involved in injury collisions. As the severity of the collision increases, so does the likelihood that the collision will involve a drinking driver.
- Warmer weather months (June to September) experience the highest number of casualty collisions involving alcohol.
- The most casualty collisions involving alcohol occur on the weekends. The most likely time period for these collisions, on any day of the week, is between 11 p.m. and 3 a.m.
- Drinking and driving collisions are often associated with long weekends.

### **III. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

---

#### **How many people are killed or injured in collisions involving drinking drivers?**

From 2004 to 2008, on average each year over 110 people were killed and almost 1900 people were injured in collisions involving at least one driver who had consumed alcohol prior to the crash. Specifically, in 2008, 107 people were killed and 1881 were injured.

### **How big of an issue is drug impaired driving?**

A recent Canadian study of alcohol and drug use among drivers found that drug use in nighttime drivers exceeded that of alcohol use.

### **How many drinks does it take to be impaired?**

Impairment begins with the first drink. The effects of alcoholic drinks vary greatly because the rate of absorption and blood alcohol concentration (BAC) attained vary from person to person due to factors such as weight, amount of fat tissue, and stomach contents.

### **Is beer or wine less impairing than hard liquor?**

Impairment is not determined by the type of drink but rather by the amount of alcohol ingested over a specific period of time. There is a similar amount of alcohol in such standard drinks as a 12-ounce glass of beer, a 4-ounce glass of wine, and 1.25 ounces of 80-proof liquor.

### **What happens if you refuse to comply with a lawful demand made by a Peace Officer?**

Refusing to comply with a lawful demand can result in a Criminal Code charge under section 254 of the Criminal Code. A lawful demand includes a demand for breath, both at the roadside and for a breathalyzer test; a demand for blood sample; a demand for physical coordination tests, and a demand for a drug evaluation.

### **What is the Mandatory Ignition Interlock Program?**

Drivers who are convicted of having twice the legal limit or higher of alcohol in their bloodstreams will be required to attach alcohol sensors to their vehicle ignitions before they are allowed to drive again. This program will also apply to drivers convicted of refusing to provide a breath or blood sample as well as repeat offenders over the past 10 years.

### **How are drug-impaired drivers determined?**

Drivers who are pulled over on suspicion of drug impairment may be asked to complete the Standardized Field Sobriety Tests (SFST), which check for divided attention impairment. These tests help give an officer the reasonable and probable grounds to then ask for a drug recognition investigation.

### **Where can I find more information about impaired driving in Alberta?**

Additional information and resources can be found on the Saferoads website at: <http://www.saferoads.com/drivers/impaired.html>. Additional information can be found at: <http://www.aadac.com/default.asp> and <http://www.ccsa.ca/Eng/KnowledgeCentre/OurPublications/Pages/FAQsandFactSheets.aspx>

## **IV. Advertising for Impaired Driving Campaign**

---

To be determined



## Tips for Writing a Media Notice

---

### What is a Media Notice?

A media notice is a one-page release to advise reporters of an announcement or event that they may want to cover.

### Some Tips About Media Notices:

- A notice should have a headline that contains news, a verb, and not in uppercase.
- The lead should grab readers' attention and convey in a single sentence the most important aspect of the story.
- It should say what the news conference is about, the date, location, who is attending and whether or not there will be photo opportunities.
- Always include a contact name, phone number and e-mail address of someone the media can contact. Make sure the contact person is available to take calls.
- Send out the media notice at least two days in advance of the news conference or event.

**MEDIA NOTICE** *(Should be in bold font and placed near the top left hand corner of the page.)*

**Event:**     **[Headline]** *(Provide a main headline that focuses on the most newsworthy item of the event.)*

*The lead should grab readers' attention and convey in a single sentence the most important aspect of the event.*

*After the first paragraph provide the answers to what, when, where and who will be attending. Any persons of local interest, dignitaries, elected officials or others who are key to the event should be mentioned.*

**Date:** *(Provide information regarding the date of the event.)*

**Time:** *(Provide information regarding the time of the event.)*

**Location:** *(Include the address, room number, etc. and provide parking information for media. Also, include a map if available.)*

**Program:** *(Include information regarding the length of the event and specific details regarding the agenda (e.g., if there will be a luncheon, presentation, etc.).*

**Visuals:** *(Provide details regarding any exhibits, live entertainment or potential photo opportunities at the event.)*

**Contact:** *(Provide a contact name and phone number for someone who is available to speak to media prior to the event. This person, however, is not necessarily the key spokesperson.)*

– 30 –

*(The symbol -30-, which should be centered at the end of the media advisory, indicates it is finished.)*

## Sample Media Notice

---

**Government  
of Alberta** ■

MediaNotice

*Alberta* ■

*September 25, 2009*

### **Premier, Transportation Minister and safety partners promote traffic safety to elementary students**

*Edmonton...* Media are invited to join Premier Ed Stelmach, Transportation Minister Luke Ouellette, law enforcement agencies, and other traffic safety partners taking part in *Back to School Traffic Safety Day*.

