

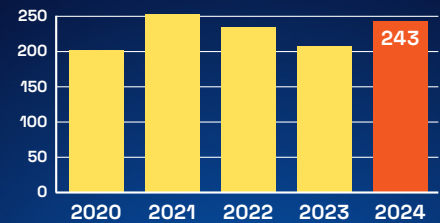
## Experiencing is Believing

Traffic safety professionals dedicate their careers to reducing crashes and the deaths and injuries that too often result. But sometimes experience is the best teacher.

In her [blog](#) this month, Minnesota NETS Coordinator Lisa Kons details how she narrowly escaped three close calls in an 18-hour span last month and the ways that experience further fueled her passion to make sure drivers slow down and pay attention. Got a close call of your own? Email Lisa at [lisa.kons@mnsnc.org](mailto:lisa.kons@mnsnc.org) and she'll feature a few in her September blog.

For those who need more evidence of the challenge, Minnesota's 2024 traffic-related deaths remain on track to be the highest in six years after a period of decline in the early 2010s. Through July 28, the state recorded 243 crash deaths, up 22% over this time last year. Fatalities involving unbelted occupants so far in 2024 are up 76% from the same period in 2019! And speaking of vehicle safety restraints, Minnesota's new Child Passenger Safety law took effect on August 1. Read about what's changed in this newsletter.

MINNESOTA TRAFFIC FATALITIES  
January 1 – July 28



Source: Minnesota Department of Public Safety

## Ring the School Bells for Safety

Summer temperatures may remain, but by mid-August many Minnesota kids will be headed back to school. Take time now to boost your student transportation safety knowledge before the buses, bicyclists, carpools and walkers get on their way.

- [Drive Safe MN School Safety Fact Sheet](#)
- [NHTSA Back-to-School Tips](#)
- [National Safety Council's Back-to-School Check List](#)

**NTSB WEBINAR:**  
**BACK-TO-SCHOOL SAFETY**  
**AUGUST 21 | 12:00 – 1:45 p.m.**

**Register here.** This live event features a panel of National Highway Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) experts. Topics include pedestrian, bicyclist, and scooter safety; safe routes to school; school bus safety and occupant protection. A recorded video will be available after the event on [NTSB's YouTube channel](#).

## Last Hurrahs of Summer Ahead? Pay Attention and Don't Drive Impaired

While it's easy to be in denial, summer IS winding down. But don't despair. There are a few weeks left for vacations, trips to the lake, a visit to the Minnesota State Fair, plus one more long holiday weekend.

Labor Day, the final installment of summer's holiday trifecta, comes with its own challenges. The days are shorter. Wildlife is on the move near roadways. And too many drivers get behind the wheel drunk or impaired by other substances.





The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has two August campaigns to remind drivers of the risks and the consequences. Both ["Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over"](#) and ["If You Feel Different You Drive Different"](#) will run August 16 – September 2. The campaigns include resources for paid and earned media, social media, websites, news releases, facility message boards and more.



## NEW Child Passenger Safety Law

Minnesota's Child Passenger Safety Law went into effect on August 1. The new law is based on best-practice recommendations that encourage caregivers to get the full use out of their car seats by maxing them out in either the height limit or weight limit, whichever the child reaches first.

- The law requires that you keep the child rear-facing as long as possible, at least until age 2, And until the child outgrows the car seat by the height or weight limit, according to the car seat manufacturer. By rear-facing, you are better able to protect a child's head, neck and spine.
- Once the child has outgrown the rear-facing car seat, and they are at least age 2, they can ride in a forward-facing car seat with an internal 5-point harness. They should continue to ride in the forward-facing car seat until they are at least age 4 AND have outgrown the seat by the height or weight limit, according to the car seat manufacturer.
- After the child has outgrown the forward-facing car seat, and they are at least age 4, they can ride in a belt-positioning booster seat. Children need to ride in a booster seat until at least age 9 or until they've outgrown the booster seat AND they can pass the 5-Step Test.

Seat Type	Age/Size	Restraint Use
 Rear-Facing	Birth to at least 2 years old.	Rear-facing in an infant or convertible child safety seat.
 Front-Facing	At least 2 years old AND has outgrown the rear-facing seat with internal harness by height or weight.	Forward-facing with an internal harness.
 Booster Seat	4 Years old AND has outgrown the forward-facing seat with internal harness by height or weight.	Ride restrained in a belt-positioning booster seat using the lap belt and shoulder belt.
 Lap Belt	9 years old or has outgrown the booster seat AND the child can pass the 5-step test.  A child, under age 13, must sit in a back seat, if possible.	Ride restrained with a lap belt and shoulder belt secured correctly on the vehicle seat.

## 5-Step Test

The 5-Step Test is a way to know when a child can ride safely without a booster seat. When a child can do **ALL 5 STEPS**, they are ready to ride with the lap and shoulder belt on the vehicle seat!

1. The child sits all the way back against the vehicle seat.
2. The child's knees bend over the edge of the vehicle seat.
3. The lap belt fits snugly across the hips near the top of the child's thighs, not the child's abdomen.
4. The shoulder belt snugly crosses the center of the child's chest and shoulder, not the child's neck.
5. The child sits correctly, without slouching, for the duration of the ride.

Children under the age of 13 must sit in a back seat, if possible. Every driver who transports a child under the age of 18 in a motor vehicle must have the child restrained in a car seat or seat belt.

Trained Child Passenger Safety Technicians (CPST) are available to help at car seat check events. Find a CPST or a car seat check event in your area at [Safe Kids](#).

## Do it for THEM.

Successful schooldays require dedicated adults ready to help students with daily school life. But what if you weren't there? [This video](#) reminds drivers that when someone dies or is injured in a crash, the result has a life-changing impact on loved ones.



**NETWORK OF  
EMPLOYERS FOR  
TRAFFIC SAFETY**  
MINNESOTA

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