

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF STATE HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORTATION OFFICIALS



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New AASHTO Study Designed to Save Lives

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) has released a report that details a number of low-cost solutions to reduce the staggering number of traffic fatalities in the U.S. each year. 42,000 people die on our highways annually and more than 25,000, almost 60 percent, are killed in crashes caused when their vehicles veer from their lanes.

The report, *Driving Down Lane-Departure Crashes*, highlights several examples of states that are experiencing dramatic reductions in lane-departure crashes and fatalities through successful leadership and systematic, low-cost improvements. For example:

- The Missouri DOT experienced a 25% reduction in lane-departure related fatalities from 2005 to 2007 after installing lane-departure countermeasures such as rumble stripes, pavement markings and cable median barriers.
- In Washington State, as the miles of divided highway protected by cable median barrier has increased, the number of crossover median collisions has decreased 74 percent, from 42 crashes to just 11 per year in 2007.

The study outlines quick-implementation strategies that will also reduce crashes into trees and utility poles and assist with the identification and removal of roadside safety hazards.

This study was created as part of a commitment by AASHTO President Pete Rahn to draw attention to the issue during his tenure. Rahn has made lane-departure crashes one of his three main priorities. The AASHTO board of directors has also set a goal of cutting U.S. traffic fatalities in half within two decades with the ultimate goal of zero deaths on our nation's roadway. To accomplish this goal, AASHTO is making every effort to reduce the number of traffic fatalities by approximately 1,000 per year.