



Summer 2003



Iowa Department of Public Safety

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**Iowa Seat Belt Use 86%**

*by Robert L. Thompson, Evaluator  
Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau*

The Iowa seat belt use rate shot up four percentage points to 86.16 percent. The tally was based on official results from the recently completed statewide seat belt survey conducted by the Iowa DOT and the Iowa State Patrol.

The rise is a result of several approaches to expanding seat belt use.

**Education:** The educational efforts in drivers education classes, by peace officers and with groups such as AARP's "55 Alive" program have contributed to the success.

**Media:** From roadside signs advising "It's the Law," to billboards, to paid advertising during May, to news reports about special enforcement projects; all have told the public to expect enforcement.

**Enforcement:** A combination of routine enforcement and participation in sTEP and corridor projects tells drivers Iowa is serious about occupant protection.

GTSB Director J. Michael Laski said, "Thanks to everyone for their efforts and hard work in helping to achieve this new seat belt use rate."

In the autumn 2002 survey and in one conducted in May 2003, 82 percent of Iowa motorists were buckling up.

The 86 percent tally represents the largest single increase since 1990-1991 when Iowa went from 61 percent to 69 percent.

**Corridor Enforcement Summer 2003**

The 2003 season of corridor enforcement projects in Iowa has been quite successful according to Capt. Bob Rushing, Law Enforcement Liaison, GTSB. He said 2003 has seen fewer projects organized, however, all but one of them has consisted of multiple highways.

- "Operation TNT" encompassed Iowa Highways 2 and 92 and US Highway 34 in one operation.
- "Operation Is" included Interstates 35 and 80.
- "61 Heat" dwelled on US 61.
- "Northern Lights" is in the planning stages this Autumn and will involve Iowa highways 9 and 3 along with US highways 18 and 20.

Continued on page 3...

**sTEP Waves 2003**

November 17 - December 1

Iowa seat belt use	86%
Goal	90%
Midwest ranking (Michigan is #1)	# 2
U.S. Ranking	# 11

## Calendar

**November 17 -  
December 1:**  
sSTEP Wave

**August 28:**  
I-35/I-80 Corridor  
enforcement project

**Nov 25 - Dec 1:**  
sSTEP wave

**February 9-15:**  
Child Passenger  
Safety Week

February 10:  
Child Passenger  
Safety reception,  
State Capitol, Des  
Moines

**March 10-11:**  
Governor's Highway  
Traffic Safety Con-  
ference, Harrah's,  
Council Bluffs

**March 28-30:**  
Lifesavers, San  
Diego, Calif.

**April 4-10:**  
Nat'l Work Zone  
Awareness Week

**May 16-22:**  
Nat'l EMS Week

**May 24 - June 6:**  
Nat'l seat belt  
mobilization

## 2004 sSTEP Dates Set

*Trooper Adam Buck*  
*sSTEP Coordinator, GTSB*

Iowa's special Traffic Enforcement Program has wrapped up another successful year. More law enforcement partners than ever before have joined forces over the last several months devoting heightened traffic enforcement. sSTEP aims to increase seat belt usage and serves as a mechanism for local enforcement agencies to crack down on traffic safety problems in their respective communities.

The next sSTEP year is in the works, scheduled to begin in November. Once again, nearly 180 law enforcement agencies in Iowa will take part in this effort by educating their motoring public via the media and participating in nationwide enforcement campaigns.

So many partners are to be thanked for commitment to traffic safety and for their involvement with initiatives such as sSTEP. Thanks to all of you for a job well done and congratulations on achieving 86 percent seat belt usage statewide!

### sSTEP Waves

November 18 - December 1

December 27 - January 4

February 9 - 16

May 24 - June 1

July 2 - 6

September 3 - 7

## Child Passenger Safety Week Reception

An opportunity for child safety seat advocates to meet members of the Iowa Legislature has been set. Mark your calendars for the morning of February 10th, Room 116, State Capitol, for a legislative reception cosponsored by the SAFE KIDS organization.

