

A GUIDE FOR 4-H LEADERS  
LETTER CARRIERS

AND RURAL MINNESOTA  
DOCUMENTS

SAVE LIVES THROUGH

**THE 4-H-RFD SAFETY PROGRAM:**

CORRECT ROAD HAZARDS

REMEMBER ROAD HAZARDS

YOU CAN'T CORRECT

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A program jointly sponsored by the University of Minnesota Agricultural Extension Service and the Minnesota Rural Letter Carriers' Association

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## 4-H—RFD SAFETY PROGRAM OBJECTIVE

THERE IS ONLY ONE OBJECTIVE to the "Save Lives Through the 4-H—RFD Safety Program": to reduce the number of accidents on rural roads and thereby reduce the potential for fatalities, injuries, and property damage. The means to be used include:

1. Eliminating or correcting physical hazards on rural roads, either through the efforts of 4-H Club members or through other resource persons.
2. Developing and strengthening safety-mindedness in 4-H Club members through education and participation.
3. Developing and strengthening safety-mindedness in the entire community through education, publicity, and participation.
4. Focusing community attention on local rural roads and road hazards.
5. Providing a procedure and an apparatus for identifying and correcting physical hazards.

The death, injury, and property damage resulting from automobile accidents is a national problem. It is also a state, county, and local problem; and even more specifically, it is a personal problem affecting those of us who frequently use the rural roads. Unless we do something *now* to reduce the current traffic accident rate, it is entirely possible that within the next 5 years each of us, or a close friend, or a relative could be involved in a severe motor vehicle accident.

The rate of accidents is increasing faster on county and township roads than on state and federal highways. The Minnesota State Highway Department has published statistics indicating that county and township roads have the highest fatal accident rate per vehicle mile of any of the various types of roadways in the state. Forty-one percent of the fatal accidents in 1965 occurred on rural trunk highways; 24 percent occurred on rural county and township roads.

A study of accidents involving automobiles operated by U. S. Rural Letter Carriers in the Upper Midwest showed that the severity of rural accidents is unusually high. Rural letter carriers are five times more likely to be injured in an accident than letter carriers driving in urban areas. Many rural letter carrier accidents have, as contributory causes, hazards most common in rural areas—dangerous hill crests, blind curves, narrow single-lane roads, obscured vision at driveways for both passing and emerging drivers, speed too fast for conditions, intersections obscured by crops and other vegetation, etc.

These hazards affect the entire rural population, not only the mailmen. These hazards contribute largely to the many accidents occurring to rural residents on rural roads.

To assist in the accident prevention measures being undertaken by other agencies and organizations, the Minnesota Rural Letter Carriers' Association and the 4-H Clubs of the Agricultural Extension Service have combined forces and pledged their cooperation in a vigorous effort to reduce the number of accidents on rural roads in Minnesota. The 4-H—RFD Safety Program is a program to **save lives** through correcting road hazards and remembering rural road hazards that cannot be corrected.

This is how the program works:

1. 4-H Club leaders call or write their county agent indicating that their club is interested, and give the time and place of a meeting when a rural mail carrier may appear on the program.
2. A rural mail carrier comes to the meeting, shows a set of slides on common hazards on rural roads, and leaves with the club a list of hazards on rural roads in the area.
3. The club, through democratic action, organizes to eliminate or correct the hazards.
4. 4-H leaders return the hazard sheets to the county Rural Mail Carrier Safety Officer when the hazard is corrected or by September 15.

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## **RECOGNITION**

Recognition is given to each club that corrects a rural road hazard. The club will receive a Certificate of Accomplishment at the fall county 4-H achievement program.

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**AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE,  
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