

# THE ASSOCIATION



The Newsletter of the Indiana Association of Certified Accident Investigators  
www.iacai.com

## Overall Traffic Fatalities Reach Record Low

A NHTSA News Release

The US Department of Transportation announced recently that the number of overall traffic fatalities reported in 2008 hit their lowest level since 1961 and that fatalities in the first three months of 2009 continue to decrease. The fatality rate, which accounts for variables like fewer miles traveled, also reached the lowest level ever recorded. The fatality data for 2008 placed the highway death count at 37,261, a drop of 9.7 percent from 2007. The fatality rate for 2008 was at 1.27 persons per million VMT, about 7 percent below the rate of 1.36 recorded for 2007. Substantial declines occurred in virtually every major category, led by declines in passenger car occupant fatalities

which dropped for the sixth straight year in a row, reaching the lowest level since DOT began keeping records. Light truck occupant fatalities fell for the third straight year. Alcohol-impaired fatalities also declined by more than 9 percent over 2007. Continuing this trend, the January-March 2009 estimate of 7,689 deaths represents a nine percent decline from a year ago. It was the twelfth consecutive quarterly decline. The fatality rate for the first quarter of 2009 reached 1.12 fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled. Preliminary data collected by the Federal Highway Administration showed that Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) during the first three months of 2009 de-

clined by about 11.7 billion miles. The 2008 annual statistics did report, however, that motorcycle deaths increased for the 11th straight year and now account for 14 percent of all highway fatalities. "While the number of highway deaths in America has decreased, we still have a long way to go," Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood said. He added that the country has made major strides in increasing seat belt use, curtailing impaired driving, making roads and highways safer, and maximizing vehicle safety, all of which play important roles in the declining death rate.



IACAI North Director Phil Nott and Central Director Scott Poston discuss the positioning of the tape in preparation to measure crush on one two vehicles provided for the June 17th Seminar on Vehicle Damage Analysis. On looking include North Director Mike Cox (left) and former Vice President Mike Snow (right). See page 2 for more about the seminar.

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# Members Attend Vehicle Damage Analysis Seminar At Warsaw



The Warsaw Police Department was the location for the most recent IACAI seminar involving Vehicle Damage and Crush Analysis. Capt. Timothy Spencer of the Mishawaka Police Department, and IACAI North Director Phil Nott, of the Steuben Co. Sheriff's Department, were the instructors for the program. Those attending the program were instructed on the basics of crush, including a review of Hooke's law, Work energy, Kinetic Energy, Conservation of energy, force v. deflection, as well as methods of measuring crush on vehicles, the acceptable types of crush to measure, and those that are not acceptable, where to find information when calculating the 'A' and 'B' stiffness coefficients, and a practical skills demonstration of the proper methods of crush measurement on two vehicles with different types of crush. Nott's demonstration included building a 'box' around the vehicle to be measured using copper tubing and tape measure-



IACAI North Director Phil Nott demonstrates a method of obtaining crush measurements on one of two vehicles provided for the Vehicle Damage Analysis seminar held at the Warsaw Police Dept., on June 17th.

The copper tubing provides the rigid box frame and the height of the box is set in an effort to obtain the most useful measurements for the analysis. The entire program provided attendees with a well-rounded refresher to the acceptable methods of vehicle

speed analysis utilizing crush measurements. The next seminar will be in Plainfield September 17, 2009. All accident investigators and interested others are invited to attend.



Members, as well as the plain curious, visit [www.iacai.com](http://www.iacai.com) for the latest news and information

## Crash Investigation, Recon Training Courses

**Northwestern University - Center for Public Safety 1-847-491-5476**

**Institute For Police Technology & Management (IPTM) 1-904-620-4786**

Aug 10-21	Traffic Accident Reconstruction I	\$1100.00	River Grove, IL
Aug 24-28	Traffic Accident Reconstruction II	\$900.00	River Grove, IL
Sep 14-25	Accident Investigation I	\$1200.00	Evanston, IL
Sep 28-Oct 9	Accident Investigation II	\$1200.00	Evanston, IL
Oct 12-16	Basic Physics & Math Workshop	\$900.00	Evanston, IL
Oct 19-23	Vehicle Dynamics	\$900.00	Evanston, IL

Sep 14-25	At Scene Traffic Acc. Invest.	\$825.00	Jacksonville, FL
Sep 21-25	Event Data Recorder Use	\$625.00	Jacksonville, FL
Sep 28-Oct 2	Pedestrian/Bicycle Crash Invest.	\$625.00	Jacksonville, FL
Sep 28-Oct 9	Advanced Traffic Acc. Invest.	\$825.00	Jacksonville, FL
Oct 12-23	Traffic Crash Reconstruction	\$825.00	Jacksonville, FL
Nov 9-13	Advanced Commercial Vehicle	\$625.00	Jacksonville, FL



