



BROOME COUNTY TRAFFIC SAFETY BOARD NEWSLETTER

Broome County Health Department 225 Front St. / Binghamton, NY 13905

Christine Muss, Traffic Safety Coordinator

Telephone: 607-778-2807 / Fax: 778-3998 / Email: CMuss@co.broome.ny.us



'Tis the Season for Safety

December 2007/January 2008

Minimize your winter driving risks this year by following these guidelines:

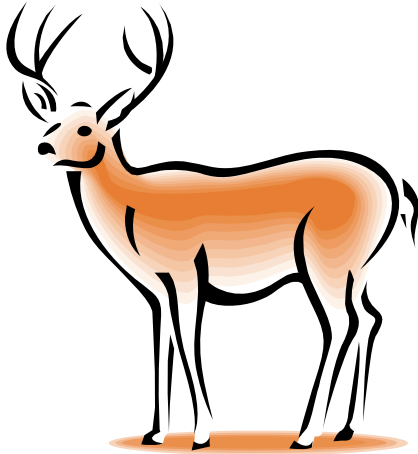
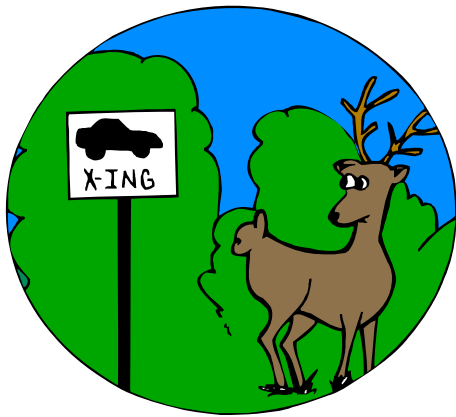
Getting Started:

- Get an engine tune-up in the fall. Switch to winter-weight oil if you aren't already using all-season oil. Be sure all lights are in good working order and have brakes adjusted.
- Be sure to have your battery and voltage regulator checked. Make sure battery connections are good.
- If the battery terminal posts seem to be building up a layer of corrosion, clean them with a paste of baking soda and water. Let it foam, and then rinse with water. Apply a thin film of petroleum jelly to the terminal posts to prevent corrosion and reconnect.
- Be sure all fluids are at proper levels. Antifreeze should not only be strong enough to prevent freezing, but fresh enough to prevent rust.
- Make sure wiper blades are cleaning properly. Consider changing to winter wiper blades, which are made for driving in snow. They are covered with a rubber boot to keep moisture away from working parts of the blade.
- Don't idle a cold vehicle's engine for a long time to warm it up—it could harm the engine. The way to warm up a vehicle is to drive it.

Be sure to have these items on hand in your car in case of an emergency, especially during the winter season:

- Snow shovel
- Scraper with a brush on one end
- Tow chain or strap
- Tire chains
- Flashlight (with extra batteries)
- Abrasive material (cat litter, sand, salt or traction mats)
- Jumper cables
- Warning device (flares or reflective triangles)
- Brightly colored cloth to signal for help
- Empty coffee or similar type can containing candles, matches (in a water tight container) or a lighter, high energy food (chocolate or dried fruits)
- Sleeping bags or blankets, ski caps and mittens
- First-aid supplies
- Compass





How to Avoid Collisions with Deer

The Department of Environmental Conservation recommends motorists follow these precautions while driving during hunting season . . .

- Use extreme caution if driving at dawn and dusk when deer are most active and visibility is poor. This means deer are often most active during peak commuter traveling times.
- The risk of deer/vehicle collisions is greatest during autumn and early winter. Two-thirds of these crashes occur in October, November and December when deer movements peak due to the onset of the breeding season.
- Slow down when approaching deer standing near roadsides. Deer may “bolt” or change direction at the last minute.
- If you see a deer cross the road, slow down and use extreme caution. Deer often travel in groups. If you see one, expect more.
- Use flashers or a headlight signal to warn other drivers when deer are spotted on or near the road.
- Use caution and be alert when passing through areas marked with deer crossing signs. These signs are placed in areas that have shown a high incidence of deer/vehicle collision in the past.

Cell Phones and Driving

In this day and age, it is hard to find a person who does not own a cellular phone. Cell phone purchases have exploded since 1995. Although many cell phone users say their main reason for having a cell phone is for security measures, we see them being used everywhere . . . at malls, in restaurants, at work and many times while driving. However use of a hand-held cellular telephone to engage in a call while driving is prohibited according to New York State’s Vehicle and Traffic Law. Cell phones do provide many benefits for a driver. Nearly half of all cell phone owners have used their phone to report car trouble, medical emergencies, crimes and drunk or reckless drivers. Police and EMS officials say that in many cases response times have been cut, criminals have been apprehended and lives have been saved due to calls from cell phone users. But is it possible to drive safely while talking on the phone?

