

# SPEED

As is the case in much of the country, speeding persists as a highway safety problem in North Carolina. The North Carolina General Statutes (§20 – 141) refer to speeding as driving at a “speed greater than is reasonable and prudent under the conditions then existing,” while the State crash report form (Form DMV-349) defines speeding as either exceeding “authorized speed limit” or exceeding “safe speed for conditions.” Not only do higher speeds leave less time for drivers to perceive and react to roadway conditions or situations, they also lead to more severe impacts when collisions do occur.

Because excessive speed can exacerbate all other roadway safety issues in North Carolina, progress in addressing speeding has the potential to positively affect other areas, as well.

It takes the involvement of many parties to create a culture that encourages and expects safe speeds. Such parties include law enforcement, roadway designers, driver educators, and drivers themselves.



## NOTABLE FACTS

- 2 of 5 fatal crashes in North Carolina are related to speeding.
- Speeding is a contributing factor in more fatal crashes in North Carolina than alcohol or seatbelt use.

## EMPHASIS AREA GOAL

In 2013, there were 319 fatalities and 407 serious injuries from speed-related crashes. The goal for this emphasis area is to reduce speed-related fatalities and serious injuries.

## STRATEGIES

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- Set speed limits that are appropriate to the roadway type, area type, and current conditions.
- Explore new avenues of enforcement and penalties.
- Investigate and address problem locations.
- Engage stakeholders to create a culture of safe speed.

## INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

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- Number of training events for setting speed limits.
- Number of communities engaged in anti-speeding programs.
- Number of corridors reviewed for speed-related improvements.
- Number of speed-related improvements implemented.

## POTENTIAL IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES

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- Advocacy groups
- Law enforcement
- Legislative liaisons
- North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
- North Carolina Department of Transportation
- North Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles

**See Appendix J for the  
Speed Action Plan.**