

## Community Traffic Safety Problems - Problem Identification FY24 HSP

Community traffic safety programs serve as the cornerstone of local interaction and education, allowing for additional outreach opportunities to areas or populations in Utah that the Highway Safety Office needs help to reach. With such a small staff, it is important for the Highway Safety Office to utilize partners. The Highway Safety Office works closely with approximately 129 law enforcement agencies across the state, 10 hospitals, 13 local health departments, the State Health Department, businesses, schools, colleges, universities, the Utah Department of Transportation, and other stakeholders to provide public information and education through community outreach efforts. State and National data is analyzed to identify problem areas and trends. Projects are implemented in partnership with community programs to address the identified challenges.

The state of Utah consists of 29 counties with 6 being urban and 23 rural, according to populous data from the US Census 2021. There are 3,658 miles of state highways in Utah consisting of 327 different roads that cross into all 29 counties of the State.

According to University of Utah's Gardner Institute, in 2022, Utah continued to experience strong population growth, adding the most residents since 2006. Total population is over 3.4 million with 61,242 new residents added in 2022. The Institute projects that Utah's population will continue to grow reaching 4 million between the years 2032 and 2033. With a growing population, Utah will need to continue seeking new and creative ways to reach and educate these new citizens, as well as current residents, about Utah traffic safety laws and the importance of ensuring Utah roads are safe for all users.

Between the years 2017-2021, Utah saw the following:

- 302,557 motor vehicle crashes resulted in 1,389 lives lost. On average, that is 60,511 crashes per year, resulting in 277 fatalities;
- Of the 1,389 people who lost their lives as the result of a crash; 62% were drivers, 21% were passengers, 11% were motorcyclists, 14% were pedestrians, 2% were bicyclists;
- Speed was the contributing factor for 29% of all fatalities and accounted for 14% of all crashes;
- 30% of the deaths were due to unrestrained occupants;
- Teenage drivers account for 21% of all crashes and 22.7% of all injuries;
- Transportation incidents were the largest cause of fatalities (36%) among fatal occupational injuries (Utah Labor Commission, Bureau of Labor Statistics);
- Of the 302,557 crashes over the 5 year period, 15% or 39,945 occurred on rural roadways.

According to the Federal Railroad Administration, during the last 5 years (2017-2021), there have been 79 crashes in which 16 people have died, and 33 people have been injured at highway-rail grade crossings in Utah.