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## DRIVE SMART Virginia Newsletter Spring 2010

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Dear DRIVE SMART Virginia supporters:

*This has been a busy several months for the DRIVE SMART Virginia team! We have two major project rollouts this Spring: Distracted Driving Awareness Day and the I-81 project. With great partners in hand and carefully planned campaigns, we are ready to roll! On an exciting note, we were invited to join the CMV Safety Belt Partnership and attended our first meeting last month. What a wonderful resource!! We shared materials from many of our campaigns with the group and had excellent feedback. We are also working on the CIOT Law Enforcement Recognition Tour, along with DMV and the Virginia Chiefs of Police Association; the annual Occupational Safety and Health Conference with the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry; and a "Traffic Safety Strategies for the Workplace" seminar that we will conduct in partnership with the Community College Workforce Alliance. Our new intern from Virginia Tech is busy recruiting restaurants to participate in the HERO Campaign for Designated Drivers. Our video project with the Virginia Farm Bureau is moving right along and we have just completed our fifth shoot. Be on the lookout for new safety videos soon!*

*From a legislative perspective, there are several new laws that you should be aware of. The Administration's bill to increase the speed limit on some interstates and highways to 70 mph*

*passed, and is subject to studies by both VDOT and the Virginia State Police before being implemented. Senator Janet Howell's bill to require teens from 16-18 (current law is to 16) to be buckled when riding in the back seat passed both houses. The "Move Over" law has been expanded to include highway construction vehicles and tow trucks displaying amber lights.*

*Many thanks to all of you who helped us with the perennial motorcycle helmet law bill, and for our new efforts toward mandatory ignition interlock. Although MADD gathered a great coalition of organizations in support of ignition interlock, it died in committee.*

*Please take a moment to add all of our important dates to your calendars! Distracted Driving Awareness Day is fast approaching, and we hope that all of you have a plan to help raise awareness of this important safety issue!*

*Janet Brooking  
Executive Director  
DRIVE SMART Virginia*

## Distracted Driving Awareness Day

April 28th is Distracted Driving Awareness Day (DDAD) in Virginia and we are excited to have more than 200 partners signed on already to help us spread the important message about the dangers of distracted driving.



The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration research shows that nearly 6,000 people died in 2008 in crashes involving a distracted or inattentive driver, and more than 500,000 were injured. On any given day in 2008, more than 800,000 vehicles were driven by someone using a handheld cell phone. **Does your company issue cell phones to employees?** Do you have a policy against using these phones while driving? If not, please consider creating such a policy to keep your employees safe and to awareness about distracted driving.

If you haven't signed up to be a safety partner of Drive Smart Virginia, please sign up today! There is no cost to be a partner and we will provide you brochures, tent cards and posters free of charge. We also have a power point presentation you can share with employees, a leadership letter you can share, email blasts you can send to workers and a press release you can customize and send to your local media. You could even Tweet about DDAD using our facts and figures! this entire toolkit is available for you, again at no cost. Just click here. We also encourage you to sign the

pledge vowing to not drive distracted.

**Many thanks to our corporate partners:**

***28 Media, AAA Mid-Atlantic, AAA Tidewater, Albemarle-Charlottesville Regional Jail, Alexandria Fire Department, Alfa Insurance, Allstate Insurance, Amelia County High School, American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE), Colonial Virginia, American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE), Greater Tidewater, American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE), Northern Virginia, American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE), Star Valley, Annandale High School, Appalachian Power, Ashland Police Department, Atlee High School, Augusta County Service Authority, Bedford County Sheriff's Office, BikeWalk Virginia, Blackstone Police Department, Bluefield Police Department, Bristol Virginia Police Department, Brunswick County Public Schools, Carilion New River Valley Medical Center (Level 3 Trauma Center), Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital Level 1 Trauma Center, CD Hylton High School, Centreville High School, Citizens Telephone Cooperative, City of Danville Police Department, City of Hampton Public Works, City of Lynchburg, City of Martinsville, City of Newport News, City of Petersburg, City of Portsmouth, City of Richmond, City of Williamsburg, Claytor Lake State Park, CNA Insurance, Deep Creek High School, Delta Airlines, DMV: The Virginia Highway Safety Office, Dominion High School, Douthat State Park, Drive Safe Hampton Roads, DRIVE SMART Virginia, DuPont, Electric Ink Graphic Design, Enterprise Rent-A-Car, Erie Insurance Group, Ervinton High School, Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department, Farmers Insurance Group, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, Front Royal Police Department, Frontier Culture Museum, Gate City Police Department, GEICO, Goodwill Industries of the Valleys, Halifax Police Department, Hampton/NASA Steam Plant, Hanover County High School, Harrisonburg Police Department, Heritage High School, Horizon Milling, Houff Transfer, Inc., I&O Medical Centers, I.D.M. Trucking, Illume Software, Inc., Jacobs Engineering/Virginia, James Madison High School, James River State Park, Kellam High School, Kraft Foods, Law Offices of Jay R. Peluso, PC, Liberty High School, Liberty Mutual Insurance, Marine Chemist Service, Marion Senior High School, Mary D. Pretlow Anchor Branch Library, Mathews High School, Mount Rogers Community Service Board, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Nationwide Insurance, Naval Safety Center, New River Trail State Park, Newport News Police Department, Norfolk Public Schools, Northumberland High School,***

