



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
Federal Highway  
Administration

## Memorandum

**Subject:** Free Tools For Boosting Traffic Safety in Your Community

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**To:** Our Community Partners

JUN 26 2012

More than ever, our citizens expect public agencies to find new ways to create more value from every tax dollar. As we all work hard to build back our nation's economy, and spend cherished time with family and friends, time matters more than ever it seems. What if I told you that working together, we could protect and save lives, while also saving time, and money?

We can. Traffic Incident Management, or "TIM" programs and responders are doing this every day on roadways and communities across the country. TIM responders include firefighters, EMS, law enforcement, towing and recovery, transportation professionals and safety service patrols. Together these responders use well-rehearsed procedures to get the right equipment to the right location faster, protect motorists' lives, and restore the affected traffic lanes more quickly. Traffic incidents, defined as just about anything that affects the flow of traffic on our roadways, are the single greatest cause of unexpected delay.

Time spent in traffic jams due to traffic incidents costs businesses billions of dollars in lost productivity. Many commuters lose the equivalent of nearly one full workweek of time (36 hours) and nearly a tank of gas just sitting in incident-related traffic every year. What's more, the AAA noted this year that the costs of traffic incidents to society has risen sharply—approximately 85%—in just four years.

But all of this pales in comparison to the value of time when you or a loved one is involved in a serious traffic crash. When lives are at stake, time is never more precious. The ability of emergency responders to get to the crash scene and then to the hospital, to deliver lifesaving help to people injured in a crash, is paramount.

**However, these "heroes of the highway" cannot do it alone—they need our help.** Motorists need to know and abide by safe, quick clearance laws and policies that require drivers to **slow down, and move over** one lane where possible, when passing an incident scene. Drivers need to be informed to **move their vehicle out of the lanes of traffic**, to a shoulder or safe nearby road, if they are involved in an incident, their vehicle is drivable and there are no injuries.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is distributing a convenient downloadable public outreach kit to help organizations like yours get the word out about the value of TIM that includes a brochure, poster, presentation, driver education program insert, press release template, and talking points. These materials are just one click away at [http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/eto\\_tim\\_pse/timtoolbox/](http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/eto_tim_pse/timtoolbox/). They can be used alone, or easily integrated into related campaigns you may be launching this year.

Saving lives, time and money, is a priority of communities across the country, and of the FHWA. We hope you will join us and encourage your members and communities to learn about and support TIM, and promote safe, quick clearance of traffic incidents.