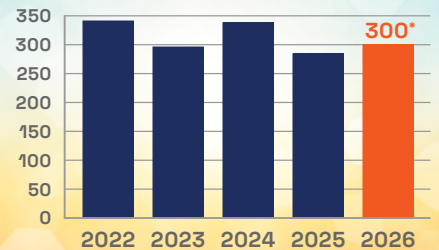


A Month to Watch Out for Pedestrians

Keeping drivers, passengers and pedestrians safe on our roads is always on the agenda, but the bag of tricks and treats that is October takes it to new levels. School is back in full swing, the fall days grow shorter and darker, and we turn the clocks back an hour right after Halloween night — there is plenty of traffic safety education to do this month, and this issue has all the resources.

Fittingly, October is National Pedestrian Safety Month and in this month's [blog](#), Lisa Kons reflects on the tragedies resulting from vehicle crashes involving pedestrians, and highlights the role we all play in reducing injuries and fatalities. This month also marks the beginning of the final quarter of 2026. As we approach year-end, and two major driving-centric holidays, crash deaths for 2026 continue to surpass 2025 — working together in this final stretch is more crucial than ever.

MINNESOTA TRAFFIC FATALITIES January 1 – September 30



Source: MN Dept. of Public Safety

*Preliminary

Upcoming Events

OCTOBER 5 – 9

United Nations Global Forum for Road Traffic Safety Meeting

International transportation and traffic safety experts will gather in Geneva, Switzerland to discuss multiple traffic safety issues.

OCTOBER 14 | 1 p.m. CST

Minnesota Advisory Council on Traffic Safety Meeting

Discussions on commercial vehicle crash trends, legislative updates, the fiscal year budget, and more. Attend in person or via Zoom.

NOVEMBER 1

Daylight Saving Time Ends

As we fall back an hour and the days get shorter, share these fact sheets with seasonal safety tips:

■ Take the Scary Out of Fall Driving

■ Oh, Deer!

■ Travel Safe School Days



Protecting Pedestrians

October is National Pedestrian Safety Month, a time to focus on the crashes that kill and injure those walking on our sidewalks and streets. On average in 2024, a pedestrian died every 74 minutes and one was injured every 7 minutes in a U.S. crash — that's more than 7,000 people killed and nearly 72,000 people injured. In Minnesota, 41 pedestrians died in 2025, and 29 have died through July 2026.

Ninety percent of pedestrian fatalities involve a single vehicle, with a quarter of those characterized as “hit and run.” The causes of pedestrian crashes are similar to most other crashes — excessive speed, distraction and impairment. Alcohol use was reported in 43% of all fatal pedestrian crashes in 2024.

As Minnesota's autumn days grow shorter and darker, keep in mind that it is more dangerous for pedestrians at night. Three-fourths of 2024 fatalities occurred in the dark versus daylight.



NHTSA Pedestrian Safety Campaign

News release, social media playbook, and more available in both English and Spanish.

Be a Street Savvy Pedestrian

Drive Safe MN Fact Sheet with safety tips for pedestrians.



Fall Campaigns to Keep Kids Safe

Walk & Roll to School Day: October 7



Walk & Roll to School Day is an annual event for students and families that encourages them to follow best practices when they walk or bike to school. Sponsored by the National Center for Safe Routes to Schools, it helps schools and communities to create local celebrations.

Teen Driver Safety Week: Oct. 18 – 24

Teen Driver Safety Week highlights that traffic crashes are a leading cause of death for teens age 15–18 in the United States. Teen drivers are eager about their newfound freedom, but their inexperience contributes to a higher numbers of crashes. In 2024, 2,320 people were killed in crashes that involved a teen driver; 752 of those killed were the teen driver. Children's Hospital of Philadelphia's **Teen Driver Source** is a go-to resource.



School Bus Safety Week: Oct. 19 – 23

School Bus Safety Week is an opportunity to increase public messaging about school bus safety, especially safe bus stops and illegal bus passing. While buses are statistically the safest way to transport students, risk remains. From 2015 – 2024, there were 962 fatal school-bus-related crashes. From 2000 – 2024, 63 crash fatalities involved a driver illegally passing a stopped school bus, with half of those fatalities under age 18.



MSC Leadership

The Minnesota Safety Council (MSC) recently announced a change in leadership, with long-time safety industry leader Janie Ritter becoming Chief Executive Officer. Lisa Kons, Minnesota NETS Manager, has been promoted to the new role of Senior Director, Traffic Safety and External Affairs.



Janie Ritter
President and CEO

Ritter, who had served as MSC's President since August 2023, now serves as the organization's President and CEO. She succeeds CEO Paul Aasen who led the organization for fourteen years. He has retired from MSC and will serve as a strategic advisor to the National Safety Council.



Lisa Kons
Senior Director,
Traffic Safety and
External Affairs

Kons has spent more than three decades in progressively responsible positions as the leader of MSC's traffic safety and education programs and has been its liaison to numerous business and government crash prevention organizations. Her advocacy and education work includes helping advance the passage of Minnesota's hands-free cellphone law and serving as a global traffic safety educator, delivering training to thousands of employees across four global regions. In 2018, she was awarded the Minnesota TZD Distinguished Public Leadership Award, which recognizes leaders who have influenced traffic safety policy directions that benefit society.



**NETWORK OF
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TRAFFIC SAFETY**
MINNESOTA

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