

February
2026



TRANSPORTATION SAFETY ACTION PLAN

Behavioral Emphasis Areas Report

DUTCHESS COUNTY
TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

Better ways from here to there

Transportation Safety Action Plan

Behavioral Emphasis Areas Report

prepared for

DUTCHESS COUNTY
TRANSPORTATION
COUNCIL



Better ways from here to there

prepared by



CAMBRIDGE
SYSTEMATICS

date

February 2026

Disclaimer

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Key Acronyms

- DCTC: Dutchess County Transportation Council
- DER: Dutchess County Department of Emergency Response
- GTSC: New York State Governor’s Traffic Safety Committee
- FHWA: Federal Highway Administration
- HSIP: NYSDOT’s Highway Safety Improvement Program
- NHTSA: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
- NYSDOT: New York State Department of Transportation
- SAP: Dutchess County’s Safety Action Plan
- SHSP: Strategic Highway Safety Plan
- THSP: GTSC’s Triennial Highway Safety Plan
- TSB: Dutchess County Traffic Safety Board

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1.0 Introduction

Dutchess County has experienced an increase in traffic crashes that result in serious injuries and fatalities, affecting the lives of residents and visitors. In response, the Dutchess County Transportation Council (DCTC) has carried out a detailed data and crash analysis (see Crash Data Analysis Reports – Part [1](#) & [2](#)) and gathered public and stakeholder input (see Public Outreach Report) to identify emphasis areas for its Safety Action Plan (SAP). The emphasis areas are listed below.

| Safer Roads | Safer Speeds | Safer Vehicles | Safer People |
|---|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intersections • Roadway Departures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speeding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motorcyclist Safety • Large Trucks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulnerable Road Users • Older Drivers • Distracted Driving • Impaired Driving • Aggressive Driving |

Efforts to achieve safer roads are being addressed in the SAP through a roadway network analysis, identification of potential safety improvement projects, and toolkits of roadway safety countermeasures.

However, included among the emphasis areas are safety issues that are less rooted in location and more focused on issues like dangerous driving behavior, specific vehicle types, or the safety of a higher-risk demographic groups. This report makes recommendations for various actions that County agencies, municipalities, law enforcement, and other partners can pursue to ensure that these types of safety risks are also addressed, with the ultimate goal of reaching zero traffic deaths.

A focus on behavior also helps fulfill the SAP’s goal of embracing the Safe System Approach, which includes action on all areas of traffic safety. Infrastructure and non-infrastructure safety strategies are not unrelated or exclusive. Infrastructure influences travel behavior and driver behavior influences roadway design. Furthermore, applying infrastructure and non-infrastructure countermeasures at the same time and locations can have an amplifying safety effect.



Infrastructure and behavioral recommendations should be considered and applied holistically to create a multi-layered safety net. To that end, all strategies presented here align with other statewide safety planning efforts, such as the New York Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP), NYSDOT’s Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP), and GTSC’s Triennial Highway Safety Plan (THSP).

All crash statistics noted in this report include total crashes, serious injuries, and fatalities during the ten-year period of 2014 through 2023. This data and its sources are described in greater detail in the Crash Data Analysis Report [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#).

2.0 NY GTSC Grants

The New York Governors Traffic Safety Committee (GTSC) makes grants available to state and local agencies for traffic safety efforts under a set of behavioral program areas:

- Impaired Driving
- Police Traffic Services
- Motorcycle Safety
- Non-Motorized (Pedestrians and Bicyclists)
- Occupant Protection
- Traffic Records
- Community Traffic Safety Programs

Grant information is available on [GTSC’s website](#). The GTSC will be revising its overall program in 2026 to create a Triennial Highway Safety Plan (THSP) for FFY 2027 – 2029.

Municipalities in Dutchess County have encountered challenges with pursuing GTSC grants. Due to NHTSA requirements, GTSC now requires each individual agency to apply for a GTSC grant. Previously, one or more agencies or the County’s Traffic Safety Board could apply for and distribute grants on behalf of a group of smaller agencies. Many local law enforcement agencies do not have the capacity to apply for GTSC grants, track necessary program information, apply for reimbursement, or manage the monitoring and reporting duties. The TSB should coordinate with the GTSC to see if grants can be bundled under the current grant system to reduce the burden on local agencies.

3.0 Behavioral Emphasis Areas

This report makes recommendations for eight of the SAP's Emphasis Areas – Speeding, Motorcyclist Safety, Large Trucks, Vulnerable Road Users, Older Drivers, Distracted Driving, Impaired Driving, and Aggressive Driving – that involve behavioral components. For each Emphasis Area, proven countermeasures are noted and framed as actions for implementation by safety partners in Dutchess County, including the County agencies, law enforcement agencies, local municipalities, partners, and others. This report also provides recommendations for improving Post-Crash Care, which is a key Safe System element.

While specific agencies are identified for the various countermeasures, other stakeholders, such as community organizations, other state and local agencies, businesses, and other partners may also start or expand suggested programs.

Potential Community Partners:

- Pedestrian and Bicycle Groups like the Mid-Hudson Road Runners, Mid-Hudson Bicycle Club, Fats in the Cats Bicycle Club, Beacon Bicycle Coalition, and DCTC's Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)
- School Districts (including Superintendents and Transportation Directors), the Association for Pupil Transportation, and Parent/Teacher/Student Associations (PTAs)
- Senior Citizen Organizations or Centers, such as the County's Office for the Aging
- Disability Advocacy Groups, such as Taconic Resources for Independence and Dutchess County's ThinkDIFFERENTLY initiative
- Libraries, including Youth Program Directors
- Cultural and Ethnic Community Organizations
- Youth Organizations and Clubs, including the County's Youth Board
- Public Health Agencies and Organizations, such as the County Health Department
- The County's Department of Emergency Response and the Dutchess County Fire Chiefs Association
- Community Service Providers and Nonprofits, such as the North East Community Center, United Way, Family Services, Hudson River Housing, Community Action Partnership for Dutchess County, and Astor Services (including Head Start programs)
- Faith-Based Organizations
- Dutchess County Magistrate's Association

TABLE 3-1 EMPHASIS AREAS, STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

| Emphasis Area | Strategies and Actions | Implementation Leads | Implementation Partners | Timeline* |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|--|------------------|
| <u>Speeding</u> | <u>Safety Infrastructure Countermeasures</u> | | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Speed feedback signs</u> | Road owners | Law enforcement agencies, County DPW, NYSDOT, GTSC | Short |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Lowered speed limits</u> | Road owners | County DPW, NYSDOT, DCTC | Short - Medium |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Automated speed enforcement cameras</u> | Municipalities | State Legislature, NYSDOT | Medium - Long |
| | <u>High-Visibility Enforcement (HVE) and Educational Campaigns</u> | Law enforcement agencies | TSB, GTSC | Short |
| | <u>Expanded Referral of Speeding and Aggressive Driving Offenders to Driver Training</u> | Municipal courts, law enforcement agencies | TSB, DCSO, CAPE, DCMA, BOCES, School Districts, GTSC | Short - Medium |
| <u>Motorcyclist Safety</u> | <u>Motorcycle Rider Training Information</u> | TSB, Rider organizations | Law enforcement, NYDMV | Short |
| | <u>Rider Conspicuity, Protective Clothing, and Effective Helmets</u> | TSB, Rider organizations | Municipal law enforcement, GTSC, NYDMV | Short |
| | <u>Communication Campaigns Aimed at Alcohol-Impaired Motorcyclists</u> | TSB, Municipal law enforcement | Rider organizations, GTSC, NYDMV | Short |
| | <u>Communication Campaigns to Increase Motorist Awareness of Motorcyclists</u> | TSB, Municipal law enforcement | Rider organizations, GTSC, NYDMV | Short |
| <u>Large Trucks</u> | <u>Truck Safety Hotspots</u> | Municipal road owners | DCTC, NYSDOT | Short |
| | <u>Employer-Based Truck Driver Safety Education</u> | DCTC | Corporate partners, TSB, GTSC | Medium |

| Emphasis Area | Strategies and Actions | Implementation Leads | Implementation Partners | Timeline* |
|---|---|--|--|----------------|
| | Heavy Truck Routing Options | Municipal governments | NYS DOT, Corporate partners, DCTC | Medium - Long |
| <u>Vulnerable Road Users</u> | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> VRU Infrastructure Safety | Safety Infrastructure Countermeasures | Road owners | DCTC | Short - Medium |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bicycle Safety | Bicyclist Helmet Use Promotion | TSB, Municipal governments | Municipal law enforcement, community partners, healthcare providers, GTSC | Short |
| | Bicycle Safety Education | Municipal governments, School districts | TSB, municipal law enforcement, community partners, GTSC | Short |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pedestrian Safety | Pedestrian Safety Campaigns | TSB, County Health Department, Municipal governments | Municipal law enforcement, DCSCO, community partners, GTSC, NYS Department of Health | Short |
| | Communications to Pedestrians About Proactive Safety | TSB, County Health Department, Municipal governments | Municipal law enforcement, community partners, GTSC, NYS Department of Health | Short |
| | High-Visibility Enforcement (HVE) at Pedestrian Crossings | Municipal law enforcement, DCSO | TSB, GTSC | Short |
| | Pedestrian Safety Zones | Municipal governments | GTSC, NYSDOT | Medium - Long |

