

UMTRI-91-1-2

**Evaluation of the Effectiveness of
Innovative Occupant Protection Measures:
US-31 Shoreline Area Vehicle Enforcement
(US-31 SAVE) Program**

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January 1991

**Final Report
Part 2: Executive Summary**

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INTRODUCTION

The US-31 SAVE project planned to increase safety belt use by applying the strategy of increased enforcement along with public information and education in a state with a secondary enforcement belt law through the cooperative efforts of seven police agencies across three counties. In Michigan, vehicles cannot be pulled over and occupants cited solely for safety belt nonuse. Instead, the vehicle must be pulled over for some other reason before officers may issue citations for safety belt nonuse. While combined enforcement and public information and education (PI&E) campaigns have proven successful in increasing safety belt use in primary enforcement states, the application of similar programs in secondary belt law states must differ somewhat. The stepped up enforcement can focus on increased diligence of police officers in citing vehicle occupants observed not using safety belts once they have been pulled over. The program may emphasize increased enforcement of some other section of the vehicle code which would permit increased traffic stops, thus providing more opportunities for safety belt law enforcement, or some combination of these approaches may be applied. The US-31 SAVE program applied the combination approach of increasing enforcement of speeding and other moving violations as well as providing stepped up enforcement of the safety belt law subsequent to traffic stops.

US-31, a major state trunk-line in western Michigan, is one of the main commuter routes connecting the cities of South Haven, Holland, Grand Haven, and Muskegon with the northern counties of the state, and also carries seasonal traffic from points south to areas in western Michigan for business and recreation. US-31 is the main connector highway for all communities along the western shore of Lake Michigan. The large variety and number of business and popular recreational attractions along the lake make US-31 a busy, often congested, and sometimes dangerous roadway.

The US-31 SAVE project combined heightened enforcement with public information and education (PI&E) campaigns in three counties in Michigan. It represented a cooperative effort among two western Michigan state police posts, county sheriff departments in Allegan, Ottawa, and Muskegon Counties, and city police departments in Holland and Grand Haven intended to

reduce crash and injury rates on US-31 by increasing awareness of speed and occupant restraint use laws and increasing enforcement of these laws.

The evaluation of the US-31 SAVE project conducted by The University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute described in this report was independent from the US-31 SAVE project activities. UMTRI had no involvement in the US-31 SAVE enforcement and PI&E activities.

US-31 SAVE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The US-31 SAVE project began its activities with an official media "kick-off" on October 23, 1989. The project described here curtailed its activities sharply in October 1990 due to budgetary constraints. The objectives of the US-31 SAVE project as stated in the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning (OHSP) grants supporting the project were:

- 1) Generate special traffic patrols for targeted areas and times.
- 2) Coordinate patrols on US-31 including officers from the Michigan State Police Fifth and Sixth Districts, Ottawa, Allegan, and Muskegon County Sheriff's Departments, and the Cities of Holland and Grand Haven.
- 3) Reach specific goals for the number of hazardous moving, speeding, and occupant restraint citations issued.
- 4) Reduce average speed on specified road segments.
- 5) Increase safety belt use.
- 6) Reduce crash frequencies.
- 7) Work with news media to educate the public on safe driving habits including use of safety restraints, and goals of the US-31 SAVE project.
- 8) Provide printed material to the public for information and education regarding US-31 SAVE and traffic safety.
- 9) Develop a committee of all involved agencies to meet on a regular bimonthly basis to discuss overall project effectiveness as well as problems and other matters related to the US-31 SAVE project.

To achieve the US-31 SAVE project objectives, a number of activities were undertaken. All agencies involved in the project provided selective enforcement patrols along US-31 within their jurisdictions, trying to ensure that those periods of the day when traffic problems were at their peak were covered. Selective enforcement patrols included vehicles that were fully marked and identified as police vehicles to maximize visibility of the enforcement effort. Bimonthly meetings involving representatives of each of the participating police agencies were held to coordinate project activities.

Patrol Activity

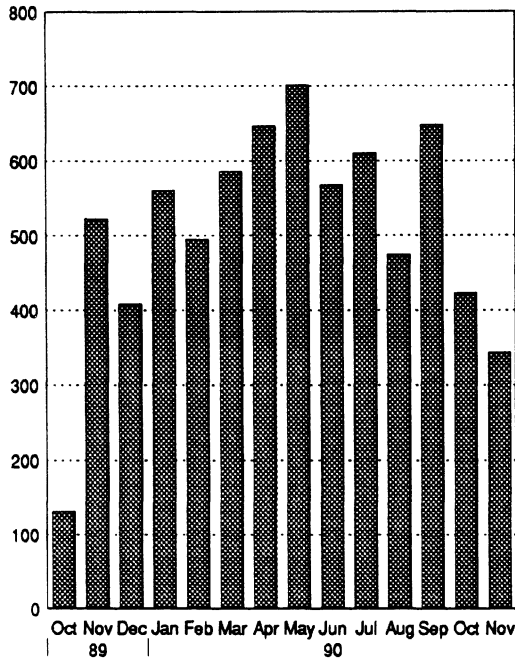
Hours devoted to patrol activities for the US-31 SAVE project each month are described in Figure 1. US-31 SAVE patrol hours are depicted for the total of all police agencies and for those patrolling in each of the counties (Allegan County included the Allegan County Sheriff's Department, the City of Holland Police Department, and Saugatuck Michigan State Police Post; Muskegon County included the Muskegon County Sheriff's Department; Ottawa County included the Ottawa County Sheriff's Department, the City of Grand Haven Police Department, and Grand Haven Michigan State Police Post). These figures show that overall patrol activity increased fourfold in the first full month of program activities, increasing gradually to a peak in May and declining thereafter. Patrol activity through the majority of the program remained between 500 and 700 hours per month.

Enforcement Activity

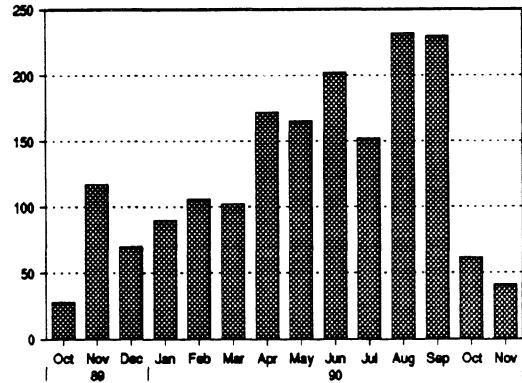
Enforcement actions taken by police during their patrol activities are described in Figures 2-4. Figure 2 shows the number of speeding citations issued each month overall and for each of the three counties. This figure shows that overall the number of speeding citations roughly mirrors patrol hours with a noticeable peak in November, just after the program began, peaking again in May and July. The number of speeding citations dropped back to preprogram levels in October and November of 1990 (the post-program period of low enforcement activity). Not surprisingly, speeding citation frequency also roughly mirrored patrol hours for each of the counties.

