

Ohio's Safety Plan

2009 Update

Emphasis Area 2 Serious Crashes: Head-On and Side-Swipe Collisions

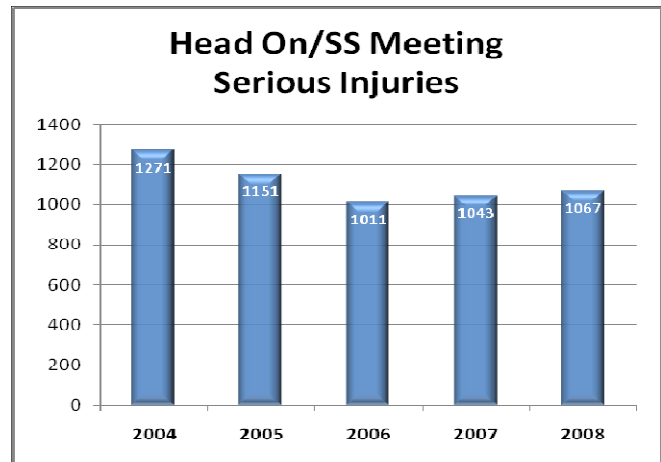
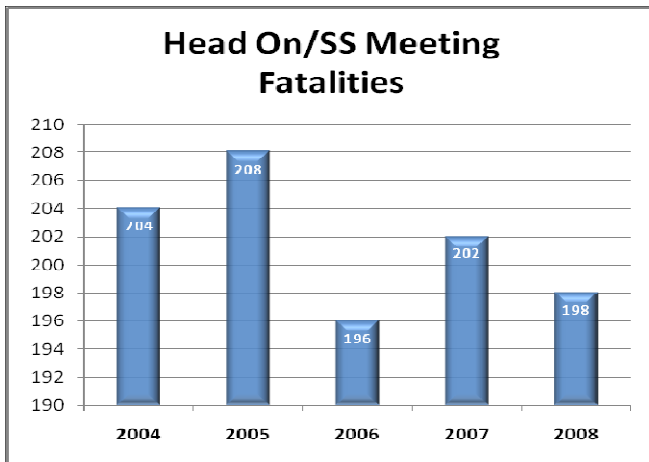


In 2008, 198 people died and 1,067 people were seriously injured in crashes where the vehicle strayed from the travel lane and hit another vehicle head-on or sideswipe.

These crashes represented 17 percent of all fatalities and 11 percent of all serious injuries in that year. Many of these crashes occur on rural, undivided, two-lane roads and result in severe injuries and/or death.

Most head-on/sideswipe crashes are likely to result from a motorist making an “unintentional” maneuver. The driver may fall asleep, become distracted, or travel too fast in a curve. There may be other contributing factors, such as alcohol use or speeding. Young drivers are also over-represented in these crash types. National studies have shown only 4 percent of these crashes are typically attributed to a vehicle passing another vehicle.

The most common ways to prevent these crashes are installing centerline rumble strips and stripes, and education and enforcement programs that encourage safer driving behaviors.



Driving Tips:

- Only drive when you are alert and sober.
- Scan the road ahead frequently for hazards. Look as far as the next hill or curve, or corner in cities.
- Always wear your seatbelt.
- Stay well to the right of the centerline where oncoming traffic is less likely to stray.
- Obey posted speed limits. It will give you more time to react if a hazard occurs.

State and local governments are also using various strategies to prevent these crash types.

Strategies include:

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.

Alert motorists by installing rumble strips/strips on roadway shoulders and centerlines.

ODOT installs shoulder rumble strips on all freeways. The department also installs them on non-freeways where appropriate, considering the proximity of homes and road shoulder widths.

Improve road shoulders and eliminate pavement drop-offs to help motorists recover safely when a near head-on or sideswipe collision occurs.

ODOT installs additional shoulder area where possible and works with local maintenance crews to build up shoulder areas to prevent drop offs.

Prevent crossover crashes on freeways by installing median cable barrier.

ODOT recently updated its design policies to expand and encourage the use of cable median barrier within freeway medians that are 59 feet wide or less.

About 125 miles of freeway appear to meet this new minimum requirement. 2010-2011, ODOT will install about \$6 to \$9 million of new cable barrier at these locations.

Enhance delineation and signing on sharp curves. ODOT installs based on safety reviews.

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 that are often involved in this crash type. 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.