Legislators, law enforcement, child safety seat technicians and others will be invited to attend. Kathy Leggett of SAFE KIDS said the event is part of Child Passenger Safety Week.

## CrossRoads

**Thomas J. Vilsack**, *Governor*  
**Kevin W. Techau**, *Commissioner,*  
*Iowa Department of Public Safety*  
**J. Michael Laski**, *Director,*  
*Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau*  
**Mark J. Campbell**, *Editor*

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Wallace Bldg., 4th Floor  
Des Moines IA 50319-0248  
Phone: 515/281-3907  
Fax: 515/281-6190  
E-Mail: [gtsbinfo@dps.state.ia.us](mailto:gtsbinfo@dps.state.ia.us)

We welcome article submissions and ideas pertaining to traffic safety.

Visit our web site at: [www.iowagtsb.org](http://www.iowagtsb.org)  
The latest issue of *CrossRoads* may be viewed in color at:

<http://iowagtsb.org/gtsbcrsr.pdf>

Back issues of *CrossRoads* may be viewed from links at:

<http://www.infoiowa.state.ia.us/DPS/index.htm>



## Corridor Enforcement Summer 2003

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The result will be that 10 major routes will be targeted this year. In 2002 nine routes were given special enforcement attention. By the end of the year, nearly every area of the state will have felt the impact of corridor enforcement.

	61 Heat	TNT	Is
Agencies	24	31	59
Officers	162	162	351
Contacts	1,369	1,940	3,573

ment.

The Motor Vehicle Enforcement section of the Iowa DOT participated in the events. They combined to conduct 275 commercial vehicle and driver inspections. Those inspections led to 88 vehicles or drivers being placed out-of-service.

The goals of the projects are to raise Iowa's seat belt use above 86 percent, to lower the incidence of impaired driving and to reduce death and injury on Iowa's roadways.

Rushing said the participation by local and state law enforcement agencies has really been great. "These

projects come from the field, not from the GTSB," he emphasized. "We receive requests for certain highways and our function is to try to get them going," Rushing said.

One more corridor project remains in 2003. "Northern Lights" is in the planning stages and will incorporate roadways in the four tiers of counties in northern Iowa.

### Contacts

The three events generated the following traffic contacts:

OWI:	25
Speed:	3,216
Seat belts	827
Stop sign/light	71

In addition there were a variety of non-traffic contacts during the event:

Felony arrests	2
Narcotics arrests	26
Warrants served	19
Motorist assists	157

## SAFE KIDS: "Iowa's Child Safety Seat Laws Not Strong Enough"

*Kathy Leggett, Coordinator  
Greater Des Moines, Iowa, SAFE KIDS*

Iowa's child restraint law is 18 years old and does not provide the proper guidance to parents and caregivers on how to keep children safe while traveling in motor vehicles. While motor vehicle crashes kill and injure more children in Iowa than any other cause, we know that parents and caregivers look to the law to provide them with guidelines on this issue.

The Iowa SAFE KIDS Coalition is already working on our grassroots efforts for the 2004 legislative session. Bills will again be drafted to upgrade Iowa's current child passenger restraint law. The most recent research from the Partners for Child Passenger Safety Studies concludes the following:

- Belt positioning booster seats are effective for children through age seven.
- Using a belt positioning booster with a seat belt instead of a seat belt alone reduces a child's risk of injury by 59%.
- In 2002, 62% of 4 to 8-year olds were inappropriately restrained in only a seat belt.

These findings further support our initiative to enhance Iowa's current child restraint law. We will again be proposing the following changes:

- Children ride in an appropriate rear facing child restraint until one year of age and at least 20 pounds.
- Children ride in an appropriate child safety seat or booster seat through the age of 5.
- Children ride in a booster seat or seat belt through the age of 13.
- A one-year education phase prior to full enactment of the law.