Figure 3 shows the number of citations and verbal warnings issued to motorists for safety belt nonuse. Recall that before a motorist could be issued either a citation or warning for belt nonuse, they first had to be stopped for some other reason, such as speeding. As can be seen in the figure, citations for belt nonuse were issued more frequently than verbal warnings. This is a positive sign of the importance placed on safety belt nonuse by officers in the field. It is also interesting that the proportion of warnings to citations remains fairly consistent throughout the project period, indicating there were not periods of exceptional strictness or leniency on issuing safety belt nonuse citations. As was the case for speeding citations, the number of safety belt citations and warnings roughly followed the pattern of patrol activity.

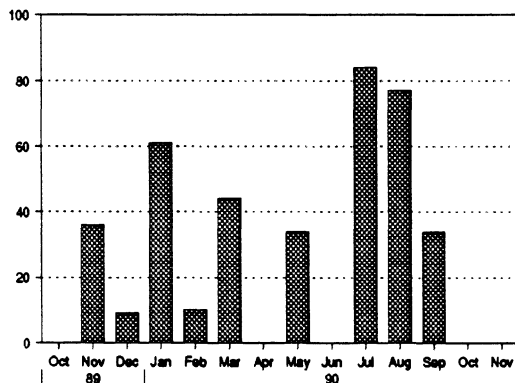
Overall



Allegheny County



Muskegon County



Ottawa County

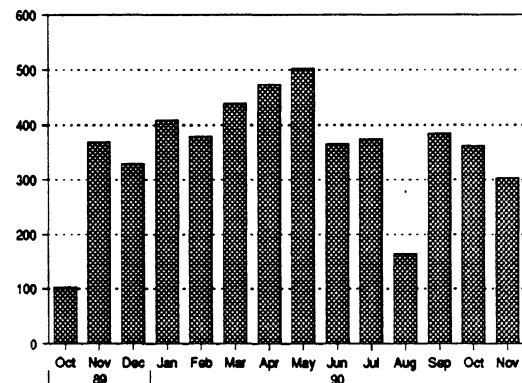
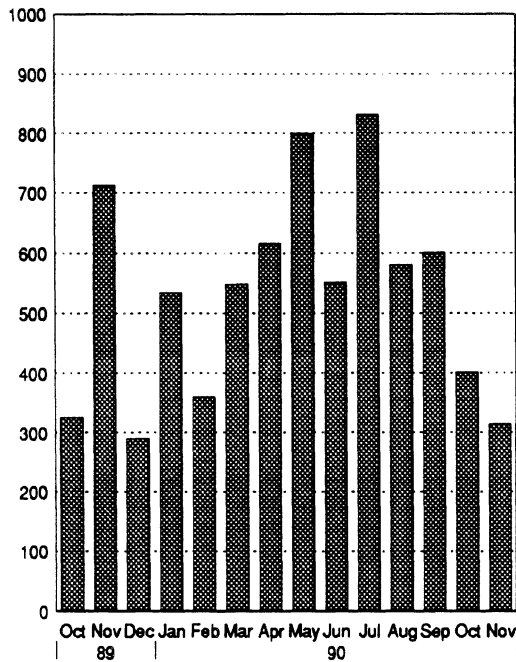
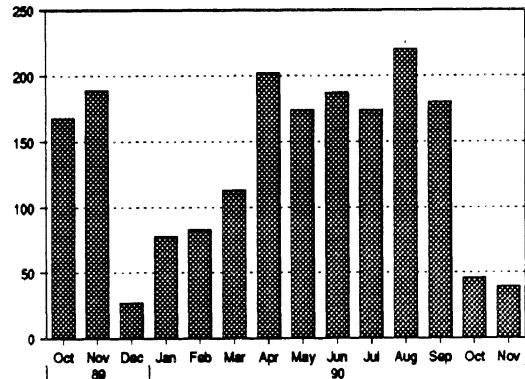


Figure 1. Police Patrol Hours on US-31

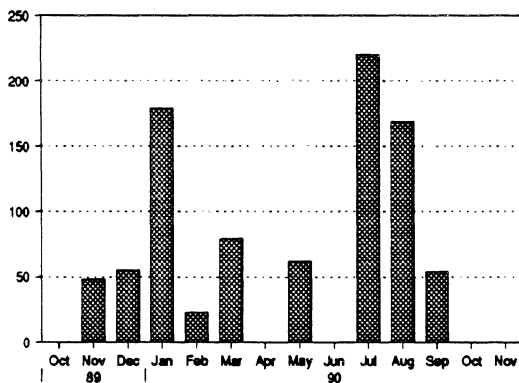
Overall



Allegheny County



Muskegon County



Ottawa County

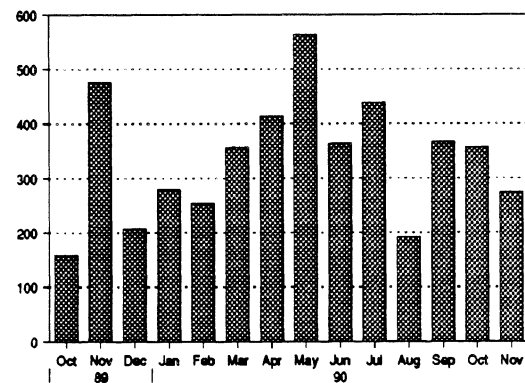
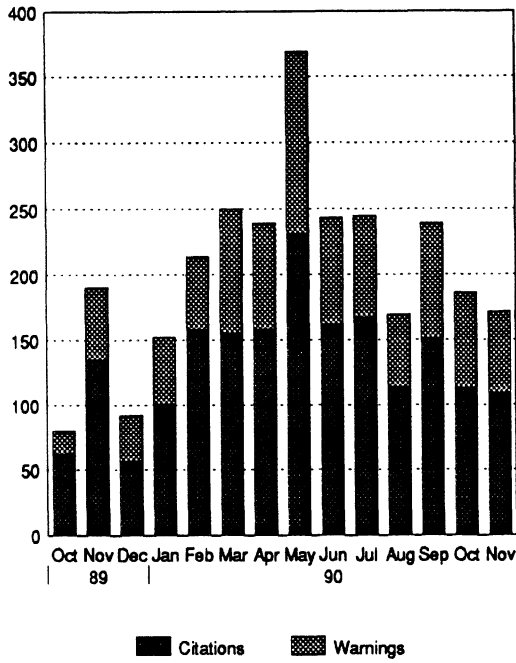
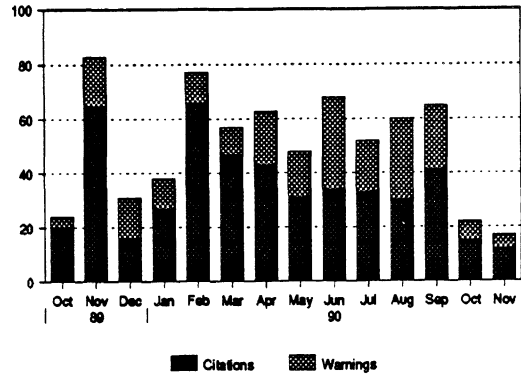