Participants will share valuable traffic safety tips with two classes of Grade 3 students.

**Date:** Monday, September 28

**Time:** 9 a.m.

**Location:** Legislature South Grounds, Edmonton

**Participants:** Premier Ed Stelmach  
Minister of Transportation Luke Ouellette  
Law enforcement officials  
Students from Grandin Elementary School in Edmonton

*Back to School Traffic Safety Day*, formerly known as *Walk the Talk Day*, is an annual event aimed at teaching children some simple but important traffic safety rules to help prevent injuries and save lives.

- 30 -

**Media inquiries may be directed to:**

Paul Oss  
Communications  
Alberta Transportation  
780-644-5786 or 780-619-5874 (Cell)  
[paul.oss@gov.ab.ca](mailto:paul.oss@gov.ab.ca)  
To call toll free within Alberta dial 310-0000.

## Tips for Writing a News Release

---

News releases should be written like news stories. Doing this allows those reading it to see at a glance what the substance of the story is, without having to read the fine print. It also allows media to run the news release as a story with minimal or no changes. The bottom line is, the more your news release is structured like a news story, the better chance it has of being used the way you want it to be used.

Good news stories and good news releases follow these guiding principles:

1. The headline captures the highlight of the story. Also, the headline must contain a verb.
2. The first sentence, or lead, also focuses on the most important part of the story and must contain the **NEWS**.
3. Quotes must convey information or an opinion. Wishy-washy statements don't make great quotes.

### Headline

Write a headline that contains some news. The headline is the first thing people look at, so it is the first chance you have to relay some information. Headlines should not be in uppercase (except of course for things like proper names and places).

Sub-headings:

- Sub-heads are very useful when used effectively in a news release. They can be used when there are a couple of significant messages to relay.

### Writing a Good Lead

The lead is the most important part of a news release. It should grab readers' attention and convey in a single sentence the most important aspect of the story. When writing the lead, try to imagine that the lead is the **ONLY** part of the news release the reader will see.

A lead should not start with an individual's name unless that person is the news, which isn't very often. It should also not focus on details like who made the announcement, or the deep background behind the story.

### CP Style

News releases should follow Canadian Press (CP) style – this way, newspapers don't need to waste time editing for style. Here are some style tips that news release writers should remember:

1. On first reference, a person should be referred to by first and last name, and company, agency or government department name. Titles such as Mr., Mrs., Dr., and Honourable are not used. Secondary references should be by last name alone. First reference: John Brown, President of Browns Construction, said... Second and subsequent references: Brown (not Mr. Brown or President Brown).
2. Use of capital letters is reserved for proper names, trade names, government departments, names of associations or companies, languages, religions, nations, races, places and addresses. Otherwise, lowercase is used where a reasonable choice exists. On first reference: The Health Services Utilization Commission; the Government of Alberta. On second and subsequent references: the commission; the government.
3. Avoid jargon and acronyms.

## Other Tips

- Remember to KISS (keep it short and simple). Most news releases can and should be no longer than a page. Detailed information that's not central to the story should go in a backgrounder.
- Round off numbers to the nearest whole number if possible, and use no more than one decimal place: \$8 million, not \$8.013 million.
- Avoid using “we,” “us,” or “our” in news releases – it's often unclear who these words are referring to, the company, agency, or government? All Albertans?
  - **Don't use:** our specialists say...
  - **Use:** agricultural specialists say...
  - **Don't use:** we plan to...
  - **Use:** the town council plans to... or... economic development plans to...
- Avoid using time references like “today,” “yesterday,” and “tomorrow”. Media will need to revise these references for use in their stories, because anything announced “today” will need to be changed in stories that appear tomorrow and beyond. It's best just to use a date.
- If possible, list at least one media contact who is available to answer media inquiries on the day the release is issued. Return media calls promptly, no more than two hours after you receive the call.
- Look at how newspapers write headlines and leads, and incorporate their best practices into your work.
- Carefully proofread all news releases, and especially check numbers for accuracy (e.g. dollar figures, phone numbers). It is often prudent to have someone rather than the author do the proofreading to check for grammar and spelling.
- Wherever possible, simplify the language used in releases. Remember, the purpose of releases is to inform the public, not the experts.

## General Format Guidelines

Please do not use the phrase “for immediate release” as it states the obvious.

