

November Transportation Safety Newsletter: Thanksgiving safety and more

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Oregon Department
of Transportation

Transportation Safety

November 2023

Thanksgiving Holiday Travel



During this Thanksgiving weekend, millions will hit our Oregon's roads, eager to spend time with family and friends. It's one of the busiest travel times of the year. Unfortunately, more people on the roadways means the potential for more vehicle crashes. In 2021, 26,325 passenger vehicle occupants were killed throughout the year in the U.S. About 50% of those killed were not buckled. So please, whether you're driving out of town or across town: *Buckle Up. Every Trip. Every Time.*

Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day

Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day – celebrated on Tuesday, November 14 this year – gives children the chance to celebrate Ruby’s courage by walking to school and is the perfect opportunity to teach children about the civil rights movement and make connections to today’s collective efforts for change. Fall makes it fun – and educational – to crunch some leaves as you walk and roll to school.



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Drowsy Driving Prevention

The National Sleep Foundation’s Drowsy Driving Prevention Week® – November 5-11 – encourages everyone to prioritize sleep and drive when they are alert and refreshed. Drowsy-driving crashes:

- Occur most frequently between midnight and 6 a.m., or in the late afternoon. At both times of the day, people experience dips in their circadian rhythm—the human body’s internal clock that regulates sleep;
- Often involve only a single driver (and no passengers) running off the road at a high rate of speed with no evidence of braking; and
- Frequently occur on rural roads and highways.



[Some medications may also have side effects](#) that lead to sleepiness. Make sure to talk to your health care provider about possible side effects, carefully read labels, and stay alert so you can get home safely.

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Peak Migration for Deer and Elk

Vehicle collisions with deer and elk tend to peak in October and November, when migration and breeding puts them on the move, making them more likely to cross roads. Fewer daylight hours and rainy weather also reduce drivers' visibility. If you see an animal on or near the road, slow down and stay in your lane, and always wear your seat belt.



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Young Drivers and Traffic Fatalities

Young drivers are nearly four times more likely to be involved in a fatal traffic crash than their older counterparts, but [a new](#)

[report by the Governors Highway Safety Association \(GHSA\)](#)

finds that the crash and fatality rates for drivers under 21 have improved drastically over the past two decades – more so than for other drivers. Safer teen drivers make our roads safer for everyone around them – especially people walking, biking, scooting, or using other forms of non-motorized transportation. The report discusses five proven policies and programs that research confirms the teen driver safety gains can be attributed to.



World Day of Remembrance

World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims on November 19 is a platform for road traffic victims and their families to:

- remember all people killed and seriously injured on the roads;
- acknowledge the crucial work of the emergency services;
- draw attention to the generally trivial legal response to culpable road deaths and injuries and advocate for an appropriately serious response;
- advocate for better support for road traffic victims and victim families;
- promote evidence-based actions to prevent and eventually stop further road traffic deaths and injuries.



Last year, more than 600 people were killed in Oregon traffic crashes. Claiming the lives of our vulnerable and young. Devastating families, taking a toll on our emergency responders and our communities, and a multi-tiered economic impact felt by all.

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New Safety Billboard in Springfield

Springfield drivers may have noticed a new billboard along OR-126 near the 28th Street overpass in recent weeks. Officer Pardee, a 4-year member of SPD's Traffic Team says he's seen an uptick in distracted driving and the unfortunate injuries that can accompany the behavior. Numbers from ODOT seem to agree: from 2017-2021 there were 26,661 crashes resulting in 194 fatalities and 26,264 injuries caused by crashes involving a distracted driver in Oregon. So next time you're reaching for your device while driving, remember to 'park your phone' and don't drive distracted!



Sidewalks, Bicycle Lanes, Curb Ramps

Small cities around the state are receiving \$5.7 million in funding after the Small City Allotment Advisory Committee approved the latest round of recommendations for the 2024 Small City Allotment program. The [approved projects](#) range from adding sidewalks to chip-sealing roads, from paving city streets to improving intersections – all in communities with populations of 5,000 or fewer.



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Resources

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