



AAA + Advocacy

Spring 2008

The founders of CSAA in 1900 were pioneers interested in progress, dedicated to service and committed to their communities. Some of their early undertakings included placing the first road safety signs along Northern California routes, providing early traffic surveys and recommendations to cities and establishing a Public Safety Department.

For more than a century, AAA has been at the forefront in developing research and programs to serve our members and the traveling public. Our research has helped to educate and inform our Members, the general public and opinion leaders about countless traffic safety and transportation issues over the years. This installment of AAA + Advocacy highlights some recent AAA studies that continue that commitment and are helping to shape our advocacy efforts around several important issues today.

The Staggering Cost of Traffic Deaths \$164 Billion a Year

When American motorists talk about transportation problems, congestion is generally their main complaint, but a new study from AAA finds the staggering cost of traffic fatalities is more than double the cost of congestion.

Nearly 43,000 people die on the nation's roadways each year. That's nearly five people each hour. Yet the annual tally of motor vehicle-related fatalities barely registers in many people's minds.

The first-of-its-kind study found that the national cost of crashes is \$164 billion a year, nearly two-and-a-half times greater than the \$67 billion price tag for congestion. Costs measured include medical, emergency and police services, property damage, lost productivity and quality of life.

AAA's study examined costs in most major metropolitan areas throughout the United States. Total crash costs correspond to the size of a metropolitan area. Larger cities have more traffic and a greater likelihood of crashes, hence, increased total costs simply due to a multiplier effect. However, on a per person basis, smaller cities generally have higher costs.

Among the nation's very large metropolitan areas, the San Francisco-Oakland area actually had the lowest total crash costs, at about \$2.7 million or \$658 per person. Among large metro areas, crashes in the Sacramento area cost about \$2.1 million, or \$1,040 per person. In San Jose, crashes cost about \$1.1 million per year, or \$641 per person. Crash costs in Fresno, a medium metro area, run about \$988,000, or \$1,126 per person.

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AAA Partners with UC Davis on Hybrid and Plug-in Hybrid Studies

AAA of Northern California, Nevada and Utah has partnered with the newly launched Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicle (PHEV) Research Center at UC Davis to help build awareness of plug-in hybrid vehicles.

This partnership expands AAA's ongoing relationship with UC Davis' world-leading Institute of Transportation Studies (ITS-Davis) that includes research collaboration, an annual fellowship award providing tuition assistance to a minority student studying alternative fuels, and other sponsorship activities.

"AAA has been an advocate for safe and responsible transportation for more than 100 years," said PHEV Center Director Tom Turrentine. "We are so pleased to have them as a partner in this Center's groundbreaking research efforts."

AAA will provide emergency roadside service for the Center's fleet of PHEVs as well as helping identify research participants for the Center's study of "real world" plug-in hybrid vehicle usage. AAA employees and members selected at random will be given the opportunity to volunteer for the study in 2008.

AAA and ITS-Davis collaborated on another study in 2007 to examine the environmental impacts of hybrid vehicles. Researchers analyzed the current impact of hybrids on oil consumption and toxic emissions and projected their overall impact on the environment in real-world terms like tankers of oil saved and number of trees planted.

On an individual basis, the impact of driving a hybrid car is significant. On average, the study found that a hybrid vehicle

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AAA hopes the study will raise awareness among lawmakers and the public on the importance of transportation safety investments. AAA advocates making traffic safety a priority in transportation planning at federal, state and local levels and working to pass legislation and enforce laws related to seat belts, drunken driving and graduated driver licensing systems.

Email advocacy@csaa.com if you would like to receive a copy of the full AAA Crashes vs. Congestion Report.

Teen Crashes Costs U.S. \$34 Billion

A new AAA study conducted by the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (PIRE) found that crashes involving teen drivers age 15 to 17 cost the United States more than \$34 billion in medical expenses, lost work, property damage, quality of life loss and other related costs in 2006.

The \$34.4 billion cost included \$9.8 billion from fatal crashes, with an average cost of \$3.841 million per fatality. Injury crashes averaged \$50,512, costing a total of \$20.5 billion. Property damage crashes accounted for the remaining \$4.1 billion in cost.

California drivers age 15-17 were involved in 66,785 crashes in 2006 which resulted in:

- 27,869 injuries and 177 deaths
- \$211 million in medical costs
- \$884 million in work related losses
- \$343 million in property damage
- \$2.8 billion in total costs

AAA of Northern California offers a wide variety of tools to help prevent teen crashes including *Driver-ZED* (Zero Errors Driving), an interactive computer DVD-ROM that helps teens recognize dangerous driving situations in a safe virtual environment, and *TeenSmart*, a program that helps teens to drive more safely. Eligible teens can receive up to 20 percent off on auto insurance upon successful completion of the program.