- **Font:** Arial 12 pt; headline in bold, 16/18 pt; sub-headings (if used) in bold, 14/16 pt, italics.
- **Date:** at top, before headline, flush left, italics.
- **Location being released:** in the first line of the body of the release; italics; followed by ... (please type three periods rather than inserting the ellipsis symbol as a special character).
- **- 30 -** signifies end of text and should follow the body of the release; 12 pt, centered.
- **Media inquiries may be directed to:** bold, 12/14 pt.
- **Contact names:** 12 pt; flush left; two or three columns as required. (Make sure the contact people are available on the date the release is going out).

The template below shows a general layout and the components of a news release and it is designed to serve only as a guideline.

**NEWS RELEASE** (should be in bold lettering and placed near the top of the body of the email)

**[Header]** Location, Date (Use the date of release to the media), Caption

**[Headline]**

Your headline should capture the essence of your news to give media a 'handle' for what information will be in the news release. For example: ***The Alberta Government is announcing a new highway safety outreach program, dedicated to educating all drivers about sharing the roads safely with commercial vehicles***, etc. Ideally, the headline should not exceed 80 characters. It should begin with the identification of the involvement of your organization followed by the caption.

**[Lead Paragraph]**

Your lead sentence is critical. You need to succinctly summarize the key elements of your news by linking the who, what, when and where of your story with the timeliness of the information you're sharing. A story lead is intended to catch the attention of the reporter by telling the reporter why your story is important and newsworthy. Your lead should be one to three sentences maximum.

**[Second Paragraph]**

This portion of the news release is where you elaborate on the 'news' in the lead paragraph. Consider using a quote from a relevant source to make your news release more intriguing or credible. The person quoted should be a leader or an expert on the topic. Quotes should be authentic and sound conversational. They should also say something about how the speaker views or feels about the subject.

**[Third Paragraph]**

Your third paragraph should expand on the story in order of importance for the reporter. You can also provide data and include statistics to add more credibility to your story.

**[Final Paragraph]**

The final paragraph of a traditional news release could either contain the least newsworthy material or could restate and summarize the key points of your news release.

-30-

(The symbol -30-, centered at the end of your news release, indicates the end of the release.)

**For more information, please contact:**

First Name, Last Name, Title (*put the name and title of your spokesperson here*)

Phone: (area code) ### - ####  
(*put your spokesperson's office phone number and a cell phone number – here*)

E-mail: email@email.com (*put your spokesperson's email address here*)



July 27, 2009

## Traffic fatalities and injuries drop in 2008

### *Safe driving key to saving lives on Alberta's roads*

*Edmonton...* The Alberta government is reminding drivers of the important role they play in reducing traffic fatalities. Traffic fatalities decreased 10.5 per cent from 2007 to 2008, and traffic injuries also dropped 10.3 per cent in the same period—the lowest number of total casualties since 1995.

"Our traffic safety partners are working well together to do what we can to help save lives on Alberta's roads, but drivers play a key role in continuing to bring these numbers down," said Luke Ouellette, Minister of Transportation. "We remain committed to the *Traffic Safety Plan* using innovative engineering, province-wide public awareness campaigns, coordinated enforcement and legislative enhancements to make our roads safer. While these reductions are encouraging, there is still room for improvement."

Driver error continues to be a contributing factor in 90 per cent of traffic collisions—a persistent statistic indicating that changing driver attitudes continues to be a major challenge. Following too closely, running off the road and making a left turn across the path of an oncoming vehicle were the most frequently identified improper driver actions contributing to casualty collisions. Overall, 22.5 per cent of drivers in fatal collisions had consumed alcohol before the crash.

"The increased presence of enforcement, including the Alberta Sheriff Highway Patrol, has definitely had an effect on driving behaviours on Alberta highways," said Fred Lindsay, Solicitor General and Minister of Public Security. "Law enforcement's visibility on our roads serves as a constant reminder to aggressive drivers and speeders that high-risk driving will not go undetected."

The *Alberta Traffic Safety Plan* is a comprehensive strategy aimed at reducing the number of injuries and deaths on Alberta's roadways. The plan is built on a foundation of best practices, research and specific coordinated actions in enforcement, engineering, education, communications, community engagement and legislative enhancements aimed at improving traffic safety.

To view the 2008 Alberta Traffic Collision Statistics, visit <http://transportation.alberta.ca/statistics>.

- 30 -

**Backgrounder:** 2008 overview and interesting traffic safety facts

**Media inquiries may be directed to:**

Marlene Anderson  
Office of Traffic Safety  
Alberta Transportation  
780-427-6774  
[marlene.anderson@gov.ab.ca](mailto:marlene.anderson@gov.ab.ca)

Paul Oss  
Communications  
Alberta Transportation  
780-644-5786  
[paul.oss@gov.ab.ca](mailto:paul.oss@gov.ab.ca)

To call toll-free within Alberta dial 310-0000.



