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Rural Safety News



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March 6, 2008 - News Update

Rural Safety News is an electronic newsletter of the [Center for Excellence in Rural Safety \(CERS\)](#) at the University of Minnesota. *Rural Safety News* brings you the latest research and resources concerning rural safety.

Announcements

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U.S. Transportation Secretary Peters Announces New Strategy to Improve Safety on Rural Roads

U.S. Transportation Secretary Mary E. Peters on Feb. 29 announced a new national strategy that will bring new focus, including resources and new technology, to reducing deaths on the nation's rural roads. "We want to put the brakes on rural road fatalities," said Secretary Peters. "This is a challenge that we have the experience, the ability and the resources to address. We can make our rural roads safer, we can do it now and we can do it without reinventing the wheel."

The Department's Rural Safety Initiative will help states and communities develop ways to eliminate the risks drivers face on America's rural roads and highlight available solutions and resources. The new endeavor addresses five key goals: safer drivers, better roads, smarter roads, better-trained emergency responders, and improved outreach and partnerships. The Secretary said approximately \$287 million in existing and new funding is available to support the effort.

FHWA: Rural Safety Innovation Program

The new FHWA Rural Safety Innovation Program intends to improve rural road safety by assisting rural communities in addressing highway safety problems and by providing rural communities the opportunity to compete for project funding to address these problems. The program is encouraging States and rural communities to develop creative, locally crafted solutions to roadway safety problems, document their efforts and outcomes, and share the results with other communities across the country. The program also is providing technical assistance and best practice guidance. Applications must be received on or before April 14, 2008. Proposals for applications selected for potential funding will be due in June 2008.

USDOT Seeks Technology Solutions to Improve Safety and Reduce Traffic Congestion

The USDOT Research and Innovative Technology Administration (RSPA) is providing up to \$3 million in initial funding to private industry, research organizations, and state and local governments under its initiative to reduce congestion and improve the safety and performance of the nation's transportation system through field-testing of deployment-ready technologies. [SafeTrip-21](#) builds upon research into the use of electronic information, navigation, and communications technologies to prevent accidents and alleviate congestion by providing drivers with real-time safety warnings, traffic and transit information, and advanced navigational tools. The selected test sites and technology applications will be evaluated in a year-long field test that will begin following an initial exhibition of capabilities during the November 2008 Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) World Congress in New York City.