**DriveSafeMN**

**Do It for ME – Spring 2024 campaign**

**Fact Sheet**

**The High Costs of Excess Speed and Distracted Driving**

***In a Nutshell***

*The statistics around crashes caused by excessive speed and distracted driving are well known. For more than two decades, speeding has been a factor in about one-third of all motor vehicle fatalities. In 2021, the last year for which comprehensive national data is available, speeding was a contributing factor in 29% of all U.S. traffic fatalities. In Minnesota, it was tied to 30% of fatal crashes for 2022. In 2021, Distracted driving claimed 3,522 lives nationwide. In 2020, distracted driving contributed to 2,612 injuries and 29 deaths in Minnesota.*

*But what’s the REAL cost? What would your loved ones face financially or emotionally you were killed or severely injured because of these deadly driving practice? Or if your actions lead to someone else’s death?*

*The emotional, legal and financial impacts are deep and often long lasting, if not permanent. Here are just a few of the potential consequences when you put your need to speed, use your cellphone while driving or other distractions ahead of the long-term well-being of your loved ones:*

**Death is Costly** – The lifetime economic cost to society for each fatality is $1.6 million, according to the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813403) (NHTSA). Over 90% of this amount is attributable to lost workplace and household productivity and legal costs.

**Kids Never Recover** – A 2018 [University of Pittsburgh](https://www.psychiatry.pitt.edu/news/longest-and-most-detailed-study-pediatric-grief-following-parental-loss-date-department) study concluded that found that kids who have lost a parent are more than twice as likely than nonbereaved kids to show impairments in functioning at school and at home, even seven years later. [Other studies](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/experimentations/202202/how-losing-parent-affects-young-children) showed early parental loss is associated with anxiety, depression, prolonged grief reactions, negative effects on sense of self, increased risk for suicide, substance abuse and eating problems; difficulty with relationships and more.

**Medical Expenses for Life** – Each critically injured survivor’s medical costs an average of $979,000, [NHTSA](https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813403) calculates. Medical costs and lost productivity accounted for 81% of the cost for this most serious level of nonfatal injury.

**Other Critical Costs Can Last a Lifetime** –NHTSA’s data indicates each critically injured survivor has comprehensive costs that average of $6 million. Lost quality-of-life accounted for 84% of the total harm for this most serious level of nonfatal injury.

**Convictions are Costly** – In Minnesota, a person convicted of vehicular homicide may receive prison time. The amount of time may depend on the case. However, the maximum prison time is 10 years behind bars. Those convicted can be sentenced to pay a fine of $20,000. That doesn’t include legal costs which can exceed $10,000.

**You’ve Been Sued** – If someone is killed or injured in a crash caused because you were driving while impaired or distracted, you’re likely to be sued by the victim or survivors’ families. While there’s no average settlement amount, payouts can run into the six digits. And that doesn’t include what you’ll pay your attorneys. That’s an enormous financial and emotional burden on your family that may include bankruptcy.

**Loss is Expensive** – Overall, the average direct costs related to the death of a loved one can reach $20,000. That’s before factoring lost income from taking time off or healthcare costs required to manage health and mental health symptoms, according to the 2023 [The Cost of Dying](https://www.empathy.com/costofdying) report.

**The Impact of Loss on Employers** – In 2019, U.S. traffic crashes cost employers $72.2 billion—up from $47.4 billion in 2013—in direct crash-related expenses which include medical care, liability, lost productivity and property damage. See the breakdown of how driver behaviors—on and off the job—contribute significantly to the costs in the Cost of Motor Vehicle Crashes to Employers publication.

That’s a lot of irreparable damage – and impact on your loved ones. Now ask yourself, is driving too fast or using your cellphone while behind the wheel worth it?

***Slow Down. Pay Attention. Your Driving Matters. Do It for THEM!***