

**CHSP Roadway Departure & Intersection Crashes  
Emphasis Area Meeting**  
Thursday, January 26, 2023  
10:30 a.m.- noon



Edith Diaz-Hansen, Program Manager, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)  
Gabe Priebe, Traffic & Safety Engineering Bureau Chief, Montana Department of Transportation (MDT)  
John Althof, Rail Highway Safety, Traffic & Safety (T&S) Engineering, MDT  
Marcee Allen, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)  
Mark Keeffe, Data Analyst, State Highway Traffic Safety Section (SHTSS), MDT  
Matt Ulberg, Executive Director, Local Transportation Assistance Program (LTAP)-MSU  
Pam Langve-Davis, CHSP Manager, MDT  
Patricia Burke, Safety Engineer, T&S Engineering, MDT  
Sgt Patrick Erbacher, Missoula Police Department (MPD)  
Shari Graham, EMS Systems Manager, Department of Health & Human Services (DPHHS), MDT  
Shelby Clark, Statewide Bicycle & Pedestrian Coordinator, MDT  
Stan Brelin, Traffic Operations Engineer, MDT

**Meeting Purpose –**

New members introduced themselves and provided an overview of their safety programs. Report of any updates.

**Legislative Tracking**

**LC 0062 / SB 137-** "AN ACT REVISING BICYCLE SAFETY LAWS; AMENDING PASSING 5 CONDITIONS; REQUIRING USE OF A RED, REAR-FACING LIGHT IF A BICYCLE IS USED BETWEEN 6 DUSK AND DAWN; AND AMENDING SECTIONS 61-8-320 AND 61-8-607, MCA."

Section 1 of the current text proposed amendment reads: *"61-8-320. Right-of-way for bicycles. (1) The operator of a motor vehicle may not: (a) intentionally interfere with the movement of a person who is lawfully riding a bicycle; or (b) overtake and pass a person riding a bicycle unless the operator of the motor vehicle can do so safely ~~without endangering the person riding the bicycle by maintaining at all times a minimum distance of 5 feet between the vehicle and the person riding the bicycle. To pass a person riding a bicycle, the operator of the motor vehicle may drive to the left of the center line of the roadway, if it is safe to do so, including when a no passing zone is marked as provided in 61-8-326.~~"*

Concerns discussed included how this would impact urban city streets and whether there is capacity for full lane use of bicyclist traveling at a speed lower than that posted; use/nonuse of bicycle lanes; and safety concerns to permit motor vehicles passing in no-passing zones on higher speed roadways.

Section 2 of the current amended portion reads; *"61-8-607. Lamps and other equipment on bicycles and mopeds. (1) A bicycle or moped when in use at dawn, dusk, or nighttime must be equipped with: (a) a lamp on the front emitting a white light visible from a distance of at least 500 feet to the front. In lieu of a lamp affixed to the bicycle or moped, a bicyclist may use a lamp with equal intensity and visibility affixed to the cyclist's helmet and facing forward. (b) facing the rear, ~~either a lamp affixed to the bicycle or cyclist and emitting a red light visible from a distance of at least 500 feet to the rear or a red reflector visible from a distance of at least 500 feet to the rear when illuminated by low-beam motor vehicle headlights;~~"*

This portion has a potential safety component that may increase the visibility of cyclists.

**HB 179-** A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT REVISING CARELESS DRIVING LAWS; SPECIFYING CIRCUMSTANCES THAT QUALIFY AS CARELESS DRIVING; AND AMENDING SECTION 61-8-302, MCA." BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA: Section 1. Section 61-8-302, MCA, is amended to read: "61-8-302. Careless driving. (1) A person operating or driving a vehicle on a public highway shall drive it in a careful and prudent manner that does not unduly or unreasonably endanger the life, limb, property, or other rights of a person entitled to the use of the highway. (2) Careless driving includes: BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO (a) failing to drive in the manner required by subsection (1); or passing any of the following at a speed above the posted speed limit or at a speed that is not careful and prudent under the circumstances: (A) a vehicle on the shoulder OR IN THE ROADWAY flashing its hazard lights; OR (B) a person walking OR RIDING A BICYCLE on the shoulder OR IN THE ROADWAY while wearing hunter orange, high-visibility lime, or retroreflective material; or DISPLAYING A RED OR AMBER LIGHT. (iii) a person riding a bicycle on the shoulder while wearing hunter orange, high-visibility lime, or retroreflective material. (2)(3) A person who is convicted of the offense of careless driving is subject to the penalties provided 24 in 61-8-711 or 61-8-716."

