

Signing Fatalities

IS IT WORTH THE
PAIN?
TDOT'S EXPERIENCE

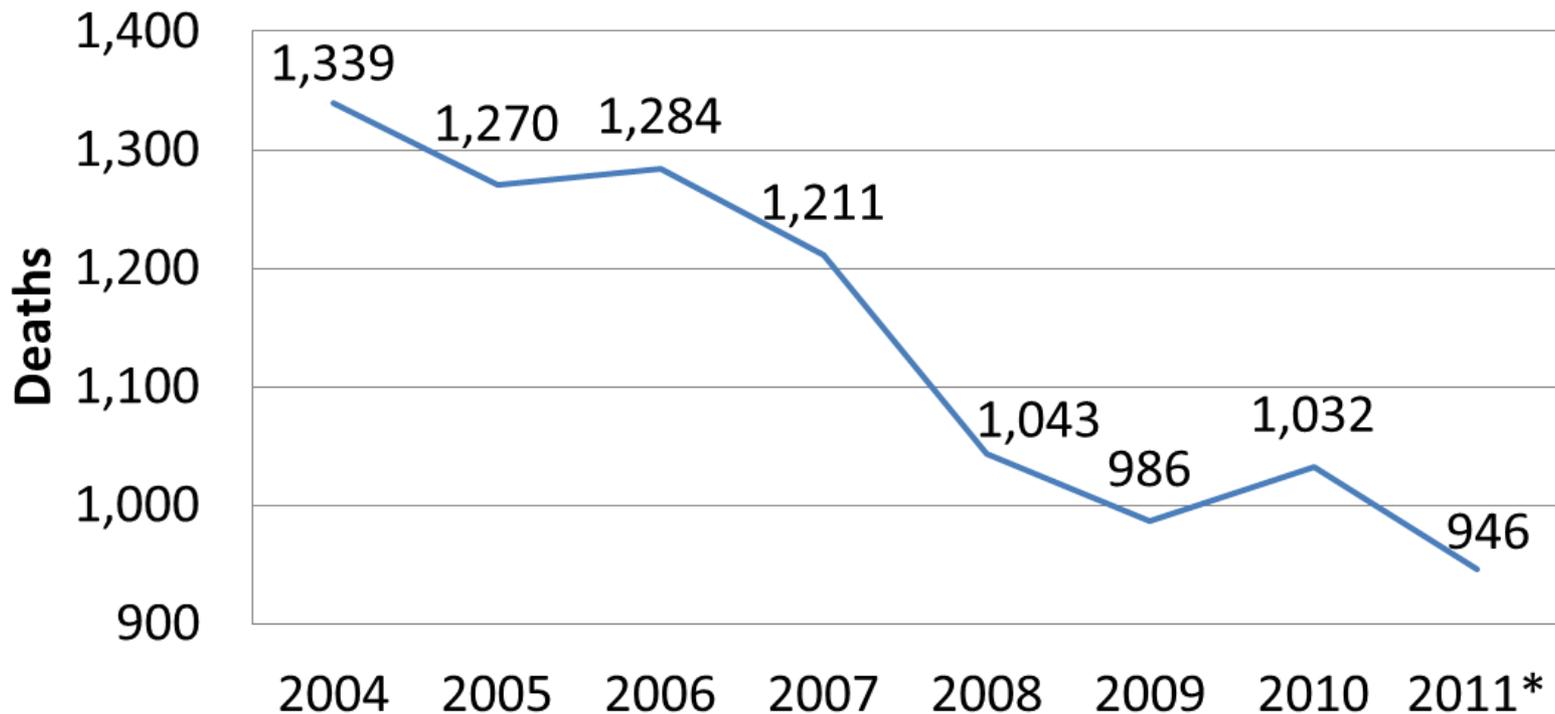
GRANDINETTI, OCTOBER 2012

Why use Dynamic Message Signs?

- *2011 Experience: Record-setting reductions
- *2011 People not driving as much
- *Awareness efforts increased

2004-2011 Fatalities

Traffic Fatalities 2004 - 2011*



Motorists Views

- * Best estimate: 600,000 daily see at least once
- * Hard to estimate
- * 151 Boards in 4 urbans: Nashville, Knoxville, Chattanooga, Memphis
- * Distracted drivers may not see these

Unusual tactics necessary

- * Currently spend \$20 million on addressing behaviors—speeding, impaired driving, seat belt usage
- * Morbidity factor discussed at top levels
- * Deviated from FHWA guidelines on DMS

Commissioner Schroer April 30 @ 288 Fatalities



Game Plan

- * Post when no other motorist guidance is needed—departure from FHWA guidance
- * Updated M-F at 10 a.m.
- * Provide related messages
- * Post through “100 Days of Summer Heat”

Immediate Media Response

- Lead stories all 4 major cities
- Stories have continued over the summer

Media Response



- * <http://www.commercialappeal.com/news/2012/sep/10/data-coaching-important-in-changing-behavior-in/?partner=RSS>



- * <http://www.newschannel5.com/story/18971898/road-fatalities-reach-record-numbers>



- * <http://www.wbir.com/news/local/story.aspx?storyid=218204>

More Media



- * <http://www.wate.com/story/18241488/traffic-fatalities-on-the-rise-in-tennessee>



- * <http://www.wkrn.com/story/18247001/thp-reports-1100-seat-belt-violations-in-24-hours>



- * <http://www.knoxnews.com/news/2012/aug/28/sam-venable-a-tally-of-tragedy-on-our-highways/>

Public Comments

60% Negative

“This email is in response to the... never-ending death toll of Tennessee highways. I can assure you that the only thing I observe are the total deaths continuing to rise. Who is responsible for these messages, the Grim Reaper?”

Public Comments

40% positive

“If just one life is saved, it will be a success. I think that posting the numbers, and unfortunately, seeing them go up, will put it in the forefront of drivers’ and passengers’ minds. Rather than being a nebulous number tallied somewhere.”

Comments on Driving Messages

“Lights on when raining – it’s the law” It was very gratifying to see that message the other day. At the time, I had my lights on, however, earlier in the day, I didn’t! We all need reminders from time to time. Given the number of individuals who have lost their lives this year due to traffic accidents, anything we can do to reduce the carnage on our roadways must be tried.”

Results

- * April 30, 2012: 63+ fatalities over 2011
- * As of Sept. 28, 2012: 37+ fatalities
- * Made the public aware of numbers we see daily.
- * Keeps it in public discourse
- * Plan to continue through December 31, 2012
- * NHTSA auditors have praised TDOT for these efforts

Questions:

