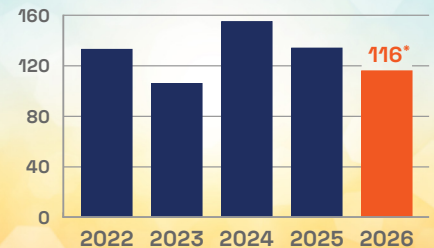


## Summer Traffic Safety Ramps Up

We're now in the thick of it – the 100 Deadliest Days on the Road that began on Memorial Day weekend and runs through Labor Day. And while so far in 2026 Minnesota remains on track for lower year-over-year crash deaths, the summer period has a reputation for a higher number of crashes, injuries and deaths.

Statewide and nationally, traffic safety advocates and law enforcement are putting on a full-court press to educate drivers and curtail risky behaviors. Special awareness campaigns and enforcement efforts are slated for the big holiday weekends this summer. Each of us has the opportunity to embrace our own personal campaign by following this issue's 10 Tips for Safer Summer Driving. Lisa Kons reminds us in this month's [blog](#) that when confronted with summer driving challenges, one of the best things we can do is to take a deep breath, keep calm and stay focused on slowing down and paying attention.

MINNESOTA TRAFFIC FATALITIES  
January 1 – May 31



Source: MN Dept. of Public Safety \*Preliminary

## Hands-Free Cell Phone Law

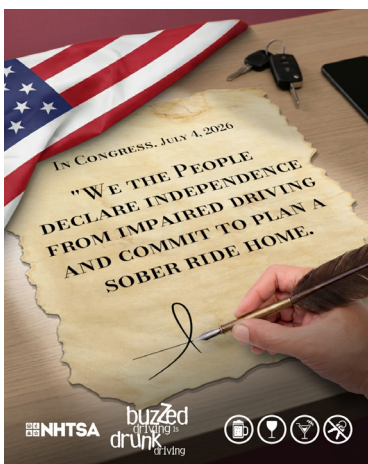


Minnesota's extra enforcement campaign in April delivered an important lesson to thousands of drivers throughout the state. The Minnesota Department of Public Safety's Office of Traffic Safety reported that the month-long campaign, involving 296 agencies, issued 5,426 citations. Law enforcement noted a number of drivers extremely distracted:

- Elk River police stopped a driver who was holding two phones while driving. They cited another driver for taking a photo of a squad car while stopped in traffic.
- Fillmore County Sheriff's Office cited a semi truck driver for phone use while driving. The distracted driver did not notice the deputy trying to pull them over until the next county.
- St. Cloud police stopped a driver for typing on a laptop while also holding a cell phone in heavy traffic.

## Plan for a Sober Ride on July 4th

It's time to start gearing up for our nation's 250th birthday and that means special efforts to prevent impaired driving on our roads. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has a Fourth of July Campaign that runs June 29 – July 5. Themed materials encourage people to plan for a safe and sober ride home from holiday celebrations.



### Buzzed Driving is Drunk Driving

In 2024 alone, 579 people were killed in traffic crashes during the Fourth of July holiday period – 38% of those drivers were drunk. Of the 1,724 drivers killed from 2020–2024, the 21–34 age group had the highest percentage of drunk drivers at 47%. This NHTSA campaign features news releases, talking points, message boards, graphics and social media resources. Celebrate America's birthday with fireworks and grilling, but ditch the keys if you're planning to drink. Designate a sober driver instead.



## 10 Tips for Safer Summer Driving

Summer is officially here, and with it the 100 Deadliest Days on the Road (Memorial Day through Labor Day), a time period that results in a higher number of crashes, deaths and injuries. Help educate colleagues and loved ones about safe driving habits by sharing these seasonal tips:

- 1 Put the phone down.** Minnesota law requires hands-free use but phone-free is always best!
- 2 Buckle up every ride.** Seat belts remain one of the simplest and most effective ways to prevent serious injury for all passengers.
- 3 Slow down.** Higher speeds reduce reaction time and make crashes more severe, especially in summer traffic, construction zones and neighborhoods.
- 4 Drive sober.** Plan ahead for a sober ride if drinking or using any impairing substance.
- 5 Pay attention.** Avoid fiddling with entertainment systems, in-vehicle grooming, eating and other distractions.
- 6 Avoid driving drowsy.** Take breaks or switch drivers.
- 7 Watch for motorcycles, bikes and pedestrians.** Warm weather brings more people outside and more vulnerable road users near traffic.
- 8 Check your vehicle before trips.** Inspect tires, brakes, lights, wipers, fluids and air conditioning.
- 9 Be patient in work zones and traffic.** Expect delays, merge early, avoid aggressive lane changes and follow posted work-zone speeds.
- 10 Watch for teens and other inexperienced drivers.** Summer means more young drivers on the road — give them space and model safe driving habits.

## Coming Up



JUNE 7-13

### Trailer Safety Week

Whether you're pulling a camper, a boat, or a trailer — Minnesotans are regularly pulling something behind their vehicles. Towing requires special skills and has unique risks. Trailer Safety Week is an annual campaign launched by the National Association of Trailer Manufacturers (NATM). It aims to increase awareness of trailer safety, educate about proper trailer usage and maintenance, and create a stronger alliance between trailer manufacturers, trailer dealers, and end-users.

JUNE 9

### Ride to Work Day



Summer is a great time to commute or savor the season via motorcycle or scooter. The annual Ride to Work Day highlights the presence of motorcyclists and scooter riders on our roads and the safety aspects of two-wheel vehicles. See motorcycle safety resources on [DriveSafeMN.org](https://www.drivesafemn.org) and license information on the [Minnesota Motorcycle Safety Center](https://www.mn.gov).

JUNE 10 | 1-4 p.m. CST

### Minnesota Advisory Council on Traffic Safety Meeting

Topics include discussions on polysubstance drug use, work zone speed safety cameras, legislative updates, and more.



NETWORK OF  
EMPLOYERS FOR  
TRAFFIC SAFETY  
MINNESOTA

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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.