There are safety concerns with wording of the proposed text, but it potentially may provide a component of safety in enhancing awareness of and, and visibility of vulnerable road users.

>>Shelby Clark, State Bicycle & Pedestrian Coordinator will keep the Emphasis Area Team up to date on any legislation that may impact the safety of all transportation users, specifically vulnerable road users- non-motorized – pedestrians and bicyclists.

## Workplan Updates

CHSP manager stated that the emphasis area workplans are updated annually. Once updated it will be posted and sent out to the Team. The strategies are unchanged and will continue with the 4 elements (4Es) of transportation safety - education, enforcement, emergency medical services, and engineering in determining countermeasures. Consideration of additional opportunities within strategies are ongoing.

## Strategy Updates/Discussion

Strategy 2: Reduce and mitigate speed-related roadway departure/intersection crashes

*Discussion focused on how to lower speed and enforcement efforts. Missoula Police Department (MPD) does conduct speed studies, use speed trailers, and traffic counts. Brainstorming and thoughts discussed by members included using transversal rumble strips in advanced of stop sign placement. Could this treatment be used elsewhere to slow down traffic?*

*Stan Brelin, Operations Engineer noted that informational requests have been sent out to local councils and public works to identify "hot spots". Stan would like to involve more local law enforcement. Sgt Patrick Erbacher was asked if he would be interested in working to mitigate speed-related crashes. Sgt Erbacher was agreeable and suggested reaching out to the Montana Highway Patrol (MHP) District Captain for a MHP representative on the Emphasis Area Team.*  
>> Pam to share contact information.

*Other ideas discussed included transitional areas from rural to urban areas to reduce speed limits, narrowing of the roadway, roundabouts, and opportunities to partner with locals to encourage self-enforcement.*

Strategy 3: Reduce roadway departure and intersection crashes through traffic safety education.

*Gabe Priebe reported that with the passage of IJA that HSIP funds can be used for safety education. Typically, the NHTSA media campaign focusing on impaired driving runs from May- September. HSIP funds will be used in coordination with the Highway Safety Plan (HSP) to extend the campaign year around.*

*Will Cole spoke about the Share the Road program which focuses on teen driving behavior around large vehicles, and the desire to expand program to other Montana high schools. The program is looking for safety partners.*

>> *Possible future discussion to sit down with others to understand resources needed to conduct safety program in a local community.*

Strategy 6: Support and increase enforcement of proper road use behaviors by all road users (motorized and nonmotorized) identified through crash data.

*Missoula Police Department shared that 80% of 911 calls are related to DUIs. DUI Task Force is looking to reinvigorate members and do more outreach. Also shared was that depending on the event & time the process of an Uber can be jacked up. If a typical ride might be \$12; New Years Eve or Friday or Saturday night the same ride could be \$56, which may cause some people to risk driving impaired.*

*Another issue referenced the passing of bicyclist mentioned in the Legislation being tracked. Is there the capacity for all road users if 5 feet is granted, especially if the bicyclist is in the middle of a lane? Would this impede traffic flow? Couldn't local communities designate local roads for bicyclists?*

Strategy 7: Explore and implement best practices for reducing roadway departure, including distracted and fatigued driving, in addition to other behavioral factors.

*Research projects are ongoing and nothing to report currently.*

## Upcoming Events/ Trainings/Resources

- Mark Your Calendar- Next Emphasis Area Meeting – April 27, 2023- Presenter to be determined.
- Mark Your calendar- Annual Transportation Safety Meeting – October 4 & 5, 2023
- Webinar Events (Jan 30-Feb 9) Every Day Counts | Federal Highway Administration (dot.gov)  
<https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/innovation/everydaycounts/>
- Training/Resources/Technical Assistance- National Center for Rural Road Safety, <https://ruralsafetycenter.org/>
- Proven Safety Countermeasures-FHWA, <https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures>
- Zero Deaths and Safe System Approach-FHWA, <https://highways.dot.gov/safety/zero-deaths>
- Comprehensive Highway Safety Plan, <https://www.mdt.mt.gov/visionzero/plans/docs/chsp/current-chsp.pdf>
- Roadway Departure & Intersection-related EA Workplan & Meeting Minutes,  
<https://www.mdt.mt.gov/visionzero/plans/roadway-ea.aspx>