Answers to the May issue of the IACAI Skill Review:

1. Tangent
2. Reference Line
3. Maximum Engagement
4. Drop Off
5. Chip
6. Crook
7. Arc
8. Acute Angle
9. Over-deflected
10. Conservation of Momentum

## Thank You!

Recently, the Board of Directors for IACAI voted to donate money to a very worthy cause - The Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics. President Don Harris received a letter from that organization that he wanted to share with the IACAI members:

"Dear Indiana Association of Certified Accident Investigators:

On behalf of Special Olympics Indiana, I would like to thank you for being a fan of Special Olympics through your generous donation of \$200.00 for our Indiana Law Enforcement Torch Run. It is support from corporations like yours that allow our programs to thrive, and our athletes to experience the thrill of sports training and organized sports.

The Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics (LETR) is a year-round effort to raise funds and awareness for Special Olympics. Started in Wichita, Kansas in 1981, the LETR is sanctioned by the International Association of Chiefs of Police. It is also affiliated with the Fraternal Order of Police and the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators. The Indiana Law Enforcement Torch Run program began in 1984.

Special Olympics Indiana is a not-for-profit organization that provides year-round sports training and athletic competition in more than 20 Olympic type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, reaching nearly 10,000 athletes across Indiana. The organization re-

ceives no Federal or state-appropriated funds, is not a United Way agency and relies entirely on Corporate, civic, and individual donors. For more information about Special Olympics Indiana, call (317)328-2000 or visit [www.soindiana.org](http://www.soindiana.org).

Special Olympics Indiana operates as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. No goods or services were received in exchange for your contribution.

Thank you again for your gift. It truly enriches the lives of Indiana children and adults with intellectual disabilities!"

Sincerely,

Scott Furnish, Law Enforcement Torch Run/Special Events Manager.

## New Roadside Survey Shows Alcohol Use Decline

-Taken in part from a NHTSA Press Release dated 7/13/ 2009

A new roadside survey conducted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration confirms a continuing decline in the percentage of legally intoxicated drivers. In the latest survey, 2.2 percent of drivers were found to have a blood alcohol concentration of at least 0.08%; in contrast, 7.5 percent of drivers were found to have at least 0.08% BAC in 1973. NHTSA is conducting further research to assess how drug traces correspond to driver impairment since some drugs

can remain in the body for days and even weeks.

The survey also found that 16.3 % of nighttime, weekend drivers were drug positive. The most common drugs found among the tested drivers included: Marijuana, 8.6%; Cocaine, 3.9%; Over-the-counter and prescription drugs, 3.9%.

Among the findings, NHTSA also reported the following:

- The percentage of male drivers with illegal BAC levels was 42% higher than the percentage of

alcohol-impaired female drivers.

- Drivers were most likely to be illegally drunk during late nighttime hours (1am to 3am) than during daytime or early evening hours.
- Motorcycle riders were more than twice as likely as passenger vehicle drivers to be drunk (5.6% compared to 2.3%). Pickup truck drivers were the next most likely to have illegal BACs (3.3 percent.)

## Media Coverage of Car Crashes May be a Health Hazard, Studies in NSC's *Journal of Safety Research* Conclude

Media coverage of car crashes may harm rather than help public health, according to two new studies published in the National Safety Council's *Journal of Safety Research*. Media tend to obscure the bigger picture of motor-vehicles crashes as a leading cause of American injury and death – and the number-one killer of young adults – by presenting car crashes as episodic, human interest stories, the studies conclude. This type of coverage, they argue, gives the impression that crashes are random and unpreventable. The studies call for increased mention in crash coverage of preventable risk factors that contributed to fatalities, such as seatbelt use, speeding, alcohol or drug use and distracted driving. One study focused on United States newspaper coverage of crashes with injuries (Monica Rosales and Lorann Stallones,

Department of Psychology, Colorado Injury Control Research Center, Colorado State University). It found that media coverage runs counter to public health interests by emphasizing the distinctiveness of each story rather than on detecting trends and identifying risk factors. The study noted that coverage contained virtually no information that may have predisposed a crash risk, such as weather conditions or speed. It also found little mention of alcohol or drug use, or of demographic factors, such as age and race factors, that could help communities identify population groups at high risk. This type of coverage, the study concludes, may present inaccurate perceptions by overestimating infrequent causes of crash-deaths and obscuring frequent causes. It tends to present complex issues as singular cases and can be counterpro-

ductive to public health. The other study, conducted in Belgium, explored television news coverage of crashes (Kathleen Beullens, Keith Roe and Jan Van den Bulck, Leuven School for mass Communication Research, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium). Its findings were similar, noting that there are substantial differences between the amount of media coverage devoted to certain causes of crash deaths and their actual incidence. The study expresses concern that this may distort the public's perceptions and attitudes, and present crashes as non-preventable. The study further concluded that television news did not highlight potential prevention measures, such as seatbelt use. It also noted that the human-interest framework favored by television news added an emotional dimension that (See page #5)