| Emphasis Area | Strategies and Actions | Implementation Leads | Implementation Partners | Timeline* |
|---|--|--|---|----------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School and Student Safety | Elementary-Age Child Pedestrian Training | Municipal governments, School districts | Municipal law enforcement, community partners, County Health Department, GTSC | Short |
| | Safe Routes to School (SRTS) | Municipal governments, School districts | DCTC, Municipal law enforcement, community partners, GTSC, NYSDOT | Medium |
| | Walking School Bus & BikeBus Programs | Municipal governments, School districts | Municipal law enforcement, TSB, community partners, GTSC | Short - Medium |
| Impaired Driving | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alcohol-Impaired Driving | Enforcement and Criminal Justice Interventions | | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicized Sobriety Checkpoints | Municipal law enforcement, DCSO | County STOP-DWI, GTSC | Short |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High-Visibility Saturation Patrols | Municipal law enforcement, DCSO | County STOP-DWI, GTSC | Short |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated Enforcement | Municipal law enforcement, DCSO | County STOP-DWI, GTSC | Medium |
| | Alternative Transportation/Safe Ride Home Programs | County STOP-DWI | GTSC, corporate partners, 511 NY | Short |
| | Media Campaigns | County STOP-DWI/TSB, Municipal law enforcement, DCSO | GTSC, CAPE, community partners | Short - Medium |

| Emphasis Area | Strategies and Actions | Implementation Leads | Implementation Partners | Timeline* |
|---|--|--|---|----------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drug-Impaired Driving | Enforcement of Drug-Impaired Driving | Municipal law enforcement, DCSCO | County STOP-DWI, GTSC | Short - Medium |
| | Education Regarding Medications | TSB, Healthcare providers | County Office for the Aging, County Health Department, community partners, GTSC | Short - Medium |
| | Education on Cannabis and Safe Driving | TSB, Municipal law enforcement, DSCO | County Health Department, CAPE, GTSC, corporate partners, community partners | Short - Medium |
| Older Drivers | Communications and Education About Driving and Aging | TSB, County Office for the Aging, Healthcare providers | Community partners, AARP, GTSC | Short |
| | CarFit Program | TSB, County Office for the Aging, Healthcare providers | Community partners, AARP, GTSC | Short |
| Distracted Driving | High-Visibility Enforcement (HVE) | Municipal law enforcement, DCSO | TSB, GTSC | Short |
| | Employer Educational Programs | TSB | GTSC, Corporate partners | Medium - Long |
| | Public Communications and Outreach on Distracted Driving | TSB, Municipal law enforcement, DCSO | GTSC, community partners | Short |
| Aggressive Driving | Positive Traffic Safety Culture Public Awareness Campaigns | TSB, Municipal law enforcement, DCSO | County Health Department, GTSC, community partners | Short |
| Post Crash Care | Timely On-Scene Care | County DER | EMS providers | Short - Medium |
| | Reduced Travel Time to Trauma Centers | County DER | EMS providers, Healthcare providers | Long |

| Emphasis Area | Strategies and Actions | Implementation Leads | Implementation Partners | Timeline* |
|---------------|---|--|-------------------------|-----------|
| | <u>Traffic Incident Management Training and Incident Awareness</u> | County DER | EMS providers | Short |
| | <u>EMS Performance Measures</u> | County DER | EMS providers | Short |
| | <u>Improved Access to Supplies</u> | County DER | EMS providers | Short |
| | <u>Education and Enforcement Related to Ambulance Right of Way and Roadside Safety to Protect EMS Workers</u> | County DER, TSB, Municipal law enforcement, DCSO | EMS providers | Short |

* **Timeline:**

- **Short-term:** Achievable with current resources or can be launched or implemented within 1 -2 years.
- **Medium-term:** Likely requires new grant or program development or can be launched or implemented within 2 – 5 years.
- **Long-term:** Likely requires partnership development, policy changes, significant funding, content development, or may take 5 or more years to launch or implement.

3.1 Speeding

Among aggressive driving behaviors, unsafe speed is a leading traffic safety threat, responsible for 22% of fatalities and serious injuries in Dutchess County between 2014 and 2023. In this SAP analysis, rural local roads and the Taconic State Parkway (a rural expressway) were over-represented for speed related crashes, fatalities, and serious injuries. Across all road types, 18% of fatalities and serious injuries on urban roads in Dutchess County were related to speeding. Further, expressways and interstate highways in urban areas were overrepresented for speed-related fatalities and serious injuries, likely due to high traffic volumes on these roads. The following countermeasures are recommended to address the issue of **speeding** in Dutchess County.

- **Safety Infrastructure Countermeasures:** The [Countermeasure Toolkit](#) and [Systemic Countermeasure Toolkit](#) recommend a number of improvements to manage speed, including access management, traffic controls, traffic calming, road diets, and countermeasures to protect people walking and bicycling. Addressing speed in this way aligns with statewide safety plans like the SHSP and HSIP. Notable strategies include:
 - **Speed feedback signs**, which can be portable (on trailers) or permanently installed, show drivers if they are speeding and encourages them to slow down. The Dutchess County Sheriff’s Office has several speed feedback signs that it moves around the county based on municipal requests, and several municipalities have purchased their own signs. The combination of speed feedback signs with parked patrol vehicles is also proven to reduce speeding ([NHTSA](#)). Some speed feedback sign vendors, such as [Safer Streets Solutions](#), offer units that collect depersonalized data on driver behavior that can be useful for planning. Funding for speed feedback signs

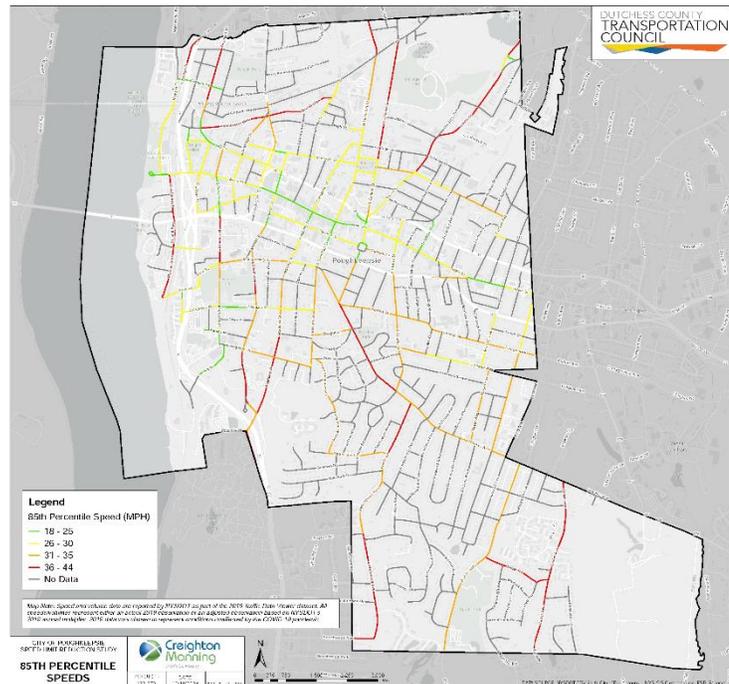
Additional Resources:

- [FHWA Proven Safety Countermeasures: Speed Management](#) (FHWA)
- Countermeasures That Work: [Speeding and Speed Management](#) (NHTSA)
- New York Governor’s Traffic Safety Committee: [Speeding](#)
- [Speed Awareness Week](#) (GTSC)
- [Speeding Catches up with You](#) (NHSTA)
- [Speeding Slows You Down](#) (NHSTA)
- CAPE [Agency Programs](#), including Alive at 25, Teen Driving: A Family Affair, and Victim Impact Panels.
- NY State Law [VAT 1643](#) (per [Assembly Bill A1007A](#)) authorizes cities, villages and some towns to reduce speed limits to 25 mph
- [Speed Limits in New York State](#) (NYSDOT)
- [What does the new legislation establishing 25 mph as the new lowest-allowable area speed limit actually change?](#) (Cornell Local Roads Program)
- [Automated Work Zone Speed Enforcement \(AWZSE\)](#) program (NYSDOT)

may be available from the GTSC if part of a larger speed management project, or from NYSDOT's HSIP.

- **Lowered speed limits**, which were authorized by a New York law enacted in 2022 ([NY 2022 AB A1007A](#)). The law allows cities, villages, and some towns to lower area-wide speed limits to 25 miles per hour (versus the previously-allowed 30 mph). Lowered speed limits require an engineering study by a licensed professional engineer and must be set consistent with the [Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices](#) and [New York State Supplement to the MUTCD](#).

Lower speed limits can reduce traffic crashes and casualties when they result in reduced speeds ([NHTSA](#) and [FHWA](#)). The DCTC recently conducted a citywide speed limit reduction study for the City of Poughkeepsie ([Guidance Memo](#); [Methodology and Results](#); [Maps](#)).



An 85th percentile speed analysis for the [City of Poughkeepsie Speed Limit Reduction Assessment](#) shows many areas (in orange and red) experience speeding, even though most streets have a 30mph speed limit.

The Village of Tivoli adopted a lower village-wide speed limit in 2023. Dutchess County municipalities should consider whether their roadways could benefit from lower speed limits and identify the planning steps necessary to make changes. DCTC should continue to provide guidance and resources for local municipalities interested in lowering speed limits.

