*Put on Safety Talk Template*

**Five Minutes for Safety**

**Speed Kills**

**Objective:** To reinforce the deadly ramifications of the epidemic of speeding on Minnesota roads and those across the U.S.

**Opening:**

Did you drive the speed limit to get here today? You don’t have to answer that, but here are a few things to think about.

Speeding was a factor about a third of all traffic fatalities in 2020. A crash is considered speeding-related if the driver was charged with a speeding-related offense or if racing, driving too fast for conditions, or exceeding the posted speed limit was indicated as a contributing factor in the crash.

Excessive speeds are deadly. Initial numbers in Minnesota were 488 traffic fatalities in 2021 — the most since 2007 when 510 people died. A 100-day period in 2021 accounted for 167 of those fatalities. In 2021, the Minnesota State Patrol issued 1,249 speeding tickets for speeds of 100 mph or more, compared with 1,080 in 2020 and 533 tickets for those excessive speeds in 2019.

That’s what the situation looks like in our state today, but even if you’re not hitting 100 mph, it’s important to know how deadly speed at any level can be.

Speed is generally thought of as "illegal" speed, or speed in excess of the speed limit. Speed means more than this. It’s going too fast to be able to stop in the distance needed to prevent a crash.

How fast is that? It varies. Certainly "over the limit" is unsafe, but other factors are involved. We — all of us — have a very distorted perception of speed. Let’s think about how fast you are really going at any given speed.

Consider this — 60 miles per hour (mph) divided into 5280 feet or (one mile) equals 88 feet per/second. 30 mph equals 44 feet per/second. That’s a big difference.

Now let’s dig into what this really means.

**Questions for leading the conversation**

**Question:** Does anyone remember, or know, what the average reaction time is for human beings? (Ask for guesses)

**Answer:** It is 3/4 of a second from the time you see the hazard until you get your foot on the brake. Even at the reasonable speed of 30 mph you travel this far — 33 feet — before your foot hits the brake.

**Question:** How far do you travel after you apply the brakes but before your car comes to a complete stop? That's a dumb question, isn't it? Why? (Ask for guesses)

**Answer:** Sure, it varies, but you need safe stopping distance for conditions.

**Question:** What causes increased stopping distance? (Ask for guesses)

**Answer:** Ice, snow, rain, quality of your brakes and tires and the weight of your car or truck, among other things. Darkness, rain, fog, parked cars, blocked vision and other factors must also be considered when you think about speed. You've got to be able to stop in the distance you can see.

**Other considerations**

Maybe you’re not a speeder, but you’re encountering speeding and aggressive behavior. Here are some tips:

* If you are in the left lane and someone wants to pass, move over and let them by.
* Give speeding drivers plenty of space. Speeding drivers may lose control of their vehicle more easily.
* Adjust your driving accordingly. Speeding is tied to aggressive driving. If a speeding driver is tailgating you or trying to engage you in risky driving, use judgment to safely steer your vehicle out of the way.
* Call the police if you believe a driver is following or harassing you.

**Company/Organization policy review, if applicable**

**Closing reinforcement**

Beyond the risk of death or severe injury, speeding is a costly choice. It varies by county, but traveling 10 mph over the limit typically costs a driver more than $110 with court fees and double that for going over 20 mph. Those who get cited for going 100 mph or more can lose their license for six months.

Try to remember these facts the next time you're tempted to press a little hard on the accelerator. Use your head to protect your body.

**Sources:**

Minnesota Department of Public Safety,

Office of Traffic Safety

National Safety Council

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration