

# Media Release



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## **Ohio State Highway Patrol and Ohio Turnpike announce 2023 safety initiatives**

**CLEVELAND** (Feb. 24, 2023) - The Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSHP) and the Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission (OTIC) are collaborating in an effort to reduce fatal crashes and unsafe driving behaviors on the Ohio Turnpike statewide.

Today, the OSHP and the OTIC announced safety initiatives slated for 2023 aimed to improve roadway safety along the 241-mile Ohio Turnpike (Interstate 80, I-90 and I-76), which traverses through 13 counties across northern Ohio.

These initiatives include plans for increased aerial speed enforcement, distracted driving enforcement zones, increased patrols of work zones and educational programs. The purpose of these initiatives is to continue to educate drivers on the importance of following traffic laws and eliminating dangerous driving behaviors.

“Critical injuries and deaths continue to occur when drivers are speeding and/or distracted,” said Staff Lieutenant Richard Reeder, OSHP Turnpike Liaison. “Through this collaboration, we can collectively focus on our shared mission of reducing traffic fatalities and improving the overall safety of the Ohio Turnpike.”

From 2018 through 2022, there were 11,038 crashes on the Ohio Turnpike. Of those crashes, 2,152 were injury crashes and 48 were fatal crashes. Speed was attributed to nearly 4,000 crashes during that time period, while distracted driving attributed to 349 of those crashes.

“Despite all the recent advances in vehicle technology designed to improve motorist and roadway safety, dangerous driving behaviors alone cause about 94% of fatal crashes each year nationwide,” said Chris Matta, OTIC chief engineer, in remarks today at the Cleveland Auto Show. “The top-five deadly driving risky behaviors include speeding/aggressive driving, distracted driving, impaired driving, not wearing seatbelts, and drowsy driving.”

The OTIC also highlighted a few of its year-round safety campaigns, which include Don’t Crowd the Plow; Move Over, Slow Down; and Work Zone Awareness.

“Motorists should take every precaution to avoid passing snowplow trucks and allow extra space for our maintenance crews to clear the road,” Matta added. “The safest place to be on the road is behind a snowplow truck.”

To remind motorists of Ohio’s Move Over Law, the OTIC has installed permanent roadway signs, “Move Over Slow Down for All Vehicles with Flashing Lights,” on the ramps at all 14 service plazas along the Ohio Turnpike.

“The law requires drivers to ‘move over and slow down’ for all stationary vehicles with flashing lights on the side of all roadways and highways in the state and elsewhere,” Matta added. “These stationary vehicles include roadway construction and maintenance vehicles, law enforcement vehicles and tow trucks.”

Matta added that dangerous driving behaviors on the highway also put maintenance and roadway workers at severe risk in construction work zones.

“We’re urging all motorists to be attentive when driving through work zones and move over and slow down for all vehicles with flashing lights so that everyone returns home to their loved ones safe and sound at the end of the day,” he said. “By eliminating dangerous driving behaviors, most vehicle crashes are preventable.”

You can help contribute to roadway safety by calling #677 when you see unsafe motorists driving on Ohio roads.

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