- **Automated Speed Enforcement Cameras** can be used to enforce speed limits as part of a broader speed enforcement program. Speed safety cameras have been found to be highly effective at reducing speeds and crashes ([NHTSA](#)). While speed cameras eliminate much enforcement bias, the systematic placement of cameras can create “neighborhood bias.” An analysis of communities in need and collection of community input on planning can help make sure any use of speed cameras garners public acceptance.

New York State currently permits speed safety cameras in work zones on designated State-owned controlled-access roads under the statewide [Automated Work Zone Speed Enforcement \(AWZSE\)](#) program. Such systems have been most notably deployed on the New York State Thruway. In Dutchess County, AWZSE has been deployed on I-84. NYSDOT [publishes](#) a planned weekly camera deployment schedule. New York State Law also authorizes school zone speed cameras and red light cameras in specific municipalities (not currently in Dutchess County). Other sites around the county could benefit from speed safety camera enforcement, but New York

requires State legislation for local governments to use this countermeasure. Dutchess County and its municipalities should work with the State to enable speed safety cameras in school zones, work zones, and other high-risk areas. For this strategy, with State legislative approval, funding may be available from NYSDOT.

- **High-Visibility Enforcement (HVE) and Educational Campaigns:** HVE efforts combine enforcement, a publicity strategy, and often community partnerships to inform the public about safe driving and create a deterrent effect that promotes compliance with traffic laws ([NHTSA](#)). The GTSC organizes statewide enforcement mobilizations under its Police Traffic Services and Community Traffic Safety programs. For example, in the summer of 2025, GTSC held statewide “Speed Awareness Week” HVE initiatives. GTSC may also support locally-focused HVE events, such as in the City of Binghamton where local law enforcement actively increased speed enforcement patrols in residential neighborhoods, schools, city parks, and hospital zones.

The implementation of sustained speed enforcement efforts (beyond isolated campaigns) in high-risk areas is proven to reduce speeding and aggressive driving. Research shows that consistent enforcement can lead to safer driving behaviors ([FHWA](#)). Some law enforcement agencies in Dutchess County are carrying out grant-funded enforcement efforts, but not all. Local agencies and partners should seek additional funding for these efforts through the GTSC.

It is important to note that traffic enforcement can have an outsized impact on disadvantaged communities. Gathering community input and support to craft traffic enforcement plans can help create widely accepted enforcement initiatives. Further, some communities may be more receptive to tailored, culturally sensitive safety messages.

- **Expanded Referral of Speeding and Aggressive Driving Offenders to Driver Training:** Currently, in coordination with the [Council on Addiction Prevention and Education of Dutchess County \(CAPE\)](#), some judges in Dutchess County refer traffic offenders to the Alive at 25 driver training course. Alive at 25 is four-hour defensive driving course developed by the National Safety Council that is widely deployed across the country. However, some judges may be reluctant to impose this requirement as it creates additional costs for offenders. While accessibility and affordability should be considered with any punitive adjudication by a court, dangerous drivers should be held accountable and discouraged from recidivating.

The TSB may want to consider further coordinating with [Municipal Courts](#) on adjudication options for speeding and aggressive drivers. This could include additional training, possibly through the Dutchess County Magistrate’s Association. Additional driver training courses are available from the [Dutchess County Board of Cooperative Educational Services](#) (BOCES) or others [approved by NY DMV](#).

Many school districts in Dutchess County have long-standing programs where teen drivers and their parents are required to participate in CAPE’s “Teen Driving: A Family Affair” educational program to obtain a high school parking pass. Defensive driving courses and driver safety education programs can improve driver behaviors. Speeding is widely practiced and generally accepted by the public, but steps such as these could be taken to begin to change culture by stigmatize speeding in the same way as drunk driving. This strategy will require ongoing judicial coordination.

3.2 Motorcyclist Safety

Motorcycle-related crashes accounted for 10% of fatalities and serious injuries in the county between 2014 and 2023, and have showed an overall upward trend, increasing by 71% from 2017 to 2022, consistent with statewide observations. The following countermeasures are recommended to address the issue of **motorcyclist safety** in Dutchess County.

- Motorcycle Rider Training Information:** In addition to teaching motorcycle control skills, rider training programs better prepare riders to recognize potentially hazardous riding situations and encourage them to assess their own abilities and limitations (and riding within those constraints) ([NHTSA](#)). To earn a New York motorcycle license, riders are required to either pass a road test or complete a safety course approved by the [New York State Motorcycle Safety Program](#). The program offers three nationally recognized Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) RiderCourses, as well as more advanced training for experienced riders. Approved courses (by third party training providers) are offered at specific locations throughout the state. Currently, no such approved courses are offered in Dutchess County, though courses are available in Ulster, Orange, and Columbia counties.

NYS DMV does not accept out-of-state MSF training certificates. For example, though the same MSF courses are offered in neighboring Connecticut, they cannot be used for NYS DMV purposes. The TSB should collaborate with law enforcement, local DMV offices, and rider organizations to provide information on motorcycle-specific rider training.

- Rider Conspicuity, Protective Clothing, and Effective Helmets:** Research shows that motorcycle helmets that comply with federal safety regulations significantly reduce the risk of fatalities and injuries ([NHTSA](#)). New York State law requires anyone operating or riding a motorcycle to wear an approved helmet. Well-constructed jackets, pants, boots, and gloves can also prevent injury.

A common issue is that drivers do not always look for or see motorcycles. In addition to continuous headlight use, riders can wear brightly colored clothing and helmets, use retroreflective materials or devices, and add more motorcycle lighting ([NHTSA](#)). The TSB and its partners should coordinate with motorcycle clubs or organizations in the county to promote the use of helmets and safety

Additional Resources:

- Dutchess County Traffic Safety Board Driver Safety Website: [Motorcycle Safety](#)
- Governor's Traffic Safety Committee: [Motorcycle Safety & Awareness](#) and [Motorcycle Safety Tips](#)
- [Share the Road, Watch for Motorcycles](#) PSA (GTSC)
- [NYS Motorcycle Safety Program](#)
- Countermeasures That Work: [Motorcycle Safety](#) (NHTSA)
- In NYS, all motorcycle operators and passengers must wear approved motorcycle helmets ([Article 9, section 381-6](#)) as defined by USDOT federal motor vehicle safety standards.
- [Wearing the Right Motorcycle Helmet](#) (NYS DMV)
- New York Department of Health [Motorcycle Safety](#)

equipment and clothing. The TSB can also include more information on strategies for rider conspicuity and protective clothing on its website.

**Dutchess County
Motorcycle Rider
Organizations and Allies**

- [Hudson Valley Biker Network](#)
- [Destination Dutchess - Motorcycling](#)

- **Communication Campaigns Aimed at Alcohol-Impaired Motorcyclists:** Alcohol impairment is a substantial problem for motorcyclists. Safety awareness campaigns that are well researched and planned, well-funded and executed, achieve high levels of target audience exposure (perhaps using paid advertising), use high-quality messages that are pre-tested for effectiveness, and conducted in conjunction with enforcement activities may be helpful in educating motorcyclists on the risks of riding while impaired ([NHTSA](#)).

In addition to impaired driving enforcement by officers, the TSB, local law enforcement, and local motorcycle organizations can consider applying for funding through GTSC to support campaigns to discourage impaired riding. For example, the GTSC currently distributes funding to the [Broome County Sheriff's Office](#) to participate in public events and promote motorcycle safety. GTSC also provides a grant to the [New York State Association of Traffic Safety Boards](#) for statewide education and outreach efforts.

- **Communication Campaigns to Increase Motorist Awareness of Motorcyclists:** Motorcyclists are considerably more vulnerable than passenger vehicle occupants. The TSB should consider applying for funding through GTSC to conduct communications and outreach campaigns to increase motorists' awareness of motorcyclists. Typical themes are "Share the Road" or "Watch for Motorcyclists" ([NHTSA](#)). Every May, which is Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month, the TSB could amplify motorcycle safety messages issued by GTSC and [NHTSA](#).



3.3 Large Trucks

Fatalities and serious injuries involving large trucks account for a small proportion of all traffic crashes in Dutchess County, but they more than doubled from 2014 to 2023. Dutchess County hosts significant freight traffic. The Mid-Hudson Valley TMA’s (MHVTMA) [Freight in the Mid-Hudson Valley](#) report, co-authored by the DCTC, estimates that 91 million tons of freight pass through the area (a value of \$130 billion) annually. I-84 and portions of Routes 44, 55, and 22 are considered “NYS Freight Core Highway Network” routes. State roads like Route 9, 9G, 52, 82 and others, as well as some County roads are listed in NYSDOT’s [Official Description of Designated Qualifying And Access Highways in New York State](#) and are eligible for large truck combinations.

