

# Ohio's Safety Plan

## 2009 Update

### Emphasis Area 2 Serious Crashes: Fixed Object

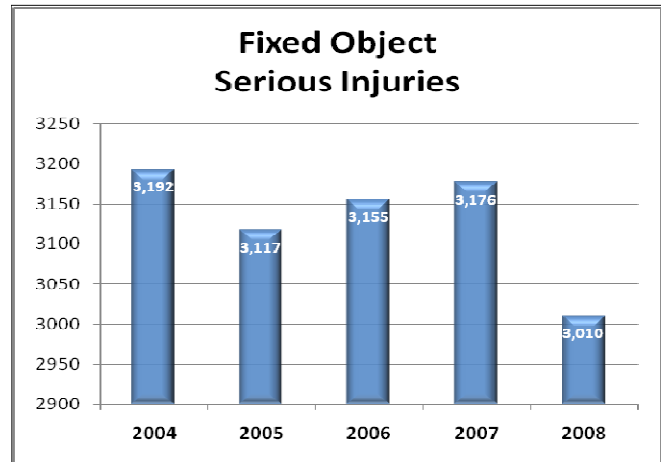
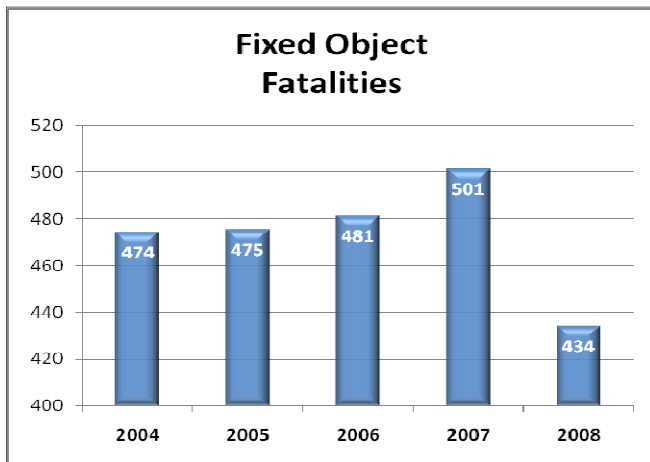


In 2008, the second leading cause of fatalities in Ohio was fixed object crashes, in which a motorist leaves the roadway and collides with an object, such as a tree, utility pole, embankment or bridge wall.

In 2008, 434 people died and 3,010 people were seriously injured in these crashes. Fixed object crashes represented 36 percent of all fatalities and 30 percent of all serious injuries in that year. In addition, a high percentage of these fatalities involved alcohol, speed and unbelted passengers and drivers.

These types of crashes can be prevented by reducing the likelihood that a vehicle will leave the roadway. Roads can be redesigned to flatten curves or install rumble strips along the shoulder. If a vehicle leaves the roadway, fatalities and injuries can be reduced by removing or shielding fixed objects and by installing breakaway devices such as poles or signs.

Education and enforcement programs also play a key role in reducing injuries and deaths. Many crashes can be prevented by safer driving behavior.



#### Driving Tips:

- **Obey posted speed limits.** Allow extra travel time for traffic and bad weather to eliminate the need to speed.
- **Always wear your seatbelt.**
- **Focus on the road.** If you are distracted (changing radio stations, talking on the phone, etc.), you put yourself and other road users at risk.
- **Adjust your speed before curves.** It's always better to enter a curve a little too slowly than too quickly.

**Strategies** (where applicable):

Identify, review and address areas with a disproportionate number of fixed object crashes.

ODOT compiles the information each year to share with internal staff and local governments. Many locations are addressed through annual safety work plans that identify the top high-crash, severe-crash locations statewide.

ODOT also provides \$72 million in safety funding each year that can be used to improve safety on any public road.

Conduct Roadway Safety Audits (RSA).

ODOT is working with local governments to develop multi-disciplinary teams that conduct RSAs at problem locations.

Remove or relocate fixed objects or delineate fixed objects with reflectors and/or paint.

State and local governments implement these recommendations as RSAs and other safety reviews are completed.

Provide adequate clear zones, flatten slopes and reduce sharp curves.

State and local governments implement these recommendations as RSAs and other safety reviews are completed.

Shield motorists from trees, poles or other fixed objects using guardrail or other barrier types.

State and local governments implement these recommendations as RSAs and other safety reviews are completed.

Alert motorists by installing rumble strips/stripes on roadway shoulders.

2010-2011, ODOT will spend up to \$10 million to install shoulder rumble stripes on qualifying roadways—primarily two-lane roads. Many freeways and multi-lane roads have already received a rumble strip treatment. Locations are selected based on shoulder widths, bike use and the proximity of homes.

Use skid resistant pavement treatments to increase roadway traction.

State and local governments implement skid resistant treatments as RSAs and other safety reviews are completed.

Support enforcement and education programs that encourage safer driving behaviors.

The Department of Public Safety provides funding to state and local law enforcement to conduct high-visibility enforcement campaigns that help reduce alcohol, seat belt, and motorcycle-related fatalities and injuries. The department also sponsors Safe Community coalitions comprised of law enforcement officers, emergency medical professionals and other safety advocates that work to increase awareness for these and other safety issues.