

What You Should Know About:

► *Pedestrian Injury*

National Statistics

According to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, pedestrians are the second largest category of motor vehicle deaths after occupants, accounting for 11% of motor vehicle deaths. According to NHTSA, 4,808 pedestrians were killed in traffic crashes in the United States in 2002 and 71,000 were injured. Almost one-fourth of those fatalities were children between the ages of 5 and 9.¹ On average, a pedestrian is killed every 109 minutes and injured every 7 minutes.



The physical vulnerability of pedestrians is a major factor in their injury. The most serious pedestrian injuries often result from pedestrians being thrown onto hoods, windshields, or tops of vehicles.²

Injuries and fatalities involving pedestrians occur most frequently in three distinct groups of people: young children (between the ages of 5-9), older adults (age 70+), and persons impaired by alcohol.³ Pedestrian deaths constitute a third of traffic deaths among children 3-9 years of age.² Children 10-15 years of age have the highest nonfatal injury rates.²

Seventy percent of pedestrian deaths in 2002 occurred in urban areas.² However, the ratio of deaths to injuries is higher in rural areas because of higher impact speeds on rural roads.⁴ Fatal pedestrian motor vehicle collisions occur most often between 6 p.m. and midnight.² Pedestrian deaths are more likely to occur on Friday, Saturday or Sunday than on other days.² In 2002, alcohol involvement was reported in 46% of traffic crashes that resulted in pedestrian deaths.¹

Oklahoma Statistics

According to Oklahoma State Department of Health Vital Statistics data, from 1992 through 2001, there were a total of 568 pedestrian deaths. Pedestrian death rates were highest for Native Americans 25-44 years of age. Time of death varied among age groups. Among children 0-4 years of age, 61% of deaths occurred between 2 p.m. and 9 p.m., while nearly

half of deaths among persons 25 and older occurred between 6 p.m. and 2 a.m.

According to State Medical Examiner data, 78% of pedestrians who died were tested for BAC; 42% had positive levels. More than 50% of persons 15-54 years of age had positive BAC levels. Fifty-three percent of all persons tested for BAC who died between 7 p.m. and 2 a.m. had positive levels.

► What Works

Roadway countermeasures

Roadway countermeasures such as: 1) converting two-way streets to one-way streets; 2) installing adequate roadway lighting; 3) requiring sidewalks be constructed in new rural and suburban housing subdivisions; 4) installing barriers to physically separate pedestrians from vehicles; 5) installing pedestrian crossing signs in unusually hazardous locations; and 6) utilizing crossing guards in school zones have shown promise in reducing the number of pedestrian injuries.⁴



► What You Can Do

Implement Roadway Countermeasures

Communities should consider implementing roadway countermeasures such as the ones listed above

Collaborate With Cardiovascular Programs

Work with cardiovascular programs to encourage walking as a form of exercise. Sponsor events/campaigns such as "Walk Your Child to School Day." Use the opportunity to make note of hazards (e.g., sidewalks cracked, unsafe neighborhoods, etc.) and present to city leaders with recommendations for improvements.

Increase Signal Time

Communities should consider resetting traffic signals to allow more time for street crossing.

Work With City Planners

Encourage local officials, designers, and planners to enhance pedestrian accessibility and safety when building or remodeling schools, recreational sites, and businesses.

Utilize Walkability Checklists

Sponsored by NHTSA, the Walkability Checklist is a tool with insightful questions that allow communities to evaluate a neighborhood's walkability. In addition to the questions, the Checklist provides both immediate answers and long-term solutions to your neighborhood's potential problems. The checklist is available for download at <http://www.walkinginfo.org/cps/checklist.htm>.

► Where You Can Go

The following organizations can provide information about reducing pedestrian deaths and injuries as well as links to other organizations and web sites.

State

- Injury Prevention Service
Oklahoma State Department of Health
405/271-3430
www.health.state.ok.us/PROGRAM/injury
- Oklahoma SAFE KIDS Coalition
405/271-5695
www.oksafekids.org
- Oklahoma Highway Safety Office
405/523-1570
www.dps.state.ok.us/ohso

National

- National SAFE KIDS Campaign
www.safekids.org
- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
www.nhtsa.dot.gov
- National Center for Injury Prevention and Control
www.cdc.gov/ncipc

- Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center
www.bicyclinginfo.org
- National Center for Bicycling and Walking
www.bikewalk.org
- Insurance Institute for Highway Safety
www.iihs.org
- Indian Health Service
www.ihs.gov/MedicalPrograms/InjuryPrevention/index.cfm

Local

Police Department
County Health Department

References

1. US Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. *Traffic Safety Facts 2002: Pedestrians*. 2002. Available from: <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/pdf/nrd-30/NCSA/TSF2002/2002pedfacts.pdf>. Accessed September 30, 2004.
2. Insurance Institute for Highway Safety. *Fatality Facts: Pedestrians, 2002*. June 2004. Available from: http://www.iihs.org/safety_facts/fatality_facts/peds.htm. Accessed September 30, 2004.
3. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Fatality Analysis Reporting System. *Traffic Safety Facts 1996: A Compilation of Motor Vehicle Crash Data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System and the General Estimates System*. Report No.: DOT HS 808 649. Accessed September 30, 2004. December 1997.
4. Baker S, O'Neill B, Ginsberg M, Li G. *The Injury Fact Book*. 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press; 1992.