The [Mid-Hudson Valley TMA’s Large Truck Crash Analysis](#) flagged five locations in Dutchess County as high-risk hotspots for truck crashes:

Additional Resources:

- [Trucks](#) (NYSDOT)
- [Office of Truck and Motor Carrier Safety](#) (NYSDOT)
- [Official Description of Designated Qualifying And Access Highways in New York State](#) (NYSDOT)
- [Large Truck Crash Analysis](#) (MHVTMA)
- [National Highway Freight Network Map and Tables for New York](#) (2022) (FHWA)
- [Crash Causal Factors Program](#) (FMCSA)

TABLE 3-2 TOP SCORING DUTCHESS COUNTY CRASH SEGMENTS FOR LARGE TRUCKS

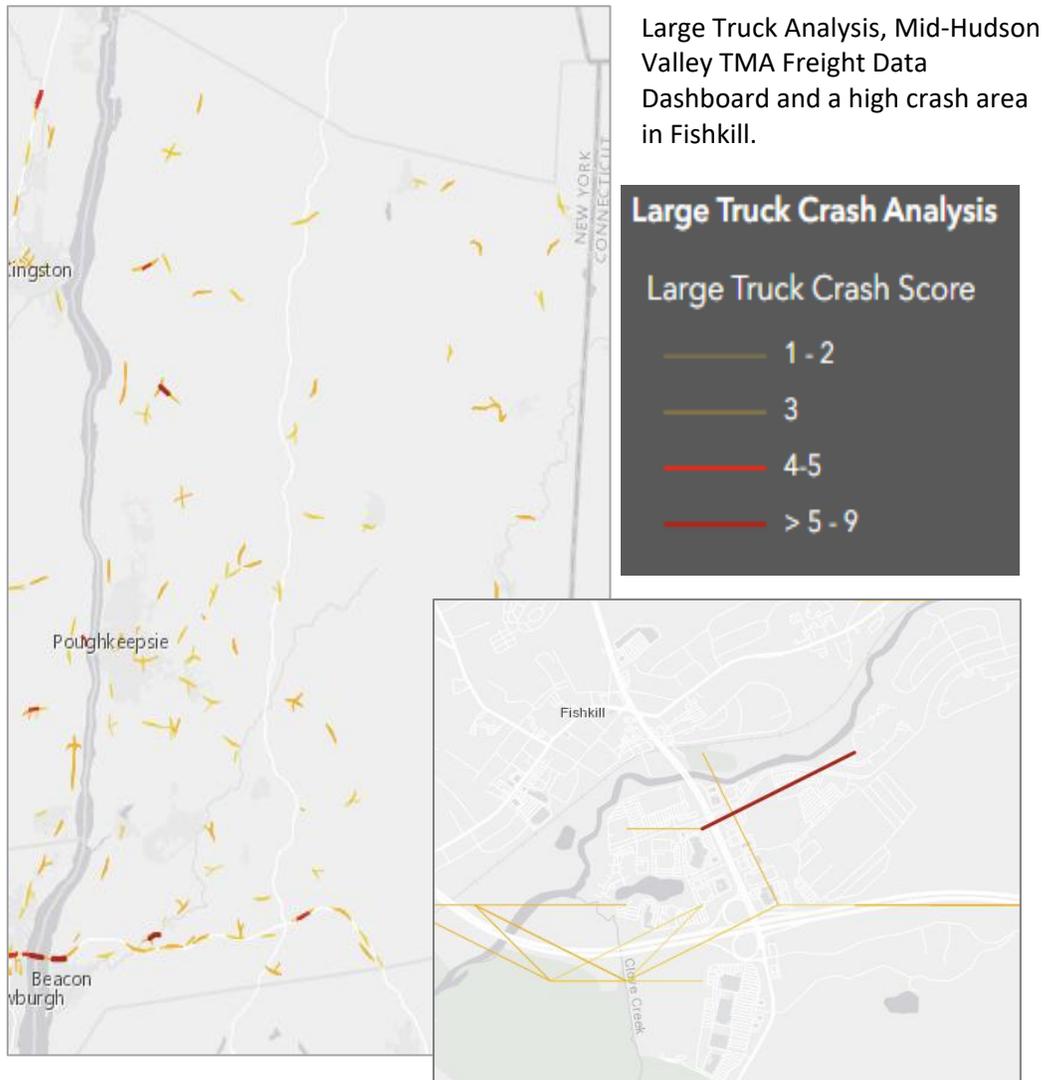
| Location | Regional Rank (out of 14) | Municipality | Functional Class | Road Owner |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|------------|
| Interstate 84 EB Near toll plaza and Beacon exit | 6 | Beacon/Fishkill | Interstate | NYSDOT |
| Hollow Rd/CR 14 East of NY 9G to W Cookingham Dr | 8 | Clinton | Major Collector | County |
| Merritt Blvd East of US 9* | 9 | Fishkill | Major Collector | Local |
| Newburgh-Beacon Bridge/Interstate 84 EB Near the Orange/Dutchess line | 10 | Newburgh/ Fishkill | Interstate | NYSDOT |
| NY 22 Near NY 55 in Wingdale | 11 | Dover | Major Arterial | NYSDOT |

*Note: This has been identified as a priority location in the Safety Action Plan

Additionally, several Dutchess County municipalities have expressed concern about the safety risks of large trucks that pass through village centers, often on State-owned roads, in addition to noise pollution and added wear on roadways.

The following countermeasures are recommended to address the issue of **large truck safety** in Dutchess County.

- Truck Safety Hotspots:** The Mid-Hudson Valley TMA’s [Freight Data Dashboard](#) shows the full results of its Large Truck Crash Analysis. Municipalities can use the interactive map to identify and investigate high-risk sites. Municipalities could also examine intersections where truck turning is challenging. This strategy could result in increased safety at specific spots.



- Employer-Based Truck Driver Safety Education:** The DCTC and its partners could engage employers in the county to implement programs that address truck fleet safety. Employers often implement comprehensive programs to reduce roadway risk, comply with government oversight, and protect themselves from liability.

The National Safety Council offers business training programs to improve employer and fleet safety. The TSB could engage the Dutchess County [Regional Chamber of Commerce](#) to seek potential corporate partners.

Training and outreach could cover issues such as truck routing, distracted driving, speeding, turning, and other safety priorities. This strategy will require ongoing private sector outreach.

Dutchess County Employers with Notable Commercial/Occupational Vehicle Traffic

- Penske (multiple locations)
- The Gap, Old Navy, and Banana Republic distribution center in Fishkill
- Stellantis Mopar Parts distribution center in East Fishkill
- Amazon distribution center in East Fishkill
- Frito-Lay distribution center in East Fishkill
- Peckham Materials Corporation in Pleasant Valley
- [Cable, Telephone, and Utility Companies](#) (Dutchess County website)
- [Licensed solid waste haulers](#) (Dutchess County Division of Solid Waste Management)
- McCollisters Transportation Group in Poughkeepsie
- Clancy Relocation and Logistics in Pawling

- **Heavy Truck Routing Options:** Truck routing is a significant concern for many municipalities. Even though freight is of economic importance and facilitates the delivery of goods throughout the county, truck traffic through small communities raises safety concerns. Dutchess County municipalities should partner with NYSDOT and local freight businesses to consider re-routing solutions. The DCTC can also distribute a forthcoming NYSAMPO truck routing resource to local governments. This strategy will likely need to be augmented with state-level policy to address routing issues.

3.4 Vulnerable Road Users

Vulnerable roadway users (VRUs) include people bicycling, walking (including those using wheelchairs), roadway workers on foot, and other non-motorized travelers. VRUs encounter unique challenges and face a greater risk of injury compared to other road users. Several of the priority locations identified in this Safety Action Plan include trail crossings and other areas with high pedestrian and/or bicycle use.

3.4.1 VRU Infrastructure Safety

The [Countermeasure Toolkit](#) and [Systemic Countermeasure Toolkit](#) recommend a number of potential improvements to better protect VRUs, including bike lanes, bicycle boulevards, high-visibility and raised crosswalks, leading pedestrian intervals (LPIs), medians and pedestrian refuge islands, pedestrian warning signs, road diets, and ADA-compliant sidewalks and curb ramps. See also Speeding (above), as reducing speeding improves safety for individuals outside a vehicle. The strategies below can be supported by various infrastructure funding programs through NYSDOT.

3.4.2 Bicycle Safety

Bicyclist fatalities and serious injuries made up 3% of all fatalities and serious injuries in Dutchess County between 2014 and 2023. The following countermeasures are recommended to address the issue of **bicycle safety** in Dutchess County.

- **Bicyclist Engagement and Education:** This countermeasure includes several components, including:
 - ***Bicycle Helmet Use Promotion:*** Single events or extended campaigns can be leveraged to promote helmet distribution and use among children and adults. Use of helmets reduces the likelihood of severe and fatal brain injuries for bicyclists involved in crashes ([NHTSA](#)).
 - ***Bicycle Safety Education:*** Programs can include outreach to schools and libraries to support bicycle education programs to teach bicycle handling skills, traffic signs and signals, how to ride on streets with traffic, proper helmet use, bicycle safety checks, and bicycle maintenance ([NHTSA](#)). This can include cycling skills clinics, bike fairs, and bike rodeos. These local events can offer hands-on training on bicycle skills such as starting, stopping, weaving to avoid objects, and how to ride defensively in various traffic conditions ([NHTSA](#)).

Additional Resources:

- Dutchess County Traffic Safety Board: [Bicycle Safety](#)
- Governor’s Traffic Safety Committee: [Bicycle and Wheel Sport Safety](#)
- Countermeasures That Work: [Bicycle Safety](#) (NHTSA)
- [FHWA Proven Safety Countermeasures: Pedestrian/Bicyclist](#) (FHWA)
- [Cycling Skills Clinic Guide](#) (TSB/NHTSA)
- New York Bicycle Coalition (NYBC): [Safety Education](#)

In 2025, GTSC grant funding supported bicycle safety programs for children and teens hosted by the Nuvance Health Community Education Department, which also offers [complimentary bike helmet safety services](#). Many organizations and agencies in Dutchess County have hosted bicycle safety events and training, often in partnership with the Dutchess County Traffic Safety Board.