Figure 2. Speeding Citations Issued on US-31 SAVE Patrol

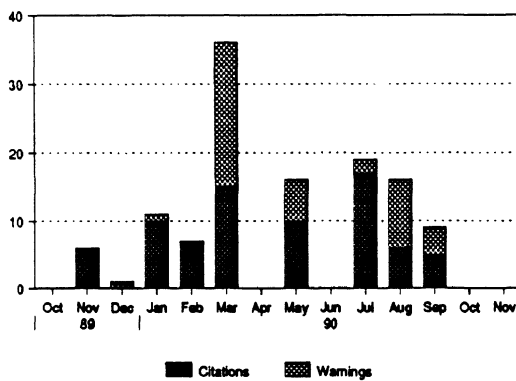
Overall



Allegheny County



Muskegon County



Ottawa County

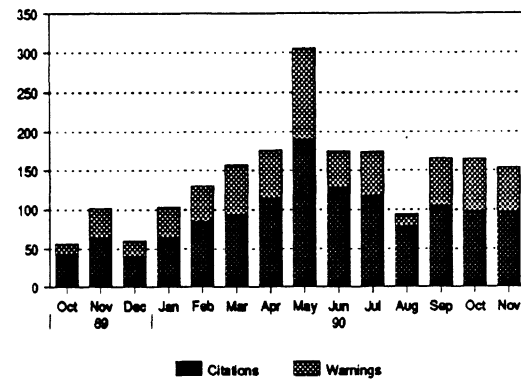


Figure 3. Safety Belt Nonuse Citations and Verbal Warnings Issued on US-31 SAVE Patrol

US-31 PI&E Efforts

All police agencies worked with the news media, including local newspapers, TV, and radio stations, to promote the US-31 SAVE project. During the course of the project three press releases were distributed describing the project and its successes to date (Appendix A). A local clipping service was contracted to collect all newspaper articles related to US-31 published in the media market served by US-31 in the three project counties. Figure 4 depicts the number of articles in which at least part of the article was devoted to a description of some aspect of the US-31 SAVE project (see Appendix B for copies of the articles).

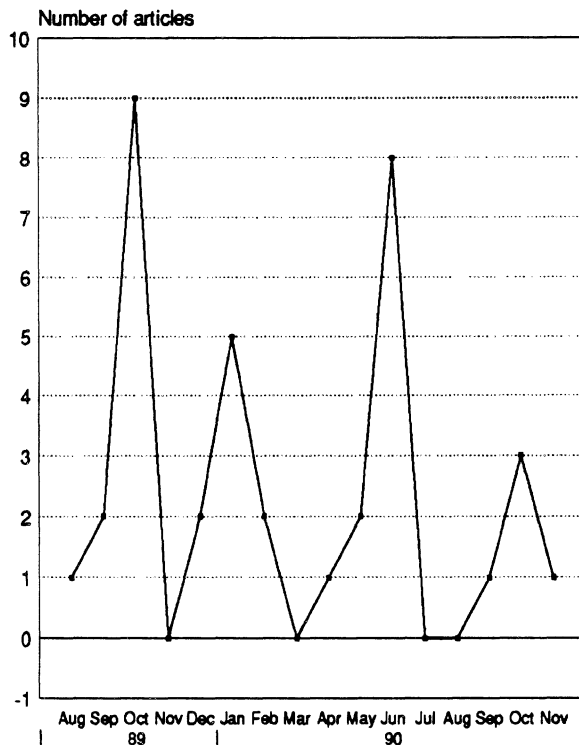


Figure 4. Number of Articles Describing US-31 SAVE Activities

Police agencies were encouraged to regularly collect media contacts using a media log. Unfortunately, such logs were not maintained, and thus we are unable to accurately document broadcast media participation and support for the program. However, we do know that broadcast media did support the program.

A wide variety of other PI&E efforts were made to publicize the program. The Michigan Department of Transportation installed several large 4 by 8 foot signs along the highway to identify the section of US-31 from South Haven to Muskegon as a selective enforcement zone. The signs displayed large Michigan State Police, sheriff's department, and municipal police department shields. The signs advised the public that they were passing through an area patrolled by the US-31 SAVE enforcement team. In addition, four large banners were hung on a variety of overpasses and buildings during periods when festivals and other events occurred announcing the US-31 SAVE project to event attendants.

The Holland Police Department acted as the principal agency for all printed public information and education material that was developed for the US-31 SAVE project. All agencies involved in the project had equal access to the printed materials produced. The following materials were produced and distributed (copies of these materials can be found in Appendix C):

- 20,000 flyers distributed to persons stopped for violations on US-31,
- 250 large posters announcing and describing the US-31 SAVE project distributed for display by interested businesses along the US-31 corridor,
- 500 8 1/2 X 11" posters announcing and describing the US-31 SAVE project distributed for display by interested businesses along the US-31 corridor,
- 10,000 US-31 SAVE stickers distributed by officers in the field and at police stations,
- 5,000 US-31 SAVE key rings distributed by officers in the field and at police stations,
- 50,000 US-31 SAVE car trash bags distributed at festivals and other events,
- 100,000 US-31 placemats distributed to restaurants along the US-31 corridor.

PROGRAM RESULTS

Effects on Vehicle Speeds

Vehicle speeds were measured prior to program implementation and at two points in time during the US-31 program at selected sites. Speed measurements were conducted by police agencies as part of their US-31 SAVE activities. Due to a lack of consistency on time and site selection for these speed measurements, only two sites in Holland were used in this portion of the evaluation (i.e., north- and southbound traffic at US-31 and 32nd Street [speed limit 55 mph], and north- and southbound traffic at US-31 and Central Street [speed limit 50 mph]). These observations were made by specially trained nonuniformed civilian officers in unmarked stationary vehicles at the same time of day (about 2:00 p.m.) under sunny or slightly overcast conditions on dry pavement.

The US-31 SAVE program was effective in reducing average speed on US-31 as measured in the City of Holland (see Table 1). Table 1 describes the results of the speed observations made prior to the program initiation and at two points in time after the program was begun. While the reductions in average speed from baseline to the intervention period were generally modest, all reductions in average speed between the September-October 1989 and June 1990 observations were statistically significant. Our confidence that the US-31 SAVE program caused the observed decrease in speed is bolstered by the fact that speeds on other similar roadways throughout the state remained unchanged during the US-31 SAVE project period (R. Swan, Michigan Department of Transportation; personal communications, February 6, 1991). However, these results are from only two sites in the City of Holland, therefore we cannot state that speeds were similarly reduced along the entire length of the US-31 corridor affected by the US-31 SAVE program.

| Table 1. Measured Vehicle Speeds (MPH) at Selected Sites in US-31 SAVE Project Area | | | | |
|--|-------------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| | Vehicles Observed | Range of Speeds | Average Speed | 85th Percentile |
| US-31 S.B. North of 32nd ¹ | | | | |
| October 1989 | 110 | 44-61 | 51.7 | 56 |
| February 1990 | 114 | 36-61 | 48.5 | 52 |
| June 1990 | 136 | 37-56 | 47.7 | 51 |
| US-31 N.B. South of 32nd ¹ | | | | |
| October 1989 | 105 | 40-63 | 51.8 | 57 |
| February 1990 | 126 | 32-65 | 51.4 | 56 |
| June 1990 | 118 | 32-62 | 49.0 | 53 |
| US-31 N.B. at Central ² | | | | |
| September 1989 | 108 | 45-68 | 57.7 | 62 |
| February 1990 | 125 | 35-69 | 52.6 | 58 |
| June 1990 | 119 | 36-60 | 48.5 | 53 |
| US-31 S.B. at Central ² | | | | |
| October 1989 | 108 | 43-70 | 52.2 | 58 |
| February 1990 | 127 | 33-68 | 50.6 | 57 |
| June 1990 | 115 | 38-60 | 50.2 | 55 |

Effects on Observed Restraint Use

Restraint use was measured using direct observation of vehicle occupants. A carefully designed set of observation sites was used to sample motorists traveling on US-31 in Allegan, Muskegon, and Ottawa Counties during daylight hours.

Overall restraint use (safety belt use of drivers and front-right seat passengers) increased during the US-31 project from baseline levels and then partially declined during the last two observation periods (see Figure 5). Preprogram observations (measured in September 1989) found overall restraint use to be 56.7%. Restraint use calculated over the entire US-31 SAVE program period (using observations from April through August 1990) was 65.1%. This belt use rate is significantly higher than the preprogram rate of 56.7% recorded in September 1989.

¹Posted speed 50 miles per hour.

²Posted speed 55 miles per hour.

Overall restraint use was found to have decreased slightly in October and December (the period when program activities declined) from the summer peak to 62.7%. Although there was a decline in restraint use during this period, restraint use remained higher during this period than the preprogram period. These findings show that the US-31 SAVE program was successful in increasing restraint use by drivers and passengers travelling the US-31 corridor.

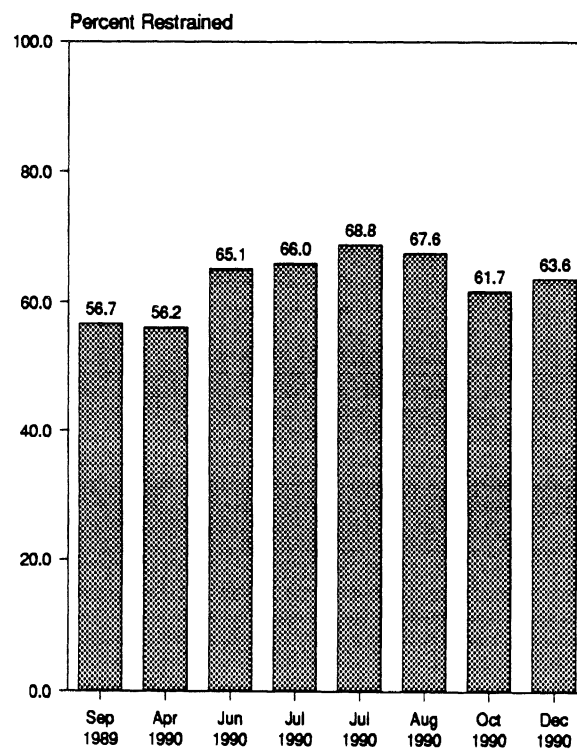


Figure 5. Overall Restraint Use at US-31 SAVE Observation Sites

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The US-31 SAVE program designed to decrease speeds and increase restraint use along the US-31 corridor in Allegan, Ottawa, and Muskegon counties was successful in achieving its behavioral goals. Average speed along the corridor decreased significantly (although this finding was based on a limited sample of sites), and restraint use increased significantly (8.4 percentage points from baseline levels) along the corridor due to the program.

The following recommendations are made for future programs designed to increase restraint use in states with secondary law provisions:

- Involve all police agencies within the target area in the program efforts.
- Coordinate enforcement activities with all involved police agencies through regular meetings.
- Target moving violations such as speeding to ensure frequent contacts with drivers and passengers who are likely to be at risk for restraint nonuse.
- Use marked police vehicles in obvious view of traffic to heighten the public's perception of the enforcement campaign.
- Remain strict in restraint-nonuse citation issuance; that is, issue more citations for restraint nonuse than verbal warnings.
- Closely link periods of high patrol activity with high levels of media activity,
- Work with local media to develop a plan/schedule for regular media coverage to keep program visibility high.
- In addition to the release of regular reports of patrol activities (patrol hours, numbers of citations issued, etc.), use special news releases to highlight special program activities to the media.
- Enlist and maintain support of the community for your program by reiterating the importance of the program and their support for reducing injuries and loss of life from motor vehicle crashes.