## Tough New Braking Rules For Large Trucks Will Save Hundreds Of Lives Annually

- A NHTSA Press Release July 24, 2009

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration issued stringent new braking standards that will save lives by improving large truck stopping distance by 30 percent. NHTSA estimates that the new braking requirement will save 227 lives annually, and will also prevent 300 serious injuries. It is estimated to reduce property damage costs by over \$169 million annually. "Safety is our highest priority," Secretary LaHood said. "Motorists deserve to know they are shar-

ing the road with large trucks that are up to the safest possible standards, so they can get home alive to their families." The new standard requires that a tractor-trailer traveling at 60 miles per hour come to a complete stop in 250 feet. The old standard required a complete stop within 355 feet. The new regulation will be phased in over four years beginning with 2012 models. The new rule should speed up the introduction of the latest braking technology into America's

freight hauling fleets and will help truck drivers avoid collisions with other vehicles. The new rule applies only to truck tractors, and does not include single-unit trucks, trailers, and buses. The latest statistics from NHTSA show that large commercial vehicles continue to show a decrease in their involvement in fatal crashes. In 2008, 4,229 people were killed in crashes involving large trucks, down 12 percent from the 4,822 deaths recorded in 2007.



"Media play a very important role in informing, educating and providing perspective to help people better understand issues" - NSC CEO/President Janet Froetscher

## More About: Media Coverage of Car Crashes....

(From page #4) may detract audience attention from the facts, thereby missing the opportunity to inform viewers about the causes and consequences of risk-taking by motorists. Both studies call for increased communication between news media and public health professionals to improve the accuracy and injury-prevention information of crash coverage. By presenting more of the factual, contextual information involved in crashes, they hope for more accurate audience impressions of risk factors involved and greater understanding of driving risks. "Media play a very important role in informing, educating and providing perspective to help people better understand issues," said Janet Froetscher, president and CEO of the NSC.

"When media focus just on the human interest side of the story, they can create the impression that crashes are accidents that are not preventable. The media has an important opportunity to help the public understand that the term 'accident' is a misnomer; that crashes are preventable, and that the injuries and deaths resulting from crashes can often be linked to specific behaviors.

"It is important that media include in their stories the behaviors that contributed to a crash or the resulting injuries, such as speeding, aggressive driving, talking on cell phones, driver inexperience, teen passengers, not wearing seat belts, driving impaired or not keeping small children properly restrained in the back seat," Froetscher said. "When media include these relevant

facts, they provide a teachable moment to help people understand the link between their behavior and crashes, injuries and deaths." To access the study, visit Elsevier's Science Direct at [www.sciencedirect.com](http://www.sciencedirect.com) and enter the title *Journal of Safety Research, Volume 39, Number 5*. *The Journal of Safety Research* is the pre-eminent peer-reviewed scientific journal in the safety field. Its scholarly articles present basic and applied research in all areas of safety, including traffic, industry, farm, home, school and public. The National Safety Council ([www.nsc.org](http://www.nsc.org)) saves lives by preventing injuries and deaths at work, in homes, communities and on the roads, through leadership, research, education and advocacy.

Permission to reprint granted by the National Safety Council, a membership organization dedicated to protecting life and promoting health.)

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## Special Training Announcement

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The Clarksville Police Department will be putting on a Photogrammetry Class the last full week of September - September 23-25, 2009.

Photogrammetry will be taking the place of the total station and can be done by one person. The cost of this training is \$2,119 for the first officer, each additional officer is \$675. The cost includes markers, cones, software and training.

For those who have questions or are interested in attending the course, please contact  
 Matt Minich,  
 Sellersburg Police  
 812-246-4491



## ***Seminar Announcement***

***The Indiana Association of Certified Accident Investigators will be sponsoring a seminar on***

### **"Motorcycle Crash Testing"**

Instructor: Mike Snow, Ret.

Indianapolis Metro Police Department

This seminar will involve live crash testing using some of the more current style motorcycles. The information collected will be of great benefit for those crash investigators who are charged with motorcycle crash reconstruction.

September 23, 2009 0900-1500 hrs

Court Room / Plainfield Police Department

1075 W. Main Street

Plainfield, IN 46168

Cost: \$50 for IACAI members; \$75 for non-members

No advanced registration is required.

Registration begins at 08:30am

Please plan to attend!!

Questions regarding this seminar may be directed to IACAI  
President Don Harris

email: [donhar232@comcast.net](mailto:donhar232@comcast.net)

Contact us at:

P.O. Box 346  
Greenwood, IN 46142  
317-882-2901 (FAX)

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