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One of HSRC's national clearinghouses, the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center (PBIC), has secured funding from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to evaluate the use of a community guide developed to assist neighborhood residents in setting up pedestrian safety programs. The PBIC will provide funding to 10 communities to perform the steps outlined in the "Resident's Guide for Creating Safe and Walkable Communities" while providing these communities with technical support in using the Guide.

The objective in awarding the funding will be to provide information, ideas, success stories, and resources to help neighborhood residents learn about issues that affect walking conditions. By using the funding and assistance from the PBIC, the community residents will be empowered to find ways to address or prevent their pedestrian problems and promote pedestrian safety. The Guide also contains fact sheets, worksheets, and sample materials that can be distributed or adapted to meet the needs of a community.

Through this project, the Center hopes to gain input from the participating communities to assess the usefulness and completeness of the Guide content, and identify necessary improvements to the content as well as additional support tools that may be needed. The project will involve developing

and executing an objective site selection process to administer the funding to 10 community groups along with regular communication with communities to determine and meet their technical assistance needs. The Center will also develop and implement an evaluation plan that will ensure objective, relevant, high-quality feedback on the content of the Guide and recommendations for future materials to assist communities in promoting pedestrian safety.

Deer-motor vehicle crashes up in 2007



Motor-vehicle crashes involving deer last year on North Carolina roadways jumped to 19,277, up from 17,236 in 2006. Of the total reported automobile crashes in North Carolina in 2007, deer were cited as a factor in 8.6 percent, up from 7.8 percent in 2006. Wake County topped the list with 1129 deer-related crashes. Other counties with high deer crashes include Guilford, Rockingham, Duplin and Pitt. There were 11 fatal crashes in 2007 related to deer compared to an average of approximately 6 over the last 3 years.

While a crash involving a deer can happen at any time, drivers should be particularly careful both in the early morning hours and the early evening hours. Almost 80 percent of deer-related crashes in 2007 occurred between the hours of 6 p.m. and 6 a.m.

White-tailed deer can be seen on the move around North Carolina roadways at any time of the year. Yet 48 percent of all deer-related crashes in North Carolina

occurred during the months of October, November and December. For more information, please visit http://www.hsrc.unc.edu/news_room/2008-09-24_deer_08.cfm.

The UNC Highway Safety Research Center offers the following tips for lowering your risk of a crash with a deer.

- **Slow down!** In areas with a large deer population, or where there are deer warning signs, drivers should reduce their speed.
- **Always wear your seat belt!** It's your best protection from injuries in the event of a crash.
- **Watch for eyes reflecting in your headlights.** Try to look far down the road and scan the roadsides, especially when driving through field edges, heavily wooded areas, or posted deer crossing areas. The sooner you see a deer on or approaching a road, the better your chances of avoiding a crash.
- **Remember that deer travel in herds.** If you see one deer cross the road in front of you, don't assume that all is clear. Deer herds can be fairly large, and the animals often move one right behind the other.
- **Do not place confidence in "deer whistles" or other "ultra-sonic" devices that claim to prevent deer collisions.**
- **Maintain control of your vehicle.** It is important that you not lose control of your vehicle or veer into the path of an oncoming vehicle to avoid contact with an animal. Loss of control usually results in a more serious crash.

Figures reflect the total number of **reported** deer-related crashes. There is evidence that a great many more of these crashes occur than are reported to law enforcement agencies. The complete deer-motor vehicle crash data for all North Carolina counties is available at http://www.hsrc.unc.edu/safety_info/animal_vehicle/index.cfm.

HSRC completes awareness project surrounding teens and distracted driving



The UNC Highway Safety Research Center recently completed a peer-to-peer educational campaign for the North Carolina Department of Transportation and the NC Executive Committee for Highway Safety. The campaign is aimed at raising awareness to the issue of distracted driving among teenagers in the state.

The project encompassed a peer-to-peer approach, requiring the input of real teens across North Carolina on the topic of distracted driving. In order to gather this input, HSRC held two focus groups at Perquimans County High School in Hertford, NC and Myers Park High School in Charlotte, NC. Campaign elements included a video and radio public service announcements featuring footage of the teens sharing their experiences and giving their thoughts on the dangers of distracted driving.

Text messaging was overwhelmingly indicated by focus group participants as the biggest distraction to them, also citing friends, music, other people in the car and

eating as additional distractions. As part of North Carolina's Graduated Driver Licensing program, use of a cell phone is prohibited for drivers under the age of 18. Use of a cell phone includes talking and texting.

Once the campaign elements were completed, the HSRC project team distributed campaign packets, which included three videos, the campaign brochure and a cover letter under the signature of Secretary Lyndo Tippet, to all North Carolina public high schools. Campaign materials were also provided to the North Carolina Chapter of Students Against Destructive Decisions, the North Carolina Driver & Traffic Safety Education Association and the NC Governor's Highway Safety Program.

To access the campaign materials, please visit http://www.hsrc.unc.edu/safety_info/young_drivers/distraction.cfm.

HSRC News Briefs

Center launches podcast

The National Center for Safe Routes to School has launched the Safe Routes Podcast, a monthly Internet radio show that highlights ways to get kids up and active on their way to school and features interviews from Safe Routes to School programs across the country. Podcasts are audio (MP3) files that you may listen to on your computer or download to an iPod or other portable player.

To listen to the Podcast and sign up for RSS feeds to receive automatic notifications when new episodes are added, please visit <http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/podcast>.

HSRC welcomes 2 new staff members

HSRC welcomes Pam Barth and Raquel Rivas, who have joined the National Center for Safe Routes to School (NCSRTS), one of HSRC's federally funded national information clearinghouses.

Pam Barth joins NCSRTS as project manager, where she is responsible for coordinating programs and activities that provide technical assistance to states and communities on how to promote safe walking or bicycling to school as part of the national Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program. Pam holds a B.A. from the University of Colorado at Boulder and a M.R.P. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Raquel Rivas joins NCSRTS as marketing manager and is responsible for marketing and communications strategies, including media relations. Previously, Raquel worked on international communications for Mayo Clinic and its three medical practices in Arizona, Florida and Minnesota. She holds a B.A. in journalism and an M.A. in English.

Sign up for additional updates from HSRC

HSRC operates several national and state-level information centers, many of which have their own e-newsletters and email alerts. Use the links below to sign up for additional information on child passenger safety recalls, Safe Routes to School, as well as pedestrian and bicycle-specific research.

Sign up for updates and announcements on child passenger safety recalls at http://www.hsrc.unc.edu/safety_info/child_passenger_safety/child_restraint_recalls_email.cfm.

Sign up for email updates from the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center at <http://www.walkinginfo.org/newsroom/newsletter/signup.cfm>

Sign up for email updates from the National Center for Safe Routes to School at http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/news_room/newsletter/signup.cfm.