Some Tips for Safe Cell Phone Use:

- ✓ Make safe driving your first priority:
 - Buckle Up
 - Keep your hands on the wheel
 - Keep your eyes on the road
- ✓ Position your phone where it is easy to see and reach
- ✓ Familiarize yourself with the phone’s operation while the car is parked
- ✓ Use a hands-free device while driving
- ✓ Use the speed dial feature for frequently called numbers
- ✓ Pull over and dial manually
- ✓ Never take notes while driving
 - Pull off the road if you must read or write
- ✓ Use voicemail to pick up your calls if it is inconvenient or unsafe to answer the car phone
- ✓ Keep calls brief and never allow your conversation to distract you from driving

Remember any task a driver performs while driving is a potential distraction so use common sense.

Recalls, Used Seats and After-Market Products....Oh My!

Tear off and mail this part.

Customer: Just fill in your name and address

Your name _____

Your street address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

CHILD RESTRAINT REGISTRATION CARD

MODEL #: 22209 - FSM HIGHBACK BOOSTER
MANUFACTURED: L76 B 115896 04/24/2007

4359-4069



To find out if your car seat has been recalled, visit the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration website](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov) to review their complete recall list

www.nhtsa.dot.gov

Recalls:

Most parents and caregivers trust that their car seat is safe. But is it? With all of the recent recalls on child products and toys, it is extremely important that parents and caregivers remember to fill out their **registration cards** on car seats. *All* new car seats include one. The card is easy. Simply fill out your name and address and pop it in the mail, free of charge. By doing this, you will be notified by the car seat manufacturer if your car seat is ever **recalled**. You will also be notified if the car seat has any special safety instructions.

Used Seats:

Parents and caregivers should avoid purchasing used car seats from garage sales or accepting hand me down seats. Not only can you not "re-register" a used car seat but it is difficult to even determine its **safety**, especially if you do not know the original car seat owner(s). The **crash history** of a used car seat is unknown as well. The car seat may look like it is in good condition but even **minor cracks, bends, or breaks** in the plastic shell can compromise the safety of the seat. Seats that have already been used may also be **old**. Car seats **expire after 6 years** and most used car seats are **missing their appropriate labels and owner's manuals**. Car seat labels and manuals carry important information such as the **model number** and **date of manufacture**. Without this information, it is impossible to determine whether the car seat is expired or recalled. The best rule of thumb is to avoid using them all together.

After-Market Products:

What are these? After-market products are items that are sold separately from the actual car seat. These items can include **harness strap covers, add-on trays, head support cushions, extra padding, seatbelt adjusters**, etc. The use of these products is not recommended because they do not undergo any type of crash testing so their safety during a crash is unknown. After-market products are not necessary for proper car seat use and only add the illusion of additional safety.

The Broome County Child Passenger Safety Program Child Safety Seat Fitting Station

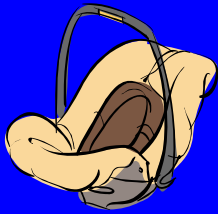
Date: Friday, December 7, 2007

Time: 9a.m.-12p.m.

Location: Broome County Sheriff's Office
(in the garage area)

Appointments only

The fitting station offers parents and caregivers an opportunity to have their car seats checked by a Certified Child Passenger Safety Technician for proper installation.



To schedule an appointment please call:

Christine Muss

Broome County Health Department

607-778-2807

CMuss@co.broome.ny.us



Broome County Traffic Safety Board **Announcements**

Next Traffic Safety Board Meeting:

- **January 9, 2008**
- **Located at the Broome County Health Department, Conference Room A**
- **4p.m.**
- **All are welcome to attend**
- **Please RSVP by January 4, 2008 at 607-778-2807**

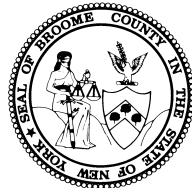
Looking for more information about Traffic Safety?

Visit our website to read past newsletters and press releases, to learn about upcoming events and what's new in traffic safety.

Go to www.gobroomecounty.com

Click on [Health Department](#)

Click on [Injury Prevention/Traffic Safety](#)



Barbara J. Fiala, Broome County Executive

*Graphics and research provided by the New York State Governor's Traffic Safety Committee
www.safeny.com, SAFEKIDS Worldwide, www.safekids.org and The National Safety Council,
www.nsc.org. The production of this newsletter was made possible through funding from the NYSGTSC.*