The DCTC, Traffic Safety Board, and other stakeholders should explore additional partnerships with municipalities, school districts, libraries, community organizations, and health care providers to support bicycle education, promote the use of helmets, and sponsor bicycle-related events on a more regular or recurring basis.

Organized cycling events, like [Scenic Hudson's Let's Bike Hudson Valley](#), may provide opportunities for bicycle safety engagement. Additional funding for these activities may be available from GTSC. Dutchess County and its partners may also want to leverage bicycle events to promote safe driving strategies to motorists in the media.

Dutchess County Bicycle Safety Rodeos

The Dutchess County Traffic Safety Board has a guide for [Organizing a Bicycle Safety Rodeo](#) that provides an overview of bicycle rodeos, resources available, and run-of-show information. Many communities, schools, scout troops, and others have hosted bicycle rodeo events in Dutchess County.

Bicycle Rodeo & Safety Clinic

Presented by the:

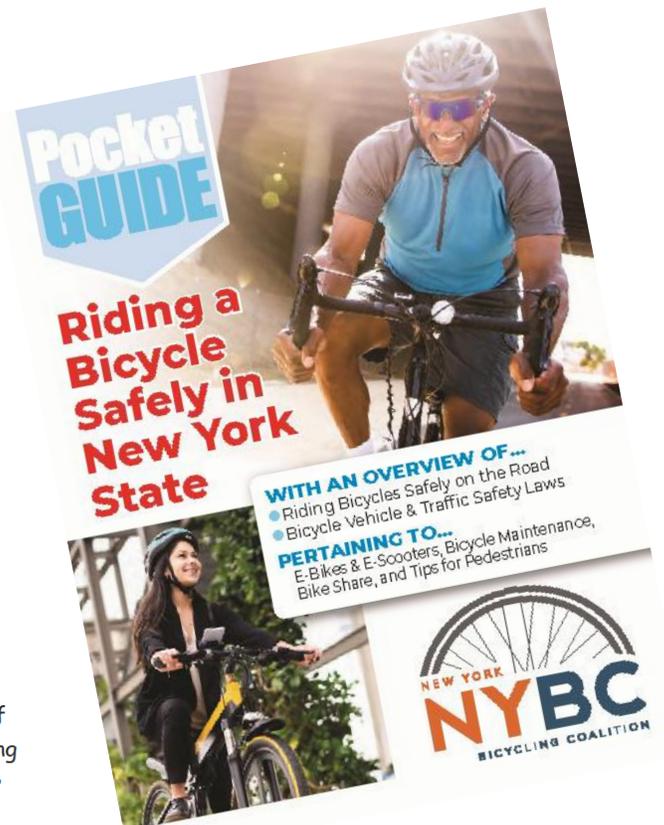
Town of Fishkill Police Department,
Town of Fishkill Rec Department &

The Dutchess County Traffic Safety Board



A Bike Rodeo is an event that teaches bicycle safety skill through a series of stations. Come join us for a skill testing obstacle course, instruction on proper helmet fittings and bicycle safety inspections.

Bring your bicycle and helmet!



With support from the GTSC, the New York Bicycling Coalition produces educational materials for drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians.

3.4.3 Pedestrian Safety

Pedestrian fatalities and serious injuries accounted for 8% of all fatalities and serious injuries in Dutchess County between 2014 and 2023, and pedestrian fatal and serious injury crashes in the county have increased since 2019. The following countermeasures are recommended to address the issue of **pedestrian safety** in Dutchess County.

- **Pedestrian Safety Campaigns:** Safety campaigns raise awareness among drivers and pedestrians, promoting safer behaviors.

FHWA’s [National Pedestrian Safety Campaign](#), New York State’s [Pedestrian Safety Program](#), the [GTSC](#), and the [New York State Department of Health](#) all provide outreach materials (including public service announcements, brochures, posters, and planning guides) that Dutchess County communities can customize and use to raise pedestrian safety awareness.

Pedestrian Safety Resources:

- Dutchess County Traffic Safety Board: [Pedestrian Safety](#)
- New York's [Pedestrian Safety Action Plan \(PSAP\)](#)
- New York State: [Pedestrian Safety Program](#)
- NHTSA Countermeasures That Work: [Pedestrian Safety](#) (NHTSA)
- [Pedestrian Safety Community Resource Guide](#) (NHTSA)
- Dutchess County [Watch Out For Me campaign](#)

Dutchess County’s “[Watch Out for Me](#)” traffic safety campaign educates and promotes safe driving, walking, and bicycling. The Watch Out for Me campaign includes videos, a Street Safety Tips brochure, posters, and resources for educators. The County can continue and expand this campaign to broaden its exposure.



Posters from Dutchess County’s Watch Out For Me! Campaign

- Communications to Pedestrians About Proactive Safety:** Communications campaigns can advise people to protect themselves when walking. This includes increasing their visibility, so drivers can more easily see them, particularly when it is dark, and information on how to use pedestrian infrastructure such as flashing beacons and crosswalks. New York State offers educational materials that emphasize visibility, such as the [See! Be Seen! Campaign](#) and [How to Stay Safe After Dark](#) video. Dutchess County should continue to share these materials and consider purchasing reflective items as giveaways at in-person events.
- High-Visibility Enforcement (HVE) at Pedestrian Crossings:** New York State's [Pedestrian Safety Action Plan \(PSAP\)](#) provides a framework for HVE initiatives. Each June, the GTSC organizes and promotes a two-week statewide pedestrian safety enforcement mobilization, [Operation See! Be Seen!](#), where participating police agencies are encouraged to issue warning cards and educational materials to pedestrians and drivers violating laws.



NYSDOT/GTSC Operation See! Be Seen! Poster

Local law enforcement agencies should participate in this and other pedestrian enforcement campaigns, such as [decoy operations](#) at pedestrian crossings, which can encourage safe driving in priority crash areas ([NHTSA](#)). Law enforcement agencies could seek grant funding for such efforts through the GTSC.

- Pedestrian Safety Zones:** Pedestrian safety zones are areas that have been formally designated as high-risk for pedestrians. Drivers traveling in these zones may face different rules, increased penalties, parking restrictions, or vehicles may be completely barred. Safety zones may also feature engineering measures such as reduced speed limits, speed bumps, or signage and pavement markings. For example, the [Ithaca Commons](#) is a 4-block pedestrian-only zone in the heart of downtown Ithaca. Research indicates that pedestrian safety zones are effective in reducing crashes involving pedestrian at locations with high pedestrian traffic and crash histories ([NHTSA](#)).

Pedestrian Safety Zone Resources:

- NHTSA Countermeasures That Work: [Pedestrian Safety Zone](#) (NHTSA)
- [Low-Cost Pedestrian Safety Zones: An Eight-Step Handbook](#) (NHTSA)
- [Pedestrian Safety Zones](#) (Connecticut Training and Technical Assistance Center)

Municipalities should consider creating pedestrian safety zones in pedestrian crash hotspots or areas with high pedestrian traffic. For village centers with State-owned roadways, this would require coordination with NYSDOT.

3.4.4 School and Student Safety

Some VRU concerns focus on children walking, bicycling, or riding a school bus to and from school, and the safety of vehicle traffic near schools. The following countermeasures are recommended to address the issue of **school and student transportation safety** in Dutchess County.

- **Elementary School Pedestrian Training:** Elementary school pedestrian training equips school-age children with skills to allow them to walk safely in environments with traffic and other safety hazards ([NHTSA](#)). Dutchess County’s “[Watch Out for Me!](#)” campaign has a pedestrian safety curriculum adapted for elementary students, which focuses on key traffic safety concepts reinforced through physical activity games. The County’s TSB and Department of Health should work with school districts to provide this curriculum for students.

- **Safe Routes to School (SRTS):** SRTS is a [program](#) to encourage safe walking and bicycling to school. NYSDOT provides funding for SRTS projects under the agency’s federally funded Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). However, the TAP program is typically oversubscribed and potential SRTS projects face strong competition from a variety of other active transportation projects. In some cases, local communities are creating and implementing their own SRTS planning initiatives.

The DCTC should encourage and assist municipalities to start their own SRTS planning initiatives, which can include coalition building, public education, community engagement, special events, and planning for future infrastructure improvements.

- **Walking School Bus & Bike Bus Programs:** A walking school bus uses volunteer adults, often parents, to walk a group of students on a specific route to and from school, collecting or dropping off children on the way ([NHTSA](#)). A bike bus is similar, with adults leading a group of students to and from school on bicycles. The TSB should promote walking school bus and bike bus programs and include resources for them on its website.

School Safety Initiatives

- [Starting a Safe Routes to School Program](#) and other resources (Safe Routes Partnership).
- [The Village of Rhinebeck’s Climate Smart Task Force](#) collaborated with middle school students to incorporate SRTS into the Village’s Comprehensive Plan. The Task Force also sponsors an annual Walking School Bus program.
- Dutchess County’s “Watch Out For Me!” campaign includes a [Pedestrian Safety Education Curriculum](#), based on the Walk Safe, Bike Safe pedestrian safety curriculum, adapted for elementary students.
- Dutchess County observes [Safe Stop Education and Enforcement Day](#) by awarding a School Bus Driver of the Year award to promote school bus safety.
- Walking School Bus: [Starting a Walking School Bus Basics](#).
- 511NY: [Bike Bus](#)

3.5 Impaired Driving

Alcohol-related crashes made up 9% of all fatalities and serious injuries in the county between 2014 and 2023, and illegal drug use represented 2%. Alcohol-related fatalities and serious injuries have generally decreased since 2014, but most of the decline occurred after 2020, possibly related to societal changes from the pandemic. (In contrast, impaired driving deaths spiked nationally in the wake of the pandemic, due to a drop in enforcement, increased mental health risks, and a general increase in risky driving).

