



NEWS RELEASE

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United Feature Syndicate
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Scripps Howard News Service Investigates America's 'Killer Roads'; Analyzes Causes and Seeks Fixes to the Alarming Death Toll

NEW YORK, March 4 – The routine act of driving has become the riskiest thing most Americans do, with more than 100 people dying every day on America's killer roads. But what are the causes of each of these accidents? How could they have been prevented? Scripps Howard News Service has conducted a first-of-its-kind analysis of all 627,262 highway deaths from 1994 to 2008, examining how many deaths in each crash were linked to drinking, speeding, not wearing a seat belt, or a myriad of other reasons.

The SHNS investigative project, which includes seven articles, an editorial by Dale McFeatters, and several photos and videos, yields some shocking results, particularly among victims who did not exhibit overtly reckless behavior at the time of their accident. The proportion of highway deaths among drivers who were sober, traveling at a safe speed, and wore a seat belt, has grown 35 percent in the last 15 years.

SHNS has created a Web site that allows newsrooms to assess dangerous highway conditions in their communities. Individual reports on the nation's 3,100 counties – including maps plotting the most recent fatalities, and color-coded by risk factor – can be seen at www.scrippsnews.com/killerroads.com.

The package offers a comprehensive look at more than just fatality statistics. Lead project reporter Thomas Hargrove examines how Americans might be able to help better notify the government about dangerous roads, and he includes experts' tips on how to become a safer driver. There is also a report on the 20 most dangerous roads in the nation, and one on the percentage of fatal accidents involving drinking or speeding, according to the type of road.

Hargrove can be reached at SHNS's Washington, D.C., office at 202-408-2703 or by e-mail at hargrovet@shns.com.



Scripps Howard News Service (www.shns.com) is a tightly edited news service that offers 80-100 stories daily to more than 400 newspapers and Web sites worldwide through United Media. SHNS is prepared by a Washington, D.C., staff and the daily file includes the best stories from Scripps Howard Newspapers and an award-winning roster of contributing newspapers from around the world.

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