



VTrans ~ Office of Highway Safety

Bruce Nyquist, Director

January 19, 2017

Highway safety impacts all of our lives each and every day. Whether we are commuting to work, taking kids to school and extra-curricular activities, driving to community events, or just going for a walk or bike ride, we all have one expectation and that is to leave home and return again unharmed. The sad fact is that each year that roughly 340 people are killed or seriously injured on Vermont Highways. In December 2014, VTrans formed the Office of Highway Safety (OHS) which is dedicated to reducing these tragedies on Vermont's roadways. The OHS is made up of four separate units: Vermont Highway Safety Alliance, Governor's Highway Safety Program, Highway Safety Improvement Program and Highway Safety Data Unit.

OFFICE OF HIGHWAY SAFETY

Vermont Highway Safety Alliance (VHSA)

The Vermont Highway Safety Alliance is an official non-profit organization whose sole focus is to reduce needless crashes on Vermont's highways. Public agencies and private individuals and companies make up the VHSA membership. The **Strategic Highway Safety Plan** (SHSP) is the guiding document which, via crash data, identifies and prioritizes the areas that need to be addressed to improve the safety of Vermont Roadways. The VHSA tackles highway safety from four different aspects: engineering, education, enforcement and emergency medical services. The organization is run by a board of directors and it implements strategies and action items via the Advisory Council and task forces. The Advisory Council establishes multi-disciplinary task forces from pools of subject matter experts to define, develop and implement projects and initiatives that will help reduce the number of major crashes on Vermont Roadways.

Governor's Highway Safety Program (GHSP)

The GHSP focuses on the behavioral side of highway safety. It was recently estimated that 94% of all highway crashes are caused by driver error or poor behavior. GHSP works with public agencies, state, county and local law enforcement departments, and educational non-profit groups to institute programs to address the behavioral issues that are rampant in society. The National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) provides funding which GHSP utilizes to mitigate problems identified in the yearly **Highway Safety Plan (HSP)**. Data Driven Yearly reports are provided to NHTSA outlining progress and/or remaining challenges in the various areas needing crash reduction.

GHSP receives around \$4 million dollars per year from NHTSA for the enforcement, education and public awareness programs and campaigns that we execute. Currently we have about \$5 million dollars in funding carried over from previous years. We expect carry forward funding will be eliminated within two years based on our current program spending levels.

Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)

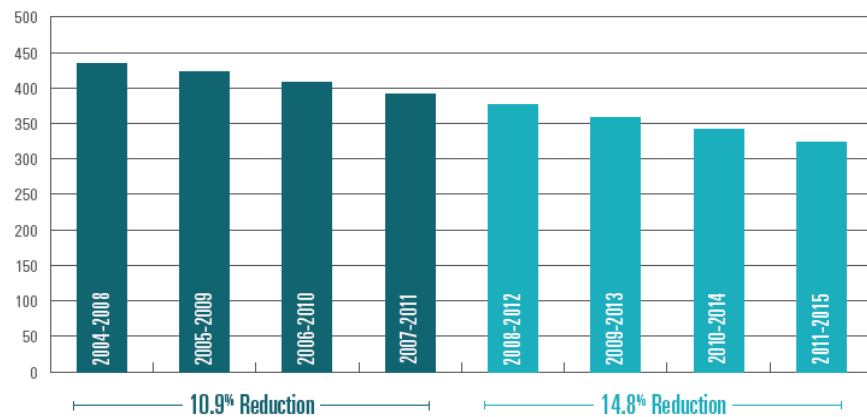
The HSIP analyzes crash data across all roadways in Vermont with an eye towards physical improvements that can make the roadways safer. The program focuses on two types of improvements site specific and systemic. Site specific projects are developed base off of the High Crash Location (HCL). Each year, two or more projects are typically constructed which will improve the geometry or traffic operation at the specific location. The Systemic projects are based on system-wide crash characteristics. Systemic projects look at what types of crashes or crash characteristics are most

prevalent across the network and what types of roadway features can be added to the system to help mitigate these crashes. Examples of system-wide features are signing and delineation projects, pavement marking restriping projects, centerline rumble stripe projects, wider shoulders, etc. HSIP funding comes from two different sources. The first source, HSIP(148 Funds), are specifically appropriated to run the HSIP program. In the latest federal appropriation, Vermont receives just over \$11.7 million dollars. These funds, under the latest FAST act guidelines, can only be used for infrastructure related improvements or training specifically related to infrastructure issues. The second funding source is 164 Funds. Vermont receives just over \$4.4 million dollars of these funds per year. 164 funds can be split between the HSIP and the Governor’s Highway Safety Program on a yearly basis.

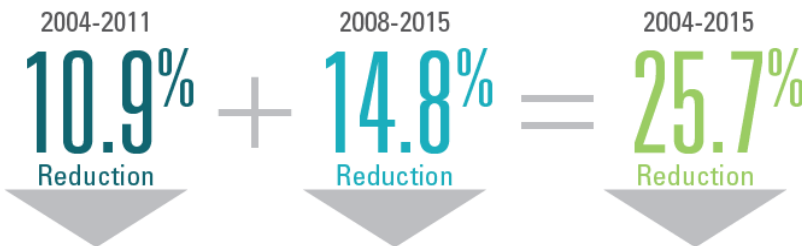
Highway Safety Data Unit

The Highway Safety Data Unit is the repository of all crash data state wide. All state and local enforcement agencies and departments send electronic crash reports to this unit. These reports are checked for quality and then added to the state database. Enforcement agencies, engineers, local communities rely on this data to make informed decisions on solving highway safety issues in the most effective way. This group provides the data by which we measure the safety health of our Vermont Highway Systems.

Overall Major Crashes Trend



5-Year Rolling Average



2012-2016 SHSP Goal

10%
Goal Met