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# SPEED FACT SHEET

February 2010

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- The National Highway Traffic Administration reported speed as factor in 41 of Iowa's 412 traffic fatalities during 2008.
- Iowa had the lowest percent of speed-related fatalities in the entire nation in 2008 and was the only state with less than 10% of traffic fatalities being speed related.
- Nationally, speed was a contributing factor in 30% of all traffic fatalities in 2008.
- Only 2 of Iowa's 41 speed-related fatalities in 2008 occurred on the interstate system, both on interstates with 55 mph speed limits. Nineteen of Iowa's speed-related fatalities occurred on non-interstate roads with 55 mph speed limits and 17 of Iowa's speed-related fatalities occurred on roads with limits of 50 mph or less.
- In 1995, Congress repealed the national maximum speed limit (NMSL). During 1996, speed limits were increased from 55 to 65 mph on 252 miles of rural 4-lane primary highway in Iowa.
- Since repeal of the national maximum speed limit, a total of 35 states have raised speed limits.
- Iowa's rural interstate speed limit increased from 65 to 70 mph on July 1, 2005.
- 1997 overall fatality rates for the 26 states with interstate speed limits of 70 mph or greater averaged 1.92 per 100 million VMT compared to a rate of 1.52 for the 24 states with limits of 65 mph or less, a difference of more than 20%.
- When traveling at 55 miles per hour, total stopping distance (including 3/4 second reaction time) is 204 feet. When traveling at 65 miles per hour, total stopping distance is 272 feet. Using those above figures, an 18% increase in speed (from 55 to 65) results in a 33% increase in stopping distance.
- Nationally, NHTSA estimates that in 2008, speed was a contributing factor in crashes that killed 11,674 people. The economic cost of all speed-related crashes is estimated at more than \$35 billion annually.

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**Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau**



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**Iowa Department of Public Safety**

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