There is a growing concern about crashes associated with the use of cannabis, particularly given its legalization at the state level. New York State prohibits all drug-impaired driving, regardless of the legality of the substance. Research [shows](#) that cannabis can impair many faculties needed for safe driving. Though cannabis is a leading drug implicated in impaired driving, opioids, stimulants, and poly-substance use are also frequently [found](#) among New York drivers. Because of the challenge of drug detection after a crash, the data can be inconsistent and crashes involving drug impairment are likely undercounted.

The following countermeasures are recommended to address the issue of **alcohol-impaired and drug-impaired driving** in Dutchess County.

3.5.1 Alcohol-impaired Driving

- **Enforcement and Criminal Justice Interventions.** The STOP-DWI (Special Traffic Operations Program for Driving While Intoxicated) program is a long-standing initiative in Dutchess County (and statewide) to combat impaired driving. In addition to traffic enforcement campaigns, such as for Memorial Day, 4th of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Super Bowl, and St. Patrick’s Day weekend, the Dutchess County program supports a specialized DWI prosecution unit, an intensive supervision program for offenders, rehabilitation services, and a range of educational and community programs. Other alcohol-impaired driving programs carried out by STOP-DWI include:
 - **Publicized Sobriety Checkpoints:** Although sobriety checkpoints remove impaired drivers from the road, their primary purpose is to deter driving after drinking by increasing the perceived risk of being caught and arrested ([NHTSA](#)). Dutchess County’s Stop-DWI Program funds a multi-jurisdictional sobriety checkpoint campaign.

Cannabis in Dutchess County

- New York State [legalized](#) cannabis for recreational purposes in 2021. Adults over age 21 are permitted to possess designated quantities of cannabis and use the drug in public where tobacco smoking is allowed (though not in a vehicle).
- Cities, towns, and villages can regulate personal cultivation, retail dispensaries, and on-site consumption.
- There are currently at least [13](#) medical and retail dispensaries in Dutchess County, with others planned.

- **High-Visibility Saturation Patrols:** A saturation patrol (also called a blanket patrol or dedicated DWI patrol) consists of a large number of law enforcement officers patrolling a specific area looking for impaired drivers ([NHTSA](#)). Dutchess County's STOP-DWI Program invests in targeted overtime saturation patrols.
- **Integrated Enforcement:** Impaired drivers are detected and arrested through regular traffic enforcement and crash investigations as well as through special impaired-driving checkpoints and saturation patrols ([NHTSA](#)). The STOP-DWI campaign helps financially support law enforcement to increase impaired driving enforcement in areas without enough police coverage.



Former County Executive Marc Molinaro delivers remarks at a 2019 DWI Victims Memorial Ceremony

The County program also supports an annual award for police officers who have excelled at DWI enforcement, as well as victim impact panels and an annual DWI Victims Memorial Ceremony.

However, STOP-DWI programs around New York State are experiencing budget pressure. Over the years, effective campaigns have led to fewer impaired driving convictions, which has reduced the amount of fine revenue available for local STOP-DWI programs. In 2023, Governor Kathy Hochul signed legislation ([S.2712B/A.4755B](#)) to help reverse this trend by redirecting state surcharges for alcohol and other drug-related traffic offenses to county-administered STOP-DWI Programs.

Dutchess County should continue to support its STOP-DWI program, collaborate with local law enforcement agencies to better understand future needs, leverage available funding from the GTSC, and promote [additional STOP-DWI resources](#) among criminal justice practitioners.

Download our Mobile App Now

Have a Plan



New York's STOP-DWI program is the Nation's first and, to date, only self-sustaining impaired driving program. Other States have implemented components of self-sufficiency, but none to the degree of New York State.

- **Alternative Transportation/Safe Ride Home Programs:** The County STOP-DWI program promotes the GTSC’s [Have A Plan mobile app](#), which provides information and resources to promote safe rides for impaired individuals and deter impaired driving.
- **Media Campaigns:** In addition to enforcement, a key part of impaired driving prevention is creating a strong safety culture against drunk driving. The County’s STOP-DWI initiative has educational resources on its website, hosts public events, and supports participation in high-visibility enforcement campaigns that include publicity. To maximize the impact of the STOP-DWI program, the County’s Traffic Safety Board could also implement additional coordinated mass media campaigns. This could include unified messaging and multi-channel outreach (radio, TV ads, social media, billboards, local news), and community engagement. [NHTSA](#), [GTSC](#), and [STOP DWI New York](#) offer readymade media collateral. STOP-DWI and CAPE could also partner to include additional impaired driving messaging in outreach [programs](#) related to underage drinking and substance abuse. This strategy would involve sustained investment in media outreach.

3.5.2 Drug-impaired Driving

- **Enforcement of Drug-Impaired Driving:** Consistent with the national experience, the enforcement of drug-impaired-driving laws in Dutchess County is difficult due to the many impairing drugs available, their differing impacts on individuals, a different toxicology than alcohol, and a lack of reliable chemical measurement. The GTSC supports statewide training programs to empower police officers to better investigate suspected drug impaired driving cases. Enforcement agencies including the [Town of Poughkeepsie Police Department](#) and Dutchess County Sheriff’s Office have trained and certified Drug Recognition Experts (DREs). Law enforcement agencies in Dutchess County should coordinate with the DRE coordinator for GTSC Region 1 to access trained DREs for impaired driving investigations. Dutchess County STOP-DWI also facilitates DREs to be on call for impaired driving cases. Law enforcement agencies in Dutchess County should seek additional [ARIDE certification](#) and [DRE](#) training through GTSC. This strategy involves training costs and requires staffing.

Drug Recognition Training

- The **Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement (ARIDE)** course trains law enforcement officers to observe, identify and articulate the signs of impairment related to drugs, alcohol, or combination of both.
- Officers can also train to become a **Drug Recognition Expert (DRE)**, which involves intensive training and field certification to carry out special diagnostic examination of impaired driving suspects and identify specific drug categories that may be the source of impairment.

- **Education Regarding Medications:** Impaired driving is generally associated with alcohol and illegal drugs, but many legally obtained and commonly used over the counter and prescription medications can impair driving ability. This is especially a risk for older adults who sometimes take several medications concurrently. Resources and messaging about this risk are available from [NHTSA](#), [GTSC](#), [AAA](#), and the [AARP](#). Further, the NYS DOH developed a “[Know the Risks](#)” brochure that outlines the dangers of combining prescription medications with substances like alcohol or over-the-counter drugs. The TSB, in collaboration with the Dutchess County Office for the Aging and the Dutchess County Department of Health should consider providing educational materials to healthcare providers, pharmacists, and patients about the potential risk of vehicle crashes associated with certain prescription medications.

- **Education on Cannabis and Safe Driving:** Many cannabis users do not understand or appreciate that cannabis can affect areas of the brain that control body movement, balance, coordination, memory, and judgment – all critical for safe driving. As New York State has legalized cannabis for recreational use, there is a growing need to establish a strong safety culture around cannabis and driving, like that for drunk driving.

The New York Office of Cannabis Management, which regulates cannabis statewide, is sponsoring a [Cannabis Conversations](#) campaign, which includes [public outreach](#) on safe driving. The GTSC offers a brief [guide](#) for drivers about the State’s cannabis laws.

The TSB, County Department of Health, and CAPE should consider additional public education to inform drivers about cannabis rules and laws, consumer safety, medical cannabis programs and more. Partnering with the cannabis industry may help reach users with messages from a trusted source. The TSB and County Department of Health could develop a flyer or brochure to distribute in dispensaries.

The Office of Cannabis Management offers a [statewide list](#) of licensed dispensary locations. Other states, such as [Colorado](#), have achieved constructive partnerships with cannabis providers to encourage safe driving.

Impaired Driving Resources

- [Dutchess County STOP-DWI Program](#)
- [Impaired Driving](#) (GTSC)
- [STOP-DWI New York](#)
- NHTSA Countermeasures That Work: [Alcohol Impaired Driving](#) and [Drug Impaired Driving](#) (NHTSA)
- [DRE Program Resources](#) (GTSC)
- [Drugged Driving in NYS \(2019-2021\)](#) (ITSMR)
- STOP-DWI programs in nearby counties lead a range of innovative initiatives. Columbia County [hosts](#) an educational mock DWI crash at high school assemblies. Ulster County [hosts](#) DWI simulator events at local high schools. Washington County STOP DWI [hosts](#) a booth at the Washington County Fair.
- [Cannabis Consumers and Safe Driving: Responsible Use and Messaging](#) (GHSA)
- [New York Office of Cannabis Management](#)



Billboard sponsored by the New York State Office of Cannabis Management



Public Educational Messaging by the Connecticut Department of Transportation



Public Educational Messaging by the Colorado Department of Transportation

3.6 Older Drivers

From 2014 to 2023, crashes involving drivers aged 65 or older represented 14% of all fatalities and serious injuries in Dutchess County. Fatalities and serious injuries for drivers aged 65 and older have doubled in the county since 2019, and the share of people aged 65 and older is growing. While aging drivers are often the safest drivers on the road, functional decline and frailty can increase their risk. The following countermeasures are recommended to address the issue of **older driver safety** in Dutchess County.

