

**Impaired Driving Emphasis Area Meeting
Comprehensive Highway Safety Plan**



Date: November 7, 2024
Time: 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM

MEETING GOALS

The purpose of the meeting is to provide an update on strategies to reduce impaired driving related fatalities and serious.

Attendees:

- AJ Allen, Roosevelt Co. DUI Task Force
- Alison Malensek, Co-chair & Impaired Driving Program Coordinator, State Hwy Traffic Safety Section (SHTSS), Montana Department of Transportation (MDT)
- Anna Mhoon, Record & Driver Control, Drivers Licensing- Department of Justice (DOJ)
- Barb Reiter, Jefferson Co DUI Task Force
- Beth Morrison, Injury Prevention Manager, Alliance for Youth
- Beth Smalley, Forensic Science Division, DOJ
- Captain Daniel Carroll, Enforcement Bureau, Butte District, Motor Carrier Services, MDT
- Ed Hirsch, Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor, Attorney General Office (AGO)
- Kent Haab, Alcohol, Beverage, Control Division, Department of Revenue (DOR)
- Kevin Dusko, Co-chair & SHTSS Supervisor, MDT
- Maureen Ward, Injury Prevention Manager, EMT & TS, DPHHS/ Lewis & Clark Co DUI Task Force
- Natalia Bowser, Director, Montana Board of Crime Control
- Sgt Lucas Herl, Traffic Safety Resource Officer (TSRO), Montana Highway Patrol (MHP)
- Steve Schmidt, Drive Safe Missoula/ Missoula DUI Task Force
- Tammy Ross, Transit & Safety Bureau, MDT
- Tanner VanWyck, Education Specialist, Cannabis Control Division, DOR

Strategy Updates

Strategy 1 - Deterrence and Enforcement

SETT representative was unable to attend. Kevin Dusko reported a new contract has been signed for FFY25 and provided brief update on the program .

Kevin Dusko reported a new contract has been signed for FFY 2025. EJ Clark will continue to work with local law enforcement agencies to determine the needs in their areas and encourage use of the mini grant process.

Mini grants for FFY 2025 are open for applications. MDT and EJ Clark continue to work with local law enforcement to encourage the use of the grants for agencies identified safety issues.

Sgt. Lucas Hurl reported that he be continuing as the TSRO program. They have finished up all their FFY24 activities and are in the process of setting up their FFY25 training calendar.

DUI Police Traffic Safety Program. The police department s active in FFY 2024 will be continuing in FFY 2025. These include Helena, Kalispell, Missoula, Billings police departments, and Flathead County Sheriff's office. Outreach continues to be conducted to add additional agencies.

Strategy 2- Prevention and Education

Barb Ritter coordinates Jefferson High School traffic safety and seatbelt safety program in school. The Task Force is conducting an event for January 22, 2025, at the Jefferson High School. The Task Force is hoping to conduct a similar event conducting they hope to do in Whitehall. They will be reaching out to MDT looking to partner on traffic safety.

AJ Allen and Sheila Cozzie are working to promote Teen Week in Lewistown and tribal communities. Additionally, there are looking at innovative ways to get traffic educators in Roosevelt County, which are experiencing a lack of traffic education instructors. This creates an additional challenge as students then must travel long distance to traffic drivers' education course.

Northern Tribes DUI Task Force members are working to bring legislation forward again this year to have the Northern Tribes DUI Task Force recognized within MCA.

Beth Morrison is looking for a contact at DPHHS. Megan Collar prevention specialist was a name provided as a possible contact.

Steve Schmidt shared an update on No Joke theater, an innovative prevention and educational outreach opportunity. The program is expanding and planning a new production. Play will be performed for 5 days in December. There is enough interest in the program that they are expanding the program to include people behind the scenes to set design. This provides a spot for people to participate who may not be comfortable on stage. Spring they will have a story telling event.

Maureen Ward shared that the State Improvement Plan is being updated, which includes a focus on impaired driving.

Alison Malensek reported that currently there are 34 DUI Task Forces which represent 37 counties. Outreach continues to get more counties involved.

Steve Schmidt attended the Western Montana Fair in August and shared the Respect the Cage victim's story with over a thousand contacts. The relevancy is as important today as when the crash involving an impaired driver occurred.

Kevin reported that the *Impact Teen Driver Program* has been built into the FFY 2025 grant funding for teen traffic safety. Sheila Cozzie continues to work closely with the SOAR coordinators.

Kent Haab, Alcohol Beverage Control Division (ABCD), Department of Revenue reported on the Fake ID campaign grant from NABCO. Launching billboards and radio ads. Getting the word out about the Fake IDs. There is a lot of issues currently with fake IDs. IDs can be purchased off the internet and are a challenge to law enforcement in determining authenticity.

Creating tool kits to help with looking into them to know if it's a fake. Pushing more to remember to card. They will choose 5 seniors in high school to receive \$5,000 scholarships for April. Recipients will have a billboard to go with the campaign for alcohol awareness month. DOR will be rolling out these projects soon.

Steve Schmidt shared that during their “Don’t Wreck the Holidays” campaign the Missoula DUI Task Force will be encouraging and trying to work with community members on alternative modes of transportation to ensure people can enjoy the parties but make it home safe. Steve continues innovative outreach opportunities with safety partners and stakeholders including writing songs using AI. Two new songs are available on the Drive Safe Missoula site [DUI Task Force | Drive Safe Missoula](#) which have been played on the radio. Country and Kids. Also produced a new podcast on Drive Safe Montana. Everything from the Don’t Wreck The Holidays, The Blythe Play, and the songs can (or will be later today) found directly on the home page at www.DriveSafeMissoula.com [drivesafemissoula.com]

Tammy Ross reported that there will be an event at the Capital Building on January 16th to provide education and information about seatbelts, impaired driving, distracted driving, and other traffic safety topics.

Strategy 3- Criminal Justice System

There is likely to be some legislation regarding impaired driving. Team Members are encouraged to attend and share any updates at emphasis area meeting.

Alison Malensek reported that the 24/7 FFY25 contract has been signed with Sgt Lacie Wickum continuing the program. FFY24 ended with 25 PBT testing sites and 5 SCRAM only testing sites. They had 573 preliminary breath test (pbt) participants in the program and 511 transdermal participants. The program continues to see success with a 99.78% success rate.

Ed Hirsch shared the completion of the second prosecutors bootcamp which is where they are training new prosecutors. Last year was the first time DUI training was conducted. New prosecutors tend to get assigned DUI cases; however, DUI cases can be extremely complex. Prosecutor Bootcamp prepares participants on how to effectively proceed through a DUI trial.

Beth Smalley reports an increase in DUI drug testing. Statistics were presented at the Annual Transportation Safety Meeting in Helena in October. NHTSA sent an email looking to study cannabis and driving and lining up arrests with the cases. Beth responded that MT has the data and would like to participate in the study. She has all the testing reports and now is trying to work to get the data lined up with the arrest reports. The Breath Alcohol Data Management System will be submitted the Traffic Records Coordinating Committee for potential NHTSA grant funding.

Working on a breath alcohol program and will be getting a better tracking system. Beth is working with Kevin to get a grant. Sgt. Lucas Herl added that MHP thinks that they will be able to work with Beth and get her the reports that she needs for her project.

Alison Malensek reports that State Highway Traffic Safety Section (SHTSS) continues to support 5 DUI Courts with NHTSA funding. Last year Bozeman opened a misdemeanor court called BRIDGERS. Gallatin County is in the process of opening a felony DUI Justice Court. Several people who would have been on the call were not present due to them being with the court that day doing training. They are in the process of hiring a court coordinator. Judge Andrew Breuner will run the court and hopes to be able to start taking applications in January.

Captain Daniel Carrol, Butte District Motor Carrier Services (MCS) reports that MCS continues to monitor drivers. MCS is in the middle of their recertification for breath testing. They are finding lots of cannabis and alcohol being transported in commercial vehicles.

Strategy 4 - Communication Program

Tammy Ross reports the media contract is with Duft Watterson. MDT had a couple of big media campaigns this year with MSU and UM. All campaigns they do research to find out how they went over. Duft received an award for the Andy campaign which they presented to MDT. Have a research team through MDT that is a nationwide collaborative who does research on highway safety. Looking for more partners on that. New Andy campaign coming up, teens, and all of the NHTSA campaigns.

Tanner VanWyck, Cannabis Control Division, Department of Revenue (DOR) is working with Tammy and Kevin on some collaboration between MDT and DOR. Looking to be able to distribute materials about cannabis and safe driving. It's a great opportunity to get information out into the public. Currently the inspectors go to every dispensary and education could be provided on safe driving to people in the dispensaries.

Strategy 5 - Alcohol and Other Drug Misuse: Screening, Assessment, Treatment and Rehabilitation

Alison and Kevin will be conducting coordinating outreach with DPHHS to discuss role in traffic safety and behaviors and getting a representative for this strategy area.

Strategy 6- Program Evaluation and Data

No report on annual program progress and evaluation provided.