For more information, please call the Des Moines SAFE KIDS Coalition at 515/241-5963.



# Traffic Enforcement in Iowa

## Dallas County

Trooper Troy Hildreth stopped an out-of-state van for speeding on Interstate 80 west of Des Moines. After talking with the driver and a passenger he noted inconsistencies in their stories. Hildreth asked for and received consent to search the vehicle and found 25 pounds of marijuana.

The driver and passenger were arrested on charges of possession with intent to deliver, drug tax stamp violation, and child endangerment. Two minor children were also passengers in the vehicle.

## Pottawattamie County

A California man was stopped by Trooper Jason Bardsley for speeding and tinted windows on near Council Bluffs.

After noting inconsistencies in stories between the driver and a passenger and seeing some problems with body work on the truck, Bardsley asked for assistance from Trooper John Hitchcock and his canine.

Troopers discovered a false compartment where 130 pounds of marijuana valued at \$195,000.

Trooper Ken Haas stopped a Colorado car for following too closely. After receiving permission to search the car, Haas discovered 14 airtight steel boxes containing 80 pounds of marijuana.

## Sioux County

Trooper Dave Driesen stopped a vehicle for tinted windows near Alton on Iowa Highway 60.

After stopping the vehicle and asking the Arizona driver to step out, Driesen noticed large bulges in the driver's pants pockets. He patted the driver down and in the process discovered a large amount of currency. After issuing a repair card, Driesen requested permission to search based on conversation and the money in the driver's pocket. Permission was granted and then withdrawn but the driver told Driesen "You will probably find a joint in the car."

Driesen found 18 marijuana cigarettes, which appeared to be packaged for sale, and \$3,000.00 in the trunk of the luxury car in addition to \$4,414.00 in the driver's pocket.

## Marion County

Trooper Bryan Michelsen stopped a vehicle near Knoxville for several charges including speeding, seat belt and no front plate.

The driver said he was on probation for possession of methamphetamine with intent to deliver. The passenger said he was on parole for vehicular homicide.

Michelsen said the driver began to sweat profusely and then consumed a soft drink in three swallows. Michelsen asked him if there were any drugs in the vehicle. The driver stared at the glove box for about one minute before saying no. The driver agreed to a consent to search the vehicle.

Michelsen said he found 20 grams of methamphetamine. The driver was arrested for possession of methamphetamine with intent to deliver, no drug tax stamp, no proof of insurance, and the traffic charges.

## Burlington

Burlington PD reports a double fatality crash this past summer. A 1960s era Ford Falcon traveling about 35 mph, collided with a gravel truck. The car had no seat belts.

## Iowa DNR

Rod Slings, Iowa DNR, juggled two issues throughout the summer. In interviews with the media he advised, "You may not be .10 on the water, but when you get in the car to pull the boat home, you may be .08!" Slings is Recreation Safety Programs Supervisor, with the DNR's Law Enforcement Bureau.

### Got a Story?

Do you have an item of interest, an anecdote or a good story related to traffic enforcement?

Feel free to submit it to CrossRoads.

Send an e-mail message to:

[gtsbinfo@dps.state.ia.us](mailto:gtsbinfo@dps.state.ia.us)

## .08 Public Information Campaign

### Rap: .08 TV Ad



The GTSB's effort to get the .08 message to young people is a significant departure from past ads which have been of general interest. Bill Grismer, The Integer Group, said the target is the under-24 age group. That is because that age group is over represented in alcohol-related crashes.

And that age group listens to rap.

Grismer said the lyrics were written in the rap-rhyme style. The ad looks like something one would see on a rock video. As the rapper performs, an Iowa State Trooper can be seen in the background conducting standardized field tests on a young man.

### Lyrics to .08 Rap

Out with your friends and it's time to celebrate  
Problems on your mind and you feel the need to escape  
Stress from your peers more beer to inebriate  
Altered your judgement and now you want to tempt fate  
Drivin' home and it's hard to concentrate  
Cops pull you over and start to interrogate  
Drinkin' 'n' drivin' is what they don't tolerate  
And you know what they'll do - no need to elaborate

Iowa has a new mandate:  
The legal limit is point - oh - eight.

Point -oh-eight's doing a number on drunk driving!

### Billboards Announce .08

Seven large outdoor "big" boards are up in seven sites around Iowa. The signs are located on heavily traveled thoroughfares in Dubuque, Sioux City, Waterloo, Davenport, Bettendorf, Cedar Rapids and Des Moines. Bill Grismer coordinated the placement of the ads with the Outdoor Advertising Association of Iowa. The signs are also supported by Guide One Insurance of West Des Moines.

Grismer said a big board measures 14 by 48 feet. During the next 52 weeks, he said the boards ads will move to different locations. Grismer said he hopes to extend the project into a second year.

Grismer is vice president, account service, of The Integer Group, Des Moines.



One of the large signs greets Iowa-bound motorists crossing the U.S. 67 Centennial Bridge between Rock Island, Ill, and Davenport.

The audio and video of the .08 Rap are available on the GTSB website: [www.iowagtsb.org](http://www.iowagtsb.org).

Carson Whitlow, GTSB, suggests for best results one should copy the files to the hard drive and play them from that location.

## An Open Letter from the President of ITCSA

*GTSB Director J. Michael Laski has been the president of the Iowa Traffic Control and Safety Association for the past year.*

*Following is a letter he wrote to ITCSA members.*

Dear Fellow Members:

Very quickly, another year has come and gone. As my time as ITCSA President is nearing completion, I want to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all of you for your efforts in making Iowa a better and safer place to live.



We have achieved some significant traffic safety milestones during the past year. During calendar year 2002, Iowa achieved two significant milestones. The

total number of traffic deaths reached a 57 year low with 404 fatalities, down 42 or 10% from the 2001 total of 446. Alcohol-related fatalities reached their lowest level ever with 99 deaths, down 19 or 16% from the 2001 figure of 118.

These reductions not only reflect precious lives saved, but considerable economic saving to our state as well. Using the economic cost of traffic crash figures established by the Iowa DOT, the reduction of 42 fatalities translates into a total economic savings of 42 million dollars. In alcohol- and impaired driving-related crashes, the 19 fewer fatalities translates to an economic saving of \$19 million dollars.

We've also made great progress in improving Iowans' use of seat belts and child safety seats. Overall belt use is up from 82% to 86%, while child safety seat use improved from 76 to 84%.

These life saving improvements simply would not be possible without the cooperative efforts of law enforcement, traffic engineers, educators, EMS personnel and a host of others (everyone else in the "5 Es").

Groups like ITCSA and Iowa's Safety Management System play an important role in bringing together traffic safety professionals from a variety of disciplines who focus their talents and interagency efforts on highway traffic safety improvements.

As we look ahead to 2004 and beyond, the challenges remain significant. We are still losing too many citizens in preventable crashes and too many others because they neglected to invest 3 seconds to reach, pull and click before heading out on that fateful trip (over 200 persons died unbelted in Iowa crashes in 2002).

Our population of older drivers continues to grow rapidly and we drive more each year, offering additional challenges. By continuing to work together, we avail ourselves of the best opportunity to make our streets and highways safer.

Thank you for a memorable year and best of luck to each and every one of you.

Very truly yours,

J. MICHAEL LASKI, President  
ITCSA



## Traffic Incident Management Workshops

Two of Iowa's multi-disciplinary safety teams will have opportunities to develop plans and strategies for traffic incident management.



The Scott and Woodbury county teams are the recipients of special funding by the Iowa Safety

Management System team for three traffic incident management workshops.

In every metropolitan area unique situations arise when incidents disrupt the normal traffic flow on area roadways. The emergency responders' tasks vary in an incident whether they are fire, police EMS, DOT or emergency management. Some of the issues the workshops confront include:

- Who is in charge?
- How well the various disciplines interact?
- Where do you park?
- When can police take measurements?
- How do we prevent secondary incidents or accidents?
- How do we reduce liability?
- Let's get traffic moving again.

The Woodbury County group is a misnomer in that the group encompasses Union County, S. Dak, and Dakota County, Nebr. But traffic problems know no boundaries.

In 2002 a two-day traffic incident management workshop was organized for Quad City area emergency responders. At the conclusion of the session evaluations of attendees was positive. Several suggested that many policies and practices were in need of revision. They further suggested that a course was needed to be held for executives.

The Iowa SMS group listened. A one-day workshop is planned in October for executives from Iowa and Illinois. Three weeks later another two-day workshop will include the hands-on emergency responders.

The Quad City sessions will include personnel from Scott County along with Henry and Rock Island counties in Illinois.

SMS funding was supplemented by additional resources from the Illinois Division, FHWA.

Aside from the funding several agencies and groups combined to make the workshops a reality. Employees of the Iowa DOT, FHWA, and the GTSB got things started. Committees from the two multi-disciplinary safety teams worked to target certain agencies and persons for the workshops.

The two metropolitan planning organizations, Bi-State Regional Commission of Rock Island, Ill, and SIMPCO of Sioux City, took the responsibility of notifying and registering participants.

Upon completion of the workshops, emergency responders should work more efficiently and get traffic moving faster.

### Local SMS Groups:

**Dubuque County:** 10 a.m., Every sixth Friday. Contact: Cpl. Cory Sommer 563/589-4473.

**Polk County: Metropolitan Traffic Management Team** 1:30 p.m., second Tuesday of each month. Contact: Cy Quick 515/225-2349.

**Scott County: CARS):** 10 a.m., third Wednesday of each month. Contact: Denny Coon 563/326-8244.

**Pottawattamie County (SWIFT):** Meetings vary. Check [www.cbtraffic.net](http://www.cbtraffic.net) Contact: Blake Redfield 712/328-4645.

Woodbury County: Tri-State Traffic Management Team, 10 a.m. 4th Wednesday of most months, WITCC, Sioux City.

Iowa's Strategic Highway Safety Plan web site:  
**[www.iowaSMS.org](http://www.iowaSMS.org)**

For other SMS information, contact Mary Stahlhut, 515/239-1169. E-mail: [Mary.Stahlhut@dot.state.ia.us](mailto:Mary.Stahlhut@dot.state.ia.us)

### Life Toll

(lives saved by the belt since July, 1986)

YTD 2003	116
Grand Total	5,056

## Iowa Represented at GHSA's National Conference

Iowa was represented in a session at the annual Governors' Highway Safety Association annual conference in New Orleans, in August.



Wendy Hamilton, Madd, with Peter Grady following the workshop.

Peter Grady, assistant Iowa attorney general, described Iowa's per se drug law and shared history and details of the measure.

The other three speakers included a member of the US Office of Drug Control Policy, a researcher with NHTSA, and Wendy Hamilton, President, MADD.

One of the tools for addressing the impaired driving problem is drugged driving per se laws. Only eight states have adopted a drugged driving per se law. Some experts believe the laws measure who is using drugs without addressing the problem of impaired driving.

GTSB Director J. Michael Laski, is the outgoing regional representative to the Governors' Highway Safety Association.

During the conference, Laski was advised of the most recent seat belt survey reflecting 86 percent usage in Iowa.

He shared the good news with Dr. Jeffrey Runge, Administrator, NHTSA. Laski said

Runge was quite pleased with Iowa's increase in seat belt use from 82 percent to 86 percent, which represents more than 100,000 additional Iowa motorists using their seat belts.



Dr. Jeffrey Runge, NHTSA with J. Michael Laski, GTSB.



Governors' Traffic Safety Bureau  
Wallace State Office Building 4th Floor  
Des Moines IA 50319-0248



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