- **Communications and Education About Driving and Aging:** Navigating the demands of driving and aging, including reducing driving when needed, can be challenging for older adults and their adult children. The Dutchess County Office for the Aging (OFA) promotes tips for older drivers in recognition of Older Driver Safety Awareness Week every December. OFA also promotes defensive driving courses provided by [AARP](#) for drivers over age 55. Information about [alternate transportation options](#) for older adults is also available.
- **CarFit Program:** [CarFit](#) is a free educational program developed by AARP and the American Occupational Therapy Association. The program is designed to help older drivers find out how well they fit their vehicle, to identify ways to improve their fit, and to promote conversations about driver safety and mobility. A proper fit in one's personal vehicle can greatly increase the driver's safety as well as the safety of others. Nuvance Health currently has several CarFit-certified technicians and hosts events at senior centers in the county. The TSB and the County's Office for the Aging should host future CarFit events as well.

Initiatives to Support Older Drivers

- NHTSA Countermeasures That Work: [Older Drivers](#) (NHTSA)
- [Older Driver Resources](#) (NY DMV)
- Dutchess County Office for the Aging's [GoGo Grandparent](#) program is an on-demand transportation option for older adults, with limited free rides to non-emergency medical appointments within the county for those who are not Medicaid clients.
- The Dutchess County Traffic Safety Board has a disabled parking [educational campaign](#).
- [Safe Driving Resources](#) (Tompkins County Office for the Aging)
- [Older Driver Concerns](#) (Erie County Department for the Aging)

3.7 Distracted Driving

Between 2014 and 2023, distracted driving accounted for 14% of all fatalities and serious injuries in the county. New York State crash reporting and crash data distinguish between crashes involving “cell phone use” when cell phone use is specifically identified (accounting for 0.5% of all fatalities and serious injuries) and “distracted driving,” which includes eating, drinking, and other driver inattention. These categories can be conflated, and it can be difficult to detect distracted driving after a crash, so the data can be inconsistent – likely making these crashes underrepresented.

The following countermeasures are recommended to address the issue of **distracted driving** in Dutchess County. These strategies are consistent with statewide safety plans such as the SHSP and THSP.

- **High-Visibility Enforcement (HVE):** The objective of HVE is to deter cell phone use by increasing the perceived risk of being stopped by police and cited. The HVE approach to distracted driving prevention includes the campaign “[Phone in One Hand, Ticket in the Other.](#)” During HVE, law enforcement officers actively seek out distracted drivers, often using special roving patrols. Police may also leverage techniques such as using a stationary “spotter” to identify offenders and radio ahead to another officer to pursue the traffic stop.

GTSC, under its Police Traffic Services and Community Traffic Safety Programs initiatives, organizes statewide enforcement mobilizations to address distracted driving. April is [National Distracted Driving Awareness Month](#), and NY State Police conduct an “Operation Hang Up” enforcement campaign for distracted drivers. GTSC also provides grant funding to local law enforcement agencies for distracted driving enforcement. Dutchess County law enforcement agencies and partners should seek additional funding for these efforts through the GTSC.

HVE targeting distracted driving reduces cell phone use, but distracted driving is pervasive and investment in sustained enforcement is necessary to make a long-term difference.

NYS Cell Phone Law

Under New York State law ([Section 1225-D Use of portable electronic devices](#)), drivers are prohibited from using a hand-held mobile telephone or portable electronic device while driving. Illegal activity includes holding a portable electronic device and doing any of the following:

- Talking on a handheld mobile telephone
- Composing, sending, reading, accessing, browsing, transmitting, saving, or retrieving electronic data such as e-mail, text messages, or webpages
- Viewing, taking, or transmitting images
- Playing games

Additional Resources:

- [Distracted Driving](#) (Dutchess County TSB)
- [Distracted Driving Resources](#) (GTSC)
- NHTSA Countermeasures That Work: [Distracted Driving](#) (NHTSA)

- Employer Educational Programs:** The TSB could engage corporate partners to implement programs that address job-related distracted driving. Since distracted driving poses a liability risk, many employers have begun to protect themselves by implementing policies that prohibit distracted driving and monitoring compliance. Examples include UPS, which [implements](#) intensive driver training to avoid distracted driving, and Amazon, which recently began [distributing](#) a digital safety tip card for delivery drivers. The National Safety Council offers business training programs to improve employer and fleet safety. The TSB could engage the Dutchess County [Regional Chamber of Commerce](#) to seek potential corporate partners. The TSB could also explore partnering with labor organizations (such as the Dutchess Staff Association, Civil Service Employees Association, Dutchess County Sheriff’s Employees Association, and/or Dutchess County Deputy Sheriffs Police Benevolent Association) to raise awareness of safety policies for vehicles owned by the County and operated by County employees. See also Large Truck Safety above for a list of employers with notable commercial/occupational vehicle traffic.
- Public Communications and Outreach on Distracted Driving:** Separate from HVE, the TSB and its partners should increase the use of distracted driving communications and outreach campaigns to educate the public on the risks of distracted driving. NHTSA and the GTSC offer ready-made materials for campaigns such as [“Put the Phone Away or Pay”](#) and [“Don’t Drive Distracted. Eyes Forward.”](#)

Several other New York communities are implementing their own distracted driving educational programs. The Ulster County Transportation Council, in collaboration with its Traffic Safety Board, law enforcement and other partners, conducts a three-week road safety campaign, [“Safe Start to Summer”](#), to elevate awareness about distracted driving and speeding. The campaign involves public education, social media, and enhanced traffic enforcement. The GTSC has provided grants to organizations in Nassau, Clinton, Chautauqua, Oneida, Livingston, and Niagara counties to implement programs to educate drivers, young people, and parents of teens about a range of dangerous behaviors, including distracted driving. Law enforcement agencies, and partners can seek funding for communications and outreach from GTSC to conduct additional campaigns to raise public awareness. As with any education campaign, sustained investment is recommended for long-term behavior change.

3.8 Aggressive Driving

Aggressive driving encompasses a range of deliberate, dangerous behaviors, including following too closely, disregarding traffic control devices, making unsafe lane changes, speeding, and “road rage.” Speeding is addressed as its own Emphasis Area (see above) in part because speeding is the highest contributing factor to fatalities and serious injuries in the county. Many strategies to manage speed and calm traffic, which can also discourage aggressive driving, are described above and in the [Countermeasure Toolkit](#) and [Systemic Countermeasure Toolkit](#).

Dutchess County has experienced a notable increase in fatal and serious injuries associated with aggressive driving. Aggressive driving is often a pattern for drivers who are willing to take greater risks behind the wheel, including other dangerous behaviors like impaired and distracted driving. Because of its open-ended definition, law enforcement tends to apply a range of traffic violations under New York State motor vehicle law, including the formal charge of reckless driving.

The following countermeasures are recommended to address the issue of **aggressive driving** in Dutchess County.

- Positive Traffic Safety Culture Public Awareness Campaigns:** Historically, traffic safety campaigns have focused on the punitive (and antagonistic) nature of traffic enforcement. However, some communities are now using public communications to promote a more positive traffic safety culture. These efforts reinforce positive safety norms, promote community inclusiveness, and reflect a systemic approach traffic safety.

Positive Traffic Safety Culture Resources

- [Positive Culture Framework](#) (Montana State University Center for Health and Safety Culture)
- Dutchess County’s [“Watch Out For Me!”](#) campaign echoes positive traffic safety culture themes by stressing everyone’s shared responsibility for safety.
- GTSC messaging, specifically its [“Vision Zero – Your Choices Matter: Cautious”](#) PSA is aligned with this approach.
- The Washington State Traffic Safety Commission (WTSC) replaced its Target Zero brand with [“Together We Get There”](#), which appeals to community members’ sense of shared community.
- The California Office of Traffic Safety and Caltrans promote a safety culture where everyone will [“Go Safely.”](#) This campaign aims to humanize all road users and remind drivers of their personal responsibility for safety.
- Washington, DC’s [Vision Zero DC](#) sponsors a range of [educational campaigns](#) and promotes slower speeds, appealing to drivers’ responsibility to protect children.

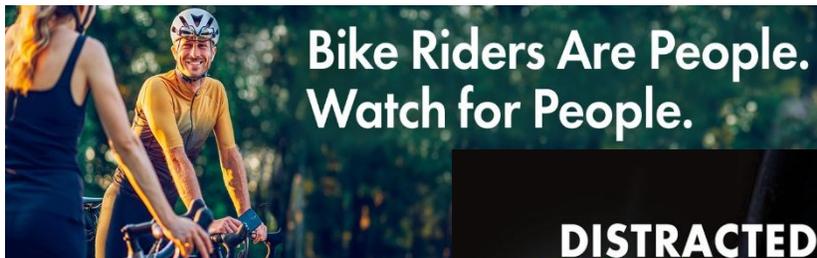


Check for Bicycles



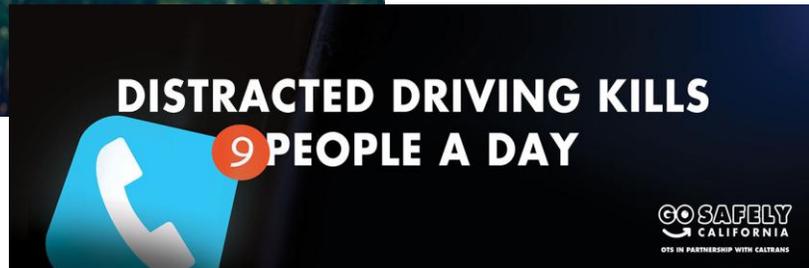
Distraction

[Dutchess County's Watch Out For Me! PSAs](#)



**Bike Riders Are People.
Watch for People.**

Go Safely California Public Educational Messaging



**TOGETHER
WE GET
THERE**

Washington Traffic Safety Commission campaign focuses on shared community



Washington "DC Vision Zero's 20" is Plenty: Slow Down" Campaign

The TSB, in partnership with law enforcement agencies and other community organizations, should expand public education campaigns on safe driving. Social norming campaigns can involve community leaders, peers, medical personnel, and other trusted messengers. The County could also lead its own branded campaign on aggressive driving. [Niagara County](#), for instance, has a “No Empty Chair” enforcement and education campaign. The TSB could seek additional funding for these efforts from GTSC. Culture change can take time, but high-quality campaign materials can be used for many years.

3.9 Post-Crash Care

Post-crash care is one of the five Safe System Elements and a critical component to decreasing fatalities and serious injuries in the county. Access to emergency and trauma care following a crash is critical to survivability. Dutchess County covers a large area, including small cities, suburban towns, villages, and rural areas, and has a limited number of hospitals to serve victims of serious crashes. Though Dutchess County has a Department of Emergency Response (DER), EMS care in Dutchess is also fragmented among commercial EMS services, volunteer fire departments, and career EMS agencies. With a diminishing workforce and fewer volunteers, rising costs, and a shortage of funding sources, EMS service is facing challenges.

The following countermeasures are recommended to address the issue of **post-crash care** in Dutchess County.

- Timely On-Scene Care:** Dutchess County has a centralized 911 communications center that dispatches calls to appropriate providers. However, finding a crash is not always easy, especially single-vehicle crashes, and EMS responders can sometimes face long distances and traffic.

Since January 2025, Dutchess has contracted with Empress Ambulance to provide 24-7 supplemental EMS coverage in strategic locations throughout the county. The County is also providing grants to fire departments and EMS agencies for lifesaving equipment for fly-car vehicles that can be first-on-scene to provide immediate care.

Dutchess County Efforts to Improve Emergency Response

Recognizing the challenges with EMS service in Dutchess County, DCTC Chairperson and County Executive Sue Serino launched an [EMS Matters](#) initiative to provide information, training, and resources to support the EMS workforce.

In 2025, the County made a \$2 million investment in building a more sustainable EMS system. In addition to increasing ambulance service, the County launched a public awareness campaign, “EMS Matters: Essential Care, Saving Lives” that provides information on when to call an ambulance. The County is also promoting workforce development and recruitment strategies for Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) and Paramedics.



EMS Matters Educational Billboard

Apple iPhones also now provide a crash detection feature that uses sensors to detect if the phone is involved in a crash and will automatically dial 911 to deliver a recorded message to emergency responders. Some vehicle telematics systems offer similar Advanced Automatic Crash Notification (AACN) which not only contact 911 centers but can also send detailed vehicle information and the crash location to better prepare first responders. However, the 911 center must be equipped to receive this data.

DER should monitor the development and encourage the widespread adoption of these emerging technologies and provide direct access to 911/Next Generation 911 (NG911) systems to improve emergency response ([USDOT](#) and [National EMS Advisory Council](#)).

- Reduced Travel Time to Trauma Centers:** Crash victims may be transported to a range of medical facilities within and near Dutchess County. Two hospitals in Dutchess County – Mid-Hudson Regional Hospital of Westchester Medical Center and Vassar Brothers Medical Center – as well as Danbury Hospital in Connecticut are Level II trauma centers for adults. Level II trauma centers can initiate definitive care for patients but may not be able to provide total care. Montefiore St. Luke's Cornwall hospital in Newburgh is a Level III trauma center providing service for adults and can assess, resuscitate, and stabilize patients. The Health Alliance Hospital in Kingston also offers Level III trauma care. The nearest Level I trauma centers, which can provide total care for any aspect of an injury, are in Westchester and Albany.

TABLE 3-3 HOSPITALS IN OR NEAR DUTCHESS COUNTY

| Facility | Location | Trauma Center |
|--|---------------|------------------------|
| Westchester Medical Center | Valhalla | Level I |
| Albany Medical Center | Albany | Level I |
| Mid-Hudson Regional Hospital of Westchester Medical Center | Poughkeepsie | Level II (adult only) |
| Vassar Brothers Medical Center | Poughkeepsie | Level II (adult only) |
| Danbury Hospital | Danbury, CT | Level II (adult only) |
| Montefiore St. Luke's Cornwall | Newburgh | Level III (adult only) |
| Health Alliance Hospital | Kingston | Level III (adult only) |
| Northern Dutchess Hospital | Rhinebeck | n/a |
| Sharon Hospital | Sharon, CT | n/a |
| Putnam Hospital | Carmel Hamlet | n/a |

Note: this does not include the VA hospital, since it does not serve the public.

Dutchess County has airborne emergency rapid transportation in the form of Medevac service helicopters and is served by surrounding air medevac services based in Albany and other locations. Responders from a heliport in Orange County can reach eastern Dutchess County in about 20 minutes. EMS air service can provide flexible transportation to multiple hospitals, though it cannot operate in bad weather. DER is considering a new policy to activate automatic helicopter launches for certain kinds of crashes, such as those involving serious injuries or pediatric serious injuries (for which it is important not to delay care).

EMS agencies and hospitals in and around Dutchess County should continue to strengthen liaison relations to improve communication and collaboration ([USDOT](#) and [National EMS Advisory Council](#)).

- **Traffic Incident Management Training and Incident Awareness:** Traffic incident management (TIM) focuses on communications, on scene management, and regional and statewide coordination. The NYS TIM Steering Committee has developed a training program, [SHRP2 National Traffic Incident Management Responder Training](#), focused on the needs of responders. The course is being offered across the state. Dutchess County should coordinate with the NYS TIM Steering Committee and local law enforcement agencies to provide targeted EMS training to traffic incident responders, including the 4-hour [National TIM Responder Training](#) course, which teaches responders how to safely and quickly clear traffic crashes ([FHWA](#) and [National EMS Advisory Council](#)). Training is available to EMS staff, and the DER uses an email distribution list to provide notification of class availability.

Travelers in the county can also benefit from more awareness of traffic incidents. The [NY Alert](#) app sends traffic advisories from traffic management centers and 511NY) and vehicle crash notifications. DER can also explore including traffic incidents among the notifications shared by the [Ready Dutchess](#) mobile app. More frequently, DER has used Facebook and X (Dutchess Alerts) to provide notice of road closures. Dutchess County also has the capability to send information via wireless emergency alerts, but these are typically reserved for special situations to alert citizens to avoid or evacuate an area due to life-threatening circumstances.

- **EMS Performance Measures:** DER is currently tracking EMS agency response times and the ability to respond to emergency calls. The Hudson Valley Regional EMS Council and the New York Division of EMS within the State's Department of Health are working on implementing quarterly EMS performance measures and treatment outcome measures. Local monitoring of EMS performance may be limited, since much EMS response data from hospitals is aggregated at the state level and information about specific patients would face privacy challenges under HIPPA, the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act. Nonetheless, DER could more formally track EMS volunteer staffing and retention as a performance measure.
- **Improved Access to Supplies:** Dutchess County should continue to support access to emergency response supplies by expanding its fly car program, providing access to Stop the Bleed (STB) equipment in all emergency-responder vehicles, and coordinating with NYSDOT to locate Incident Response Trailers at critical high-crash locations for longer duration incident zones. Incident Response Trailers include cones, barrels, barricades, flags for traffic control, and fluorescent pink signs indicating "Temporary Traffic Control" for traffic incident management ([National EMS Advisory Council](#)).

- Education and Enforcement Related to Ambulance Right of Way and Roadside Safety to Protect EMS Workers:** Anecdotally, emergency responders have observed drivers failing to yield to ambulances with flashing lights, which is a ticketable offense but difficult for police to enforce.

Emergency responders, including police, also face risks when responding to a traffic incident at the roadside. Responders on foot are sometime physically shielded by large, angled fire trucks blocking traffic, but not always. In 2023, New York updated its “Move Over Law” to require drivers to exercise due care to avoid all vehicles stopped on the roadway, including by changing lanes.

Educating emergency responders and the public on existing laws and best practices is identified as a Traffic Incident Management strategy in the State’s SHSP. The TSB and DER can partner to further inform the public about how to drive safely around emergency vehicles.

Additional EMS Resources:

- [Dutchess County Department of Emergency Response](#)
- [EMS Matters](#) (Dutchess County Department of EMS)
- [EMS & MRC Training Calendar](#)
- [Profile of Dutchess County EMS and Options for the Future](#)
- [Slow Down, Move Over PSA](#) (GTSC)
- “Steer It, Clear It” NITTEC [PSA](#) and NYSDOT [public awareness initiative](#)
- [Post-Crash Care related infographics](#), by NHTSA’s Office of EMS
- [Post-Crash Care](#) (U.S. DOT)