APPENDIX A
POLICE AGENCY PRESS RELEASES



For release on or after October 23, 1989

US-31 SAFETY PROGRAM HOPES TO SAVE LIVES

In an attempt to encourage safer travel along US-31 through Allegan, Ottawa, and Muskegon counties law enforcement patrols will be increased and more citations will be issued through a new cooperative safety program that kicks off today. The program, "US-31 SAVE", will be a cooperative effort among western Michigan state police posts, county sheriff departments and city police departments aimed at controlling speed, safety belt use, and child restraint, making "Safety's #1 on 31" the goal. In addition, the Motor Carrier Division of the Department of State Police will participate by enforcing truck safety laws. This specially coordinated effort will run from October 23, 1989 through September, 1990.

The program, funded by the Office of Highway Safety Planning and the United States Department of Transportation/National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, will attempt to reduce vehicular accidents by 2% by increasing the number of citations for hazardous moving violations, speeding, and seatbelt neglect by using air speed timing and special traffic group patrols along the 85 miles of US-31.

"The phenomenal growth that the US-31 corridor has experienced in recent years has created serious concern with traffic flow in the area," said Michigan State Police Saugatuck Team Commander, Lt. William Smith. " 'Safety is #1 on 31' is the goal of all participating agencies. The task is too great for any one agency, however, our coordinated efforts will have a very positive effect on addressing the problem. Your cooperation and support will greatly enhance this effort," Smith continued.

"Crash investigations indicate that approximately 90 percent of traffic accidents are caused by inappropriate driver behavior. Aggressive enforcement programs have demonstrated the ability to favorably impact accident experience and the S.A.V.E. Program should do the same for US-31," stated Roger VanderMeulen, 5th District Engineer.

The agencies involved include the 5th and 6th districts of the Michigan State Police; the Allegan, Ottawa and Muskegon County Sheriff Departments; and the Holland and Grand Haven City Police Departments.

A kick-off press luncheon at J.J. Finnegan's in the West Shore Mall at US-31 and James Street on Monday, October 23, 9:30 a.m. marks the start of this intensive effort. The press will be given opportunities to observe the operation in action immediately following a brief presentation by Traffic Safety officials. Speakers will include Lt. Col. James Daust, Deputy Director, Michigan State Police; Karen Tarrant, Executive Director of the Office of Highway Safety Planning, and a representative from the county sheriffs and local police departments.

**PRESS
RELEASE**

"A Cooperative Law Enforcement Effort"





News Release

February 13, 1990

Law enforcement activity along U.S. 31 continued in the month of January. The seven law enforcement agencies logged a total of 670 patrol hours on U.S. 31. There were a total of 766 citations issued in conjunction with the U.S. 31 S.A.V.E. Project, 431 of the citations were for speeding. Additionally, 300 motorists were verbally warned. 95 individuals were issued citations for violation of the Michigan passenger restraint laws.

The seven law enforcement agencies involved continue to stress strict compliance to the traffic laws, through strict enforcement. The seven agencies involved include the Michigan State Police, both Grand Haven and Saugatuck Posts, the Sheriff's Departments of Ottawa, Muskegon and Allegan Counties, the Holland and Grand Haven Police Departments.

The U.S. 31 S.A.V.E. Project is funded in part by a grant from the Office of Highway Safety and Planning.

Respectfully submitted,

Blaine A. Koops
Grant Coordinator
Holland Police Department

BAK/h

"A Cooperative Law Enforcement Effort"





US 31 SAVE NEWS RELEASE
JUNE 29, 1990

Our efforts to encourage safer travel along US 31 through Allegan, Ottawa and Muskegon Counties are paying dividends. Our 7 agency cooperative safety program that kicked off last October 23 has run now for approximately 8 months. The program, US 31 SAVE, is a cooperative effort among 7 west Michigan police agencies, consisting of the sheriff's departments of Allegan, Ottawa and Muskegon Counties, the city police departments of Grand Haven and Holland and the State Police Post at Grand Haven and the Saugatuck Team. The program is aimed at controlling speeds and enhancing safety belt and child restraint use, making safety #1 on 31 our goal.

The program, funded by the Office of Highway Safety Planning and the United States Department of Transportation National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, will attempt to reduce vehicle accidents by 2% by increasing the number of citations for hazardous moving violations, speeding and seat belt neglect by using air speed timing and special traffic group patrols along the 85 miles of US 31.

The 8 month effort to date has established some impressive statistical information that reveals that the 7 agencies have spent a total of 901 overtime hours and a total of 3,833 regular patrol hours, patrolling the 85 miles of US 31 through the three counties. These man hours have generated a total of 6,842 traffic arrests as well as a total of 71 persons arrested on various criminal offenses along with a total of 22 fugitive apprehensions on various warrants that were revealed during the various traffic stops. A total of 361 cars have been assisted with 1,254 cars being investigated with 2,183 warnings being issued for various traffic offenses. 4,050 of the 6,842 traffic offense arrests were for speeding and 1,033 were for violation of the various passenger restraint laws. A total of 520 verbal warnings were for failure to wear your seat belts. Of the 4,050

"A Cooperative Law Enforcement Effort"



speeding violations, a total of 546 motorists had radar detectors in utilization at the time they were stopped. During the officers' patrols, a total of 332 complaints have been generated that required investigation.

Accident statistics are not available for the entire 85 mile section of highway, however in the City of Holland, accidents were down from November 1 through April 30 a total of 18% over the same period last year and personal injury accidents have decreased by 56% during the same period. Speed studies have revealed a decrease in the average speed by 5 miles per hour in the City of Holland and the average speeds in the other areas are basically in compliance with our current speed laws.

Seat belt compliance in certain areas that have been surveyed within the targeted zone are an impressive 60% as compared with 49% on a state-wide average.

It is apparent that the statistics generated during the first 8 months of the US 31 SAVE project are very impressive. Time will tell on what lasting effect we have, but it's reassuring to note that the motoring public is taking note of the effort and are voluntarily complying with the traffic laws through the targeted zone.

We are pleased to announce that the efforts will continue on behalf of the 7 agencies for the duration of this fiscal year that ends in October and at the present time the 7 agencies are planning on requesting a renewal of the grant for the second year, with the addition of 2 additional departments participating, those being the Norton Shores Police Department and the Muskegon Township Police Department during the fiscal year 1990-1991. Funding levels have yet to be determined but it's anticipated that they will be similar to the current levels.

The support of the news media and the motoring public has a very positive effect on our efforts. The phenomenal growth continues to amaze your law enforcement all along the US 31 corridor and the serious concern with the traffic flow in the area still exists. Safety is #1 on 31 is the goal of all the participating agencies. The task is too great for any one agency, however our coordinated efforts will have a very positive effect in addressing the problem. Your cooperation and support will greatly enhance this effort.

APPENDIX B
US-31 NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

GRAND RAPIDS PRESS
AUG-18-89

Grant lets Holland police target violators on U.S. 31

HOLLAND

By Ben Beversluis
The Grand Rapids Press

Traffic is so bad on U.S. 31 through Holland that police figure to stop 900 speeders, 1,500 for other moving violations and 200 for child-seat violations under a new two-year highway safety grant.

In addition, they expect traffic accidents could be cut by 5 percent under the grant, approved this week, providing 20 hours of overtime patrols a week, starting Oct. 1.

"I don't think we're going to have any problem coming up with those (speeding violations) at all," said Holland Police Lt. Blaine Koops, administrator of the U.S. 31 SAVE program in a three-county area.

Koops added the numbers set in the grant application are not a quota but simply estimates based on what a patrol officer would normally write in the hours available.

Some of the motorists stopped would be given warnings, and Koops could not say how much ticket revenue will be produced.

Verbal approval of Holland's grant came just this week, Koops said, and is the first funding approved for the program that will extend from Allegan County up through Ottawa and Muskegon counties.

In the first year of the two-year effort, Holland will get \$34,255 to be matched by \$10,174 in city money. The second year will have similar funding. The Holland City Council voted in July to approve the application and matching funds.

Some of the Holland grant will fund Koops' administration of the program, plus provide \$15,500 for a public information and education campaign through the media and printed materials. The grants come through the state police office of Highway Safety and Planning.

Other grants are still pending for communities throughout the region.

U.S. 31, a four-lane divided highway, extends just over three miles within the Holland city limits.

Koops pointed out that one-tenth of all Holland accidents happen along U.S. 31. Four of the city's 10 worst intersections for accidents are along U.S. 31.

In addition, two of the city's three traffic fatalities in 1988 were along U.S. 31, and the city's two fatalities this year were on that highway.

TARGET

CONTINUED FROM A1

Koops said traffic studies show that on U.S. 31 at Holland's southern limit 24-hour traffic increased from 12,500 vehicles in 1983 to

16,700 in 1987, a 25-percent increase.

The extra patrols provided by the U.S. 31 SAVE program in Holland will come during "high-impact hours," Koops said.

Two-hour overtime patrol shifts will be conducted by two officers from 5-7 p.m. Sundays through Thursdays. Five-hour extra patrols

by two officers will be from 5-10 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays.

Other agencies to be involved in U.S. 31 SAVE (Shoreline Area Vehicular Enforcement) include the Ottawa and Allegan County sheriff's departments, the Saugatuck and Grand Haven posts of the state police and the State Motor Carrier District Units. 7-18-89

Patrols to increase along U.S. 31

By Laurie Anderson
Sentinel staff writer

Motorists on U.S. 31 between Holland and Muskegon can expect beefed-up traffic enforcement by mid-October, city officials said.

The Holland City Council Wednesday accepted a \$34,255 state grant for the first year of a two-year project aimed at reducing accidents and speeding on the highway.

"This is a result of the overall concerns that have been expressed in the council chambers and by the community at large," said City Manager Soren Wolff. "Traffic volumes have increased dramatically, and as a result, the accidents have increased."

Four of the top 10 accident intersections in the city in 1988 were located along U.S. 31, and 10 percent of Holland's accidents occurred there, according to city figures.

The Ottawa County Sheriff's Department reported it has investigated 139 accidents along the Holland portion of U.S. 31 during the first seven months of this year.

The Holland stretch of highway has claimed one life so far this year, the Holland Police Department reported.

That fatality occurred in an accident at the 24th Street intersection.

The city of Holland will be

work with the city of Grand Haven, the Ottawa County and Muskegon County sheriff's departments, and the state police on the project, Wolff said.

The funds from the state Office of Highway Safety Planning will be used to buy signs, brochures, radar equipment and officer overtime, said Wolff. A contribution of \$10,174 will include salaries and fringe benefits for existing officers and is already

included in the new city budget.

The Holland Police Department plans to spend 1,000 overtime hours patrolling U.S. 31 between Washington Avenue and Eighth Street. Goals for the program include issuing 2,600 tickets and reducing vehicle speeds during the 24-month period.

The project does not require hiring more police officers, said Wolff.

See PATROLS, A3

PATROLS

HOLLAND SENTINEL
SEP-21-89

(Continued from A1)

"I'm sure we all agree this is none to soon," Councilman Al McGeehan said of the project. He said a study should be done on the practice of making right turns on red lights.

"U.S. 31 is too much of a blend of highway and city traffic," said McGeehan. "I'm convinced that this is part of the story."

In other business:

—The council approved of hiring WBDC, a Grand Rapids consulting firm, to help upgrade the city's outdated master and zoning plans.

According to City Planner and Engineering Coordinator Dale Wyngarden, the city zoning ordinance was created in 1961 and has never had a complete review. The master plan was last rewritten in 1976.

"After 28 years, the time has come to amend the zoning ordinance," Wyngarden told the council. "I would love to do this myself. ... But as good and talented as our staff is, we are limited."

WBDC will be employed by the city under a contract budget that will not exceed \$35,000.

—The council accepted the Downtown Traffic Task Force report as a "working document" and will submit a request to the Michigan Department of Transportation to study downtown traffic patterns, particularly the Seventh Street area.

The downtown study is expected to be completed within six months, with a simultaneous MDOT study of the highway system to be completed in about a year.

9-21-89

Sheriff joins U.S. 31 speeding crackdown

By LYNN MOORE

Chronicle staff writer

The Muskegon County Sheriff's Department plans to get tough on speeders along U.S. 31 with the help of a \$13,500 federal grant.

THE SHERIFF'S department will join several other communities along the U.S. 31 corridor in stepping up patrols from October through September 1990.

"All over Michigan the speeding is taking place to the point where we could lose \$19 million in federal dollars because we

can't get 50 percent of our people traveling at the speed limit." Capt. Orville Budd of the sheriff's department told county commissioners Tuesday.

The commissioners formally accepted the grant, although Commissioner Jeff Funkhouser complained that the grant's goals include specific numbers of violations the department would issue as a result of the grant. He said that constituted "hunting down" violators.

THOSE OBJECTIVES include issuing 1,000 citations for speed and hazardous

moving violations, reducing car crashes by 10 percent and issuing 250 citations for seat belt and child restraint violations.

"Why can't they just do their job," Funkhouser said of the sheriff's deputies. "Whether it's 100 or 10,000, why don't they just go out and do it."

Budd said the government required such numbers on the grant application.

MUSKEGON COUNTY will work on the project known as S.A.V.E. with two Michigan State Police posts, the Allegan and Ottawa sheriff's departments and the Hol-

land and Grand Haven city police departments.

The stepped up patrols will cover 115 miles of U.S. 31 from Ludington to South Haven. Marked and unmarked police vehicles will be used and nine large road signs will inform motorists of the stepped-up enforcement efforts.

In applying for the grant, the law enforcement agencies noted that U.S. 31 recently has seen a substantial growth in traffic and accidents and that those numbers could climb.

UNDER THE grant agreement, the federal government will provide two hours of overtime pay each week to match two hours of road patrol focused on U.S. 31 and financed by the county sheriff's department. Budd said the work will involve one road patrol officer who already directs some of his time to U.S. 31.

He said the project's increased focus on U.S. 31 should not cut response time to police calls because the road patrol officer normally does not answer calls.

Police to swoop down on U.S. 31

By Dale Brewer
Tribune writer

Local law enforcement agencies are gearing up for the U.S. 31 combined program to curtail speeding and accidents on that heavily used shoreline corridor.

The program is to be kicked off soon when police agencies throughout Muskegon, Ottawa and Allegan counties will devote extra manpower and time to the project.

Ottawa County Sheriff Robert Dykstra hopes the project will reduce the overall motorists' speeds

on the busy highway, just like what resulted from the M-45 program.

Dykstra explained M-45, nicknamed "accident alley," had been the worst road in the county in terms of fatal accidents and speeding. Although final figures are not in, he believes the situation on M-45 has improved dramatically. "It's worked extremely well on M-45. That used to be the worst road in the county, but since starting the program there has not been one fatality out there."

He added that nearly 20 percent of the department's speeding tickets (See U.S. 31 on page 3)

U.S. 31

(Continued from page 1)

are a result of the M-45 crackdown.

THE OVERALL grant, through the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning, is for about \$150,000. The program is scheduled to run for two years. During the first year, local agencies will receive 60 percent of the funds from the grant and have to supply a 40 percent match. The second year will be a 50-50 match.

The state appropriated the first grant money Oct. 1.

Among the law enforcement agencies involved in the program are sheriff's departments from Ottawa, Muskegon and Allegan, Michigan State Police (Grand Haven and the Saugatuck sub-post), and Holland and Grand Haven City Police.

The stretch of U.S. 31 in Ottawa County is to receive special attention because practically the entire

length of it has frequent access points, unlike the limited access stretches in Muskegon and Allegan counties. This causes problems because the Ottawa stretch has 55 mph speed limits while the other areas have designated 65 mph speed limits.

Estimates peg the average speeds on the Ottawa stretch of U.S. 31 at 67-68 mph.

The Ottawa County Sheriff's Department will likely hire an additional road patrol deputy to cover its portion of the program. Dykstra said he will hire a new patrolman to work 40 hours a week, all on U.S. 31 patrol within the county. All the OCSD needs for that is approval from the full Ottawa County Board of Commissioners at next Tuesday's meeting. Dykstra said the grant and match money is already in hand and therefore the board decision should not be a problem.

OCSD OFFICIALS went to the five townships within the county to raise the matching funds. With the exception of Port Sheldon Township, the townships were agreeable to the requests. Holland Township stepped in to cover the money Port Sheldon Township would not donate.

Dykstra said that was crucial. "If someone had not done that it would have blew the whole grant apart."

While the OCSD went to the townships to hire the additional deputy, the other police agencies will utilize what they term a soft-match, or what is described as a one-on-one match. For every patrol hour the state funds, those agencies will provide an additional hour.

The program, officially called Shoreline Area Vehicle Enforcement (SAVE), will also feature educational-type efforts, through the use of billboards, pamphlets and other means.

County board accepts grant for new U.S. 31 patrol OCT 11 1989

GRAND HAVEN — Speeders in Ottawa County will have an even tougher time zooming along U.S. 31 now that the county has accepted a state grant to establish a full-time patrol officer for the road.

P2LS
The Ottawa County Sheriff's Department will receive \$22,259 in federal funds through the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning, which officials say will pay for one deputy who will be dedicated to patrolling that stretch of highway, except parts in Holland, Grand Haven, Spring Lake and Ferrysburg.

Undersheriff Philip Alderink said the officer should be on the road within the next week, as soon as final paperwork is completed. The officer will be committed to patrolling the road 40 hours a week. He added that the program is similar to one currently under operation along Lake Michigan Drive (M45) in the county.

"We're glad to see it started," Alderink said.

GRAND RAPIDS, MI

PRESS

F.125.669; S-138.885

OCT-23-89

U.S. 31 speed, seat-belt patrols will begin today

HOLLAND

By Roger Morgenstern
The Grand Rapids Press

U.S. 31 speeders, beware.

Seven law enforcement agencies in three West Michigan counties today were to officially begin the long-discussed crackdown, called the U.S. 31 Shoreline Area Vehicle Enforcement (SAVE) program.

Fueled by federal and local grants, the two-year program uses extra patrols and a public information campaign to cut speeding along U.S. 31 and to boost enforcement of the state's seat belt law, said Lt. Richard Housenga, commander of the Michigan State Police Grand Haven post.

While an 80-mile stretch of U.S. 31 through Muskegon, Ottawa and Allegan counties is their target, officials hope the program will reduce speeds and accidents along Michigan's entire stretch of U.S. 31.

The agencies involved include the sheriff's departments in the three counties, plus the Grand Haven and Holland police departments and the State Police post in

Grand Haven and the Saugatuck Team.

"The phenomenal growth that the U.S. 31 corridor has experienced in recent years has created serious concern with traffic flow in the area," said Lt. William Smith, commander of the state police Saugatuck Team. "The task is too great for any one agency, however our coordinated efforts will have a very positive effect on addressing the problem."

The project was to be ceremonially launched today at a press conference at J.J. Finnegan's Restaurant in Westshore Mall.

Federal funds administered through the state Office of Highway Safety Planning are paying for 60 percent of the program during the first year, with a 40-percent match from the townships and cities along the route.

In the second year, funding is split 50-50 between federal and local sources, Beld said. The program coincides with the federal government's fiscal calendar, from Oct. 1 of this year to Sept. 30, 1991.

The total cost within the three counties is \$96,600 for the 1990 fiscal year, Beld said.

The program boosts the amount of patrols already underway on U.S. 31. Housenga said he has increased patrols on U.S. 31 during the last year, with a car assigned to the highway 40 to 60 hours a week. The grant will allow about three more hours of patrol per week.

In addition to more cars, the grant is paying for a public information campaign so motorists are aware of the stronger enforcement, Beld said.

This will range from signs posted along the highway to pamphlets at restaurants and service stations.

The program is similar to one already in place along a 20-mile stretch of M-45 between U.S. 31 and Allendale. That program is being funded by a \$24,700 grant from Ottawa County.

Beld said he's confident that the U.S. 31 SAVE program will do some good, given the success of the M-45 program.

In 1989, there have been no fatal accidents on the traditionally dangerous M-45. The M-45 program continues through Sept. 30, 1990.

Housenga agreed: "Hopefully we'll get the same results that we've had on M-45. Strict enforcement backed up by public information does get the message across."

OCT-23-89

U.S. 31 speed watched

By ROGER MORGENSTERN

Chronicle staff writer

GRAND HAVEN. — U.S. 31 speeders, beware.

Today, seven law enforcement agencies in three West Michigan counties officially kick-off the U.S. 31 Shoreline Area Vehicle Enforcement program. It goes by the acronym S.A.V.E.

FUELED BY BOTH federal grants and local contributions, the two-year program will work to not only reduce speeding along the U.S. 31 corridor, but increase enforcement of the state's seat belt law and provide information on officers' efforts to motorists using the heavily traveled route, said Lt. Richard Housenga, commander of the State Police's Grand Haven post.

The grant program allows for beefed-up enforcement on the 80 miles of U.S. 31 within Muskegon, Ottawa and Allegan counties, said Lt. Larry Beld, road patrol coordinator for the Ottawa County Sheriff's Department. It is hoped the effort will reduce speeds and accidents along the entire stretch of U.S. 31 in Michigan, Housenga said.

The departments involved are the Muskegon, Ottawa and Allegan county sheriff's departments, the Grand Haven police, Holland police and State Police from both Grand Haven and Saugatuck, Beld said.

REPRESENTATIVES FROM each community, along with invited dignitaries, were to attend a kick-off brunch this morning in Holland.

Federal funds administered through the state Office of Highway Safety Planning are paying for 60 percent of the program during the first year, with a 40 percent match from each local community. During the second year, the funding is split 50-50 between federal and local sources, Beld said. The program will run along the federal government's fiscal calendar, from Oct. 1 of this year to Sept. 30, 1991.

The total cost for the program within the three counties is \$96,600 for the 1990 fiscal year, Beld said.

THE GRANT WILL result in an increased presence of police cars on U.S. 31. Several agencies, like the state police out of Grand Haven, already patrol the corridor regularly in Muskegon and Ottawa counties. Housenga said he has increased patrols on U.S. 31 during the last year, with a car assigned to the highway 40 to 60 hours a week, Housenga said. The grant will allow about three more hours a week of patrol, he said.

In addition to more cars, the grant is paying for a public information campaign to make motorists aware of the beefed-up enforcement, Beld said. This will range from signs posted along the highway to pamphlets at restaurants and service stations, Beld said.

The law enforcement program is similar to a program already in place on 20 miles of M-45 between U.S. 31 and Allendale, Beld said. In this case, however, Ottawa County is putting up money for this program, with the county paying about \$24,700 for the fiscal year that began Oct. 1, Beld said. For the U.S. 31 program, the local share for Ottawa County is being paid for by townships along the highway. The M-45 program continues through Sept. 30, 1990.

BELD SAID HE'S confident that the U.S. 31 S.A.V.E. program will do some good, given the success of the M-45 program. In 1989, there have been no fatal accidents on the road.

Housenga agreed.

"Hopefully we'll get the same results that we've had on M-45," he said. "Strict enforcement backed up by public information does get the message across."

OCT-24-89

Officials say U.S. 31 crackdown will be a help, but not a cure

HOLLAND

By Jon Brandt
The Grand Rapids Press

The U.S. 31 SAVE program is officially underway and not a moment too soon, as far as Lt. Blaine Koops of the Holland Police Department is concerned.

With use of the roadway running at more than a third over its engineered vehicle capacity and growth throughout Ottawa County expected to continue, Koops and other law enforcement officials say something must be done to make the road safer.

The U.S. 31 Shoreline Area Vehicle Enforcement (SAVE) program will be aimed at reducing speeds, accidents and fatalities along an 85-mile stretch of the federal highway, and also increase driver awareness and seatbelt usage.

"We have a real problem with it (U.S. 31) now," Koops said. "We just don't have the manpower during the high traffic times to patrol the area effectively."

The year-long program, which officially got underway Monday, will involve seven law enforcement agencies in a three-county area, including Michigan State Police posts in Grand Haven and Saugatuck, sheriff's departments in Ottawa, Allegan and Muske-

"U.S. 31 is becoming a dangerous roadway. But I think that with cooperation, we can make this (effort) work."

Sheriff Robert Dykstra

gon counties and Holland and Grand Haven police departments. The program likely will be extended to two years if it meets expectations, Koops said.

Koops, who is administrating the entire program, said about \$96,000 in federal grant money will be used to pay overtime for officers patrolling the roadway and fund an extra road patrol officer for the Ottawa County Sheriff's Department. With grant matches, cost for the program should approach \$175,000 this year.

"It's not a cure," Koops said. "I think the only way we're going to correct it is by having the highway change — but that's not available to us right now."

With the theme "Safety's No. 1 on 31," representa-

see U.S. 31, page 2

U.S. 31

CONTINUED FROM 1

tives from each of the agencies involved in the program met at J.J. Finnegan's in the Westshore Mall Monday morning to kick off the cooperative effort, which will initially run through Sept. 30, 1990.

After a brunch and short informational program, more than 20 police vehicles streamed up and down U.S. 31 in front of the mall with their emergency lights on in a symbolic start to the program.

Koops said the program is imperative in the Holland area, where there has been a dramatic increase in accidents in the past year. From Riley Street to Washington Avenue, there were 85 accidents along U.S. 31 in 1988, according to Koops. But during the first six months of 1989, 60 accidents occurred in the same area and continue to climb, he said.

Since Oct. 1, Koops said that Holland officers have issued 115 tickets to drivers on U.S. 31. He added, however, that issuing more tickets is not the objective of the program.

"Hopefully, what will occur is that the number of citations will go down once people realize we're out there and we get compliance," Koops said.

The program is one of 15 such cooperative efforts throughout Michigan and is the second largest next to a similar project on Interstate 75 in Genesee, Bay and Saginaw counties. A similar program on M-45 between U.S. 31 and Alendale has been extremely effective, officials said.