*July 27, 2009*

## **2008 overview and interesting traffic safety facts**

- The number of traffic fatalities decreased 10.5 per cent over the past year from 458 fatalities in 2007 to 410 in 2008.
- The number of traffic injuries decreased 10.3 per cent over the past year from 24,530 injuries in 2007 to 22,015 in 2008.
- Restraint users who were involved in collisions had a much lower injury rate (8 per cent) than those not using restraints (32.8 per cent).
- The highest number of fatal collisions occurred in August, September, and October. The highest number of injury collisions occurred in December.
- Friday was the most collision-prone day of the week, and the most collision-prone period of time was the afternoon rush-hour.
- Casualty rates were highest for persons between the ages of 15 and 24, and male drivers between the ages of 18 and 19 had the highest casualty collision rates.
- Following too closely, running off the road and turning left across the path of an oncoming vehicle were the most frequently identified improper driver actions contributing to casualty collisions.
- Fatal collisions occurred most frequently in rural areas, whereas injury and property damage collisions occurred more frequently in urban areas.
- 50 per cent of pedestrians involved in fatal collisions had consumed alcohol prior to the collision compared to 14 per cent of pedestrians in injury collisions.
- 22.5 per cent of drivers involved in fatal collisions had consumed alcohol prior to the crash compared to 5.3 per cent of drivers in injury collisions.
- The number of traffic collisions increased 2.7 per cent over the past year from 153,901 collisions in 2007 to 158,055 in 2008.

To view the 2008 Alberta Traffic Collision Statistics, visit <http://transportation.alberta.ca/statistics>.

To view the Alberta Traffic Safety Plan, go to <http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/>

-30 -

### **Media inquiries may be directed to:**

Marlene Anderson  
Office of Traffic Safety  
Alberta Transportation  
780-427-6774

[marlene.anderson@gov.ab.ca](mailto:marlene.anderson@gov.ab.ca)

To call toll-free within Alberta dial 310-0000

Paul Oss  
Communications  
Alberta Transportation  
780-644-5786  
[paul.oss@gov.ab.ca](mailto:paul.oss@gov.ab.ca)



## List of Stakeholders and Partners

---

### **Alberta government:**

- Alberta Aboriginal Relations
- Alberta Agriculture, and Rural Development
- Alberta Education
- Alberta Finance and Enterprise
- Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission
- Service Alberta
- Alberta Health and Wellness
- Alberta Employment and Immigration
- Alberta Solicitor General and Public Security
- Alberta Municipal Affairs and Housing
- Alberta International and Intergovernmental Relations
- Alberta Justice and Attorney General

### **Federal**

- Health Canada
- Transport Canada

### **Police Services**

- Calgary Police Services
- Edmonton Police Service
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police
- Medicine Hat Police Service
- Lethbridge Regional Police Service

### **Municipalities**

- Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties
- Alberta Urban Municipalities Association
- City of Calgary
- City of Camrose
- City of Edmonton
- City of Red Deer
- Strathcona County

### **Universities**

- University of Alberta
- University of Calgary

### **Safety-related organizations**

- Aboriginal Traffic Safety Coalition
- Alberta Centre for Injury Control and Research
- Alberta Motor Association
- Alberta Motor Transport Association
- Alberta Motor Vehicle Industry Council
- Alberta Roadbuilders and Heavy Construction Association
- Insurance Bureau of Canada
- Motor Dealers Association of Alberta
- Mothers Against Drunk Drivers
- Students Against Drinking and Driving
- ENFORM
- Centre for Transportation Engineers (C-TEP)



## **The Alberta Traffic Safety Context**

---

Released in November 2006, the Alberta Traffic Safety Plan (TSP) is in response to the McDermid Report, "Saving Lives on Alberta's Roads: Report and Recommendations for a Traffic Collision Fatality and Injury Reduction Strategy." This is a comprehensive strategy designed to reduce traffic-related deaths and injuries in the province.

The Traffic Safety Plan outlines key initiatives to help prevent motor vehicle collisions, build safer roads, enforce traffic laws and better educate Albertans about traffic safety. The TSP also supports Canada's National Road Safety Plan, Road Safety Vision 2010, to make Canada's Roads the Safest in the World.

The Traffic Safety Plan also includes an Action Plan that identifies the activities to be undertaken over the next one to three years. The Action Plan also supports some of the government's strategic objectives, specifically to improve Albertans' quality of life and provide safe communities.

For more information on the Alberta Traffic Safety Plan  
<http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/3112.htm>