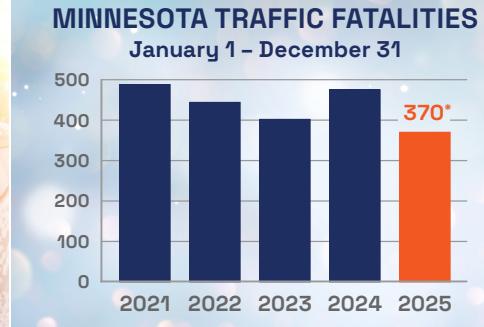


JANUARY 2026 NEWSLETTER | drivesafemn.org

New Year, New Plans for Safer Roads

The holiday decorations are down, the treats are gone and the new calendar is up. It's the time of year when we all look for fresh starts and inspiration — and that includes for our traffic safety education efforts. Need help with your resolutions?

In this month's [blog](#), Lisa Kons focuses on her 2026 professional and personal traffic safety resolutions, with a goal of maintaining the momentum Minnesota achieved in significantly reducing crash deaths in 2025. The key, she says, is to make a commitment and to make a plan. To support you in the new year with your own plans, look for a special bonus on page 3 — a [2026 Planning Calendar](#) with [NHTSA traffic safety campaigns](#) and additional events from other organizations. Watch drivesafemn.org and this monthly newsletter for details on state-focused campaigns from Minnesota NETS and our partners. Happy New Year to you — and happy planning!



Winter Ready — on the Road or Trail

As we focus on the year ahead, we can't ignore the fact that winter will be with us for at least a few more months. Minnesota winters and changing road conditions can challenge even the most experienced drivers. Regular reminders about winter driving and recreation safety matter. These DriveSafeMN Fact Sheets can help you spread the word:



[Get the Facts: Winter Driving Challenges](#)

More than any other season, winter requires us to team up with our vehicles to stay safe on the roads. This fact sheet has helpful tips to get drivers, and their vehicles, prepared for travel in the snow, ice and cold weather.



[Get the Facts: Snowmobile Safety](#)

Snowmobiles are a symbol of Minnesota winter, but their use carries specific risks and the need for safety education. This fact sheet has tips and reminders so snowmobile enthusiasts can ride safely on the trails.

[DriveSafeMN](#) is a year-around repository for all things traffic safety — visit often for a wide range of educational campaigns and materials to support safe driving habits and to keep Minnesotans safe on the road!

Save a Life by Sharing a Video

The Minnesota Department of Public Safety and Department of Transportation produced a [30-minute Video](#) in partnership with the cities of Minneapolis and Mendota Heights — part of a new pilot program in Minnesota called the Traffic Safety Camera System Pilot Program.

Although the video is used as a diversion option in lieu of paying a traffic citation, the highlighted safety messages are relevant for all drivers. Topics addressed in the video include speeding, especially in work zones and school zones, impairment, distraction, and the importance of wearing a seat belt. Please share this video widely.





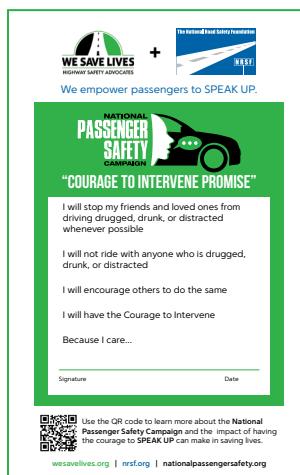
Empowering Passengers to Speak Up

National Passenger Safety Week: Jan. 19 – 26, 2026

National Passenger Safety Week promotes safe driving practices and prevents unsafe ones by empowering passengers to **SPEAK UP** when their lives are in danger due to a reckless driver. Launched by the advocacy groups We Save Lives and the National Road Safety Foundation, the annual National Passenger Safety Campaign brings together more than 60 organizations that believe it's time to focus on the passenger, and not just the driver. In 2023, NHTSA added the campaign to their national calendar.

Passengers can make a difference! National Passenger Safety Week shifts the traditional mindset from the silent passenger to a passenger that intervenes and voices their concerns when they don't feel safe with a driver's risky actions — like not wearing a seat belt, speeding, driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or texting while driving.

One courageous voice can change a deadly choice! Encourage others to speak up and sign the pledge (available in both English and Spanish). Download the [Campaign Toolkit](#) to access the pledge, a press release, flyers, graphics, videos and more helpful materials. Learn more at nationalpassengersafety.org.



2026 GHSA Annual Meeting Coming to MN!

Minneapolis will welcome the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) and the nation's state and territorial highway traffic safety leaders August 29 – September 2 for the 2026 GHSA Annual Meeting.

From Data to Action: Harnessing the Technology Revolution is the theme this year, which will focus on the need to advance innovative tools that can change the traffic safety game and save countless lives on our roads. The 2026 GHSA Annual Meeting is expected to draw more than 850 traffic safety professionals. This meeting will replace the Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) State Conference for 2026.

GHSA, a nonprofit representing the state and territorial highway safety offices that implement federal grant programs, leads states and territories toward zero traffic deaths through leadership, partnerships and advocacy.



Registration details at ghsa.org/events/2026-annual-meeting.



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MN NETS is a partnership with the MN Safety Council, funded by the MN Department of Public Safety/Office of Traffic Safety.

2026 Traffic Safety Calendar

JANUARY



19-26 National Passenger Safety Week

FEBRUARY



2-8 Super Bowl Drunk Driving

MARCH



2-8 Vehicle Safety Recalls Week
9-17 St. Patrick's Day Drunk Driving

APRIL



Distracted Driving Awareness Month

6-13 Put the Phone Away or Pay
14-20 420 Drug-Impaired Driving
20-24 Work Zone Awareness Week

MAY



Bicycle Safety Month
Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month
Youth Traffic Safety Month
1 Heatstroke Prevention Day
6 Bike to School Day
15 Bike to Work Day
11-31 Click It or Ticket Seat Belt Safety
25-9/7 100 Most Dangerous Days:
 Memorial Day – Labor Day

JUNE



National Safety Month
1-30 Summer Driving Traffic Safety

JULY



Vehicle Theft Prevention Month

1-5 Fourth of July Impaired Driving
6-31 Speeding Catches Up with You

AUGUST



12-9/7 Labor Day Impaired Driving

SEPTEMBER



20-26 Child Passenger Safety Week
26 National Seat Check Saturday

OCTOBER



Pedestrian Safety Month

18-24 Teen Driver Safety Week
19-23 School Bus Safety Week
25-31 Halloween Impaired Driving

NOVEMBER



15 World Day of Remembrance
 for Road Traffic Victims
23-29 Thanksgiving Seat Belt Safety
23-29 Thanksgiving Impaired Driving

DECEMBER



**Drunk and Drug-Impaired Driving
 Prevention Month**

1-31 Winter Holiday Impaired Driving
7-11 Older Driver Safety Awareness Week
NHTSA 2026 Communications Calendar

See the monthly [Drive Safe MN Newsletter](#) for campaign resources and more details about state-focused campaigns from Minnesota NETS.