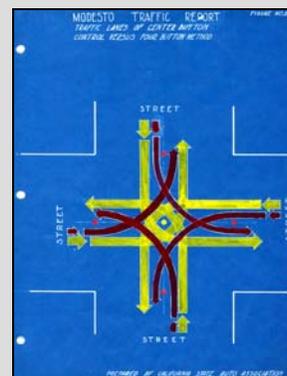
For more Information about AAA teen safety programs, go to: www.aaa.com/trafficsafety.

A Look Back...

Early Traffic Congestion Relief

As early as the 1920s, AAA offered cities relief from congestion by surveying their traffic and recommending improvements. This free service provided solutions such those offered to Modesto in a 1927 report,

"The bridge over the Tuolumne River is a beautiful structure. . . however ten years from now it will be obsolete and a new structure required. . . traffic is constantly on the increase and it is freely predicted that in ten years it will double. . . [t]he structure is none too wide, even now."



AAA Traffic Study of Modesto, 1927

AAA continued surveying cities into the 1940s. We suggested traffic routings, identified locations for parking, or recommended appropriate road signage.

When traffic clogged Vallejo streets in the 1940s, we recommended routing traffic through Mare Island, eliminating diagonal city parking, and other measures. Vallejo's grateful City Commissioner responded, "We have put a great many of the recommendations to practice and have found them quite successful."

As today's leading advocate for road safety, we continue to seek innovative solutions to congestion--like offering instructions on how to deal with aggressive drivers.



AAA worked to relieve congestion in areas like the East Shore Freeway (I-80) in Berkeley, 1945.

Survey Says...

Tell us what you think about emerging transportation financing options. Take our survey, "How Should We Pay for Roads?" in the *What's New* section at www.aaa.com. Survey open until May 15.



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reduces lifecycle greenhouse gases by about 30 percent compared to a conventional vehicle. Fuel consumption drops even more significantly, by an average of 35 percent.

The study projected that by 2010 hybrids will make up about 1.2 percent of the total miles driven in the U.S. each year, reducing total oil consumed and greenhouse gas emissions by 0.4 percent each. While that may not sound like much, it is the equivalent of 498 million gallons of gasoline per year, or about ten fewer tanker shipments from foreign oil suppliers. For greenhouse gases, it equates to an annual reduction of about 5.1 million metric tons of emissions, analogous to removing 637,500 cars from the roads.

While it will likely take decades before hybrids make up enough of the total auto market to achieve double digit oil and emission reductions, reductions in the projected 1-to-10 percent range are huge improvements. More importantly, hybrids have raised the bar on fuel economy for all technologies, creating competition that will push improvements for conventional vehicles and energize the development of new options.

Did You Know...

In 2005, AAA of Northern California, Nevada and Utah launched the Greenlight Initiative with a goal of promoting the development and understanding of new automotive fuels and fuel efficiency-related technologies. Since its inception, the Greenlight Initiative has successfully served as an objective resource for thousands of people looking for answers about alternative fuels. To build upon this success and further stimulate discovery in this area, AAA is pleased to once again announce the Greenlight Initiative Grant Program.

AAA is seeking qualified applications from higher education, government organizations, and non-profits that are pursuing projects in three key areas: 1) awareness programs, 2) vehicle conversions, and 3) dedicated research.

For more information about the Greenlight Initiative and the Grant Program, or to download the Grant application, please visit www.aaa.com/greenlight. The grant proposal submission deadline is July 1, 2008.

AAA Celebrates 80 Years of National Traffic Safety Programs

This year marks the 80th anniversary of the establishment of AAA's national traffic safety programs, which have helped teach generations of children and adults how to be safer drivers and protect them from crashes.

AAA was a pioneer in national traffic safety initiatives beginning with the establishment of a national traffic safety department in 1928. That commitment continues today through traffic safety and driver improvement programs and advocacy efforts addressing key issues such as child passenger safety, senior mobility and teen driver safety.

Key Dates in AAA's Traffic Safety History

1920	AAA School Safety Patrol program begins
1928	AAA National Traffic Safety Dept established
1935	AAA pioneers driver education
1937	<i>Pedestrian Protection Program</i> introduced First edition of <i>How to Drive</i> manual published
1945	Nat'l School Traffic Safety Poster Program begins
1949	School Safety Patrol Lifesaving Award program initiated
1982	AAA's <i>Safe Driving for Mature Operators</i> course introduced
1989	AAA and other safety groups persuade federal government to require lap/shoulder safety belts in rear seats of all passenger vehicles
1996	<i>Teaching Your Teens to Drive: A Partnership for Survival</i> driver education programs introduced
1997	<i>ABC's of Air Bag Safety</i> education campaign reaches more than 31 million children
2002	<i>Seated, Safe and Secure</i> child passenger safety initiative launched
2003	<i>Lifelong Safe Mobility</i> senior mobility initiative launched
2006	AAA launches online driver improvement courses

AAA's Advocacy Mission

For more than 100 years, AAA of Northern California has steadfastly spoken out on behalf of its Members and the traveling public. Because our 4.4 million Members in Northern California, Nevada and Utah represent a broad section of the population, the association works for balanced public policy positions on a variety of issues ranging from traffic safety and transportation to consumer protection and the environment.