100th Edition | Collier-Lee-Charlotte County Traffic Incident Management Team | March 2022

National Distracted Driving Month

The month of April is National Distracted Driving Month. Distracted driving is one of the fastest growing safety issues on the roads today. Distracted drivers aren't just a threat to themselves; they are a danger to to both first responders working along the highways and the traveling public. The national distracted driving effort focuses on ways to change the behavior of drivers through legislation, enforcement, public awareness, and education. Texting, which includes messaging, is considered the most dangerous type of distracted driving because it combines visual, manual, and cognitive distraction.

Distracted Driving Statistics:

- In 2019, distracted driving was a reported factor in 8.5% of fatal motor vehicle crashes.
- In the U.S, distracted driving claimed the lives of 3,477 people and injured another 391,000 in 2015.
- 42% of high school students across the United States admitted that they text or email while driving.
- Roughly 20% of injuries occurring in car accident crashes involve distracted driving.
- Distracted driving accounted for 27% of all crashes in 2015.
- Distracted driving claims eight lives per day — approximately 3,500 per year.
- More than 400,000 motorists were injured in accidents caused by distracted driving and 2,800 deaths occurred as a result.
- Drivers are distracted by their phones at least 10% of their driving time.
- Only 47 states (including California) have bans on texting while driving.

To learn more and to download campaign materials to highlight campaign within your agency, please visit the National Highway Traffic Safety Institute at: https://www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/distracted-driving

An Increase in Line-of-Duty Deaths

The Emergency Responder Safety Institute has reported that there was a total of 65 responders lost their lives in year 2021 while managing traffic incidents on our Nation's roadways, according to the Emergency Responder Safety Institute. This is a 41 percent increase from the 46 line-of-duty-deaths (LODD) in year 2020. In 2019, even with significantly more roadway travel than year 2020, the total LODD was 44.

The Emergency Responder Safety Institute has a nationwide database to collect detailed information about incidents on the roadway where emergency responders or their equipment were struck by a vehicle while operating at a scene. Available at ReportStruckBy.com using the ResponderSafety.com platform, the database accepts reports from all roadway responders, including fire, law enforcement, EMS, fire police and special traffic units, safety service and freeway service patrols, departments of transportation, public works, and towing and recovery. The goal of ReportStruckBy.com is to improve the voluntary reporting, tracking, and analysis of struck-by incident data to prevent future incidents. The reports help understand the problem better, provide more reliable statistics to inform policymaking, and determine where the responder training and public education gaps are. To learn more, please visit ResponderSafety.org

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Upcoming Events:

Next TIM Team Meeting will be offered both in-person and virtually.

Wednesday, **April 13, 2022**
9:30 am

SWIFT SunGuide Center
10041 Daniels Parkway
Fort Myers, FL 33913

To join the meeting virtually, please use the following link: Virtual Link

The Effects of Emergency Vehicle Lighting Characteristics on Driver Perception and Behavior

A recent research study from Emergency Responder Safety Institute investigated the impact of lighting color, intensity, modulation, and flash rate on driver behavior while approaching and passing a traffic incident scene at night.

The study, Effects of Emergency Vehicle Lighting Characteristics on Driver Perception and Behavior, included the following setup:

- Under different emergency lighting setups volunteer civilians drove a closed course traffic incident scene at night consisting of a simulated fire apparatus in center-block position with a cone taper.
- Two SAE-compliant, commercially available blue, white, yellow, and red lights were mounted vertically on two tripods spaced apart at a distance approximating the left and right edge of the rear of a fire truck.
- A silhouette cutout of a firefighter wearing a high visibility safety vest was positioned adjacent to the lights.
- Some of the tests, researchers placed a panel of retroreflective red/yellow chevrons constructed with ASTM Type V sheeting materials directly behind each flashing light tripod.
- Researchers tested (14) combinations of lamp color, lamp intensity, pattern, flash rate, and presence of reflective markings next to the lights.
- Researchers measured vehicle distance to the lights and the distance at which drivers could distinguish the silhouette of a firefighter.
- Administered a survey after the driver completed the course. Twenty drivers completed the testing.[1]

Testing Findings

Intensity - Study participants consistently judged higher intensity lights as more glaring but only marginally more visible than lights of lower intensity. Lower intensity lights remained highly visible. Using lower intensities at night will reduce discomfort glare without reducing the lights' visibility. This finding indicates that stationary vehicles in nighttime blocking mode should be sufficiently visible with lower intensity lights.

Color - Drivers' rated visibility of lights appeared to be related to the perceived saturation of their color. Blue and red lights have the greatest perceived saturation and were judged to be brighter than white and yellow lights of the same intensity. Blue and white lights were rated as most glaring. Yellow and red lights were least glaring. This data suggests that red lights for stationary blocking operations may offer the best combination of better visibility with less glare.

Moth to Flame - None of the variables tested caused drivers to move their vehicles either toward or away from the lights. Therefore, the data in this test did not support or disprove the "moth to flame" effect.

High Visibility Markings - When fluorescent and reflective markings were present, drivers did not see the firefighter silhouette until they were closer to it. This was the most unexpected finding of the study. Of the four setups tested, high intensity lights with no markings produced the longest detection distance, meaning drivers could see the firefighter silhouette from the furthest away.[1]

To learn more about the study, please visit the Emergency Responder Safety Institute at ResponderSafety.com

[1]Effects of Emergency Vehicle Lighting Characteristics on Driver Perception and Behavior. Emergency Responder Safety Institute investigated. National. Web January 2022. https://www.respondersafety.com/training/emergency-vehicles-lighting/

Article submitted by Brandy Boccuti, Metric Engineering, Inc.

T I M TEAM WEBSITE!

www.swfltim.org

*The **Collier-Lee-Charlotte County TIM Team** is committed to implementing the Quick Clearance principles of Florida's Open Roads Policy through the "3 Cs" of TIM: Communication, Cooperation and Coordination, and providing the public with the best real-time Motorist Information available. Team membership draws from state, regional, and local transportation agencies, public safety providers, and other organizations and companies that service the traveling public. The Teams, sponsored by the FDOT, meet bi-monthly.*

Mission

The TIM Team Program brings together all agencies involved in clearing the roadway crashes with the objective of improving detection, verification, response, and clearance times to expeditiously remove a motor vehicle crash or incident from the roadway while providing the best real-time information to motorists, resulting in a safer highway environment for both incident responders and motorists.