

Date: July 2, 1998

To: District Directors  
Attn: District System Planning and Operations Section

From: Pete F. Rusch,  
State Traffic Engineer

Subject: Statewide Crash Rates

The definition of a "reportable crash" changed starting January 1, 1996. For a Property Damage Only crash, the reporting threshold was raised from \$500 to \$1,000 to "any one person's property". Government-owned property changed to \$1,000 for government-owned vehicles, and remained at \$200 for all other government-owned property, such as traffic control devices.

This change in the threshold most likely, contributed to the decline in property damaged crashes (and therefore, total crashes) as compared to prior years. When compared to 1995, statewide fatal crashes are down from 655 to 631, injury crashes were 4.3% lower, property damages crashes were 16.3% lower and the total crashes were 12.7% lower.

The Table I lists the Wisconsin statewide crash rates for 1993-1997. These rates are expressed as crashes per 100 million vehicle-miles. The vehicle miles have been provided by the Division of Planning and Budget and the crashes are from the Accident File which is maintained by the Division of Motor Vehicles. The rates do not include non-reportable crashes.

Table II includes the 1993-1997 crash rates for the same highway classification, computed excluding hit deer crashes. Please note that this rate is just additional information and is being made available upon request. The official rates will be the ones shown in Table I, which includes the deer hit crashes.

During the past years it was discovered that a number of crashes that have happened on urban state trunk highways were actually coded as happening on a city or village street. In some instances this is a large percentage of the total crashes for that highway. All the crashes that have happened on both

urban STH and city streets have been combined into a single category called Urban Streets.

Table I

WISCONSIN STATEWIDE AVERAGE CRASH RATES

	<u>RURAL INTERSTATE</u>			<u>URBAN INTERSTATE</u>		
	TOTAL	FATAL	NFI	TOTAL	FATAL	
NFI						
1993 36	88	.6	21	111	.4	
1994	89	.5	20	130	.3	
41 1995 35		85	.4	21	107	.2
1996 35	82	.5	21	103	.2	
1997 35	76	.5	19	107	.2	

<u>TRUNKS</u>	<u>RURAL STH</u>			<u>URBAN STREETS</u>			<u>COUNTY</u>	
	TOTAL	FATAL	NFI	TOTAL	FATAL	NFI	TOTAL	FATAL
NFI								
1993 75	238	2.0	60	396	.7	127	319	2.8
1994 110	222	1.8	57	350	.5	117	449	3.7
1995 94	210	1.8	54	365	.6	121	376	3.2
1996 95	195	1.9	54	355	.6	125	338	3.0
1997 96	181	1.8	51	313	.6	111	342	2.9

Table II

WISCONSIN STATEWIDE AVERAGE CRASH RATES