***Old Dominion University, Osage Bio Energy, Piedmont Virginia Community College, Portsmouth Police Department, Potomac Falls High School, Powhatan County Public School, Printpack Inc. Rigid Plastics Divison, Progressive Insurance Group, Property Casualty Insurers Association of America, Purcellville Police Department, Remington Police Department, Richmond Area Bicycle Association, Richmond City Fire and EMS, Richmond City Public Schools, Richmond Redevelopment Housing Authority, Richmond Triathlon Club, Roanoke Police Department, Robert E. Lee High School, Rockingham Group, RRCSB-AAA, Rutherford, Share Shore Drive Day, Shenandoah County Public Schools, Shenandoah's Pride Dairy, Shore Drive Community Coalition, Southwest Virginia Community College, Stafford County, State Compensation Board, State Farm Insurance, Staunton Lions Club, Staunton River High School, Strasburg Police Department, Strasburg Police Department, TC Williams High School, TEMCA CHAPLAINS ASSOC., The Frazier Quarry, Thomas Nelson Community College, Timberville Police Department, Town of Dayton, Town of Orange Police, Transportation Safety Training Center at VCU, Truck Enterprises, Inc., Tunstall High School, USAA Educational Foundation, USS Carl Vinson, Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police, Virginia Automobile Dealers Association, Virginia Beach Police Department, Virginia Bicycling Federation, Virginia Correctional Enterprises, Virginia Department for the Aging, Virginia Department of General Services, Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, Virginia Department of Transportation, Virginia Farm Bureau, Virginia GrandDriver, Virginia Health Information, CODES, Virginia Megaprojects Information Center, Virginia Natural Gas, Virginia State Police, Virginia Trucking Association, VML Insurance Programs, VTA Safety Council, Warren County High School, Warwick Plumbing and Heating, West Point Police Department, Western Albemarle High School, William Edwards, Inc., Winchester Parks & Rec., Winchester Police Department, Woodbridge Senior High School, Youth of Virginia Speak Out***

### Traffic Fatalities Continue to Decline



The U.S. Department of Transportation has stated that the number of overall traffic fatalities reported at the end of 2009 reached the lowest level since 1954, declining for the 15th consecutive quarter.

In Virginia in 2009, 753 people died in crashes (preliminary data from DMV), an improvement over the 821 reported in 2008.

The projected fatality data for 2009 places the national highway death count at 33,963, down 8.9 percent from the 37,261 deaths reported in 2008.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration attributes the decline in 2009 to a combination of factors that include campaigns like the 'Click It or Ticket' seatbelt enforcement effort and 'Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest' effort to prevent drunk driving and distracted driving. Safer roads, safer vehicles and motorists driving less also play a role in the decline.

### I-81 Safety Belt Campaign

Utilizing a seatbelt while driving a truck reduces the risk of serious injury by 60%. This is just one of the reasons why Drive Smart Virginia is educating CMV about the benefits of buckling up in their truck. Interstate 81 in Virginia sees crowds of trucks passing through from neighboring states such as Tennessee and Maryland. The large number of trucks traveling on this interstate makes it an excellent project area for us to spread the word about seatbelt safety.



The 2009-2010 Be Ready Be Buckled campaign will broaden focus to not only increase seatbelt usage but also to educate the public on the importance of sharing the road with commercial motor vehicles and refraining from aggressive driving. Outreach will include presentations, educational materials, truck stop presence and signage among various other efforts.

Seatbelt surveys will be conducted before, during and after the outreach blitz, which will take place during the Click It or Ticket campaign from May 17 to June 4. These surveys will show whether heavy police presence and constant messaging have an effect on truck drivers wearing their seatbelts. In past similar projects, we have found that these factors do cause an increase in belt usage.

### New FMCSA Pre-Employment Screening



The Federal Motor Carriers Association has announced the launch of a new driver pre-employment screening program (PSP) that would give motor carriers access to commercial motor vehicle drivers' crash and safety inspection histories. Phase I of the program is now in place and carriers can go to the [PSP website](#) to pre-register in order to gain electronic access to a driver's crash and inspection history. [Click here](#) for frequently asked questions about the program.

## New Report on Safety Belt Use

People who don't wear their safety belts are almost 18 times more likely to be ejected from their vehicles when involved in a crash than occupants who do use them. These findings are from a report recently released from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.



Researchers analyzed Fatality Analysis Reporting System data for passenger vehicles from 2003 to 2007 and found that in December of 2007, an estimated 15,147 lives were saved by safety belts. 35% of unrestrained vehicle occupants were ejected, compared with only 2% of restrained occupants who were ejected. If seat belt use was at 100%, it's estimated that an additional 5024 lives would have been saved.

Overall, the percentage of occupants ejected from vehicles has dropped significantly among newer model year vehicles with the steepest decline was for sport utility vehicles. Read the report.

## Upcoming Events

April 11 - 13, 2010  
[LifeSavers Conference](#)

April 19 - 23, 2010  
[National Workzone Awareness Week](#)

April 28, 2010  
[Distracted Driving Awareness Day](#)

May 6, 2010  
[DSV Spring Board Meeting](#)

June 1 - 4, 2010  
[Department of Labor and Industries Conference \(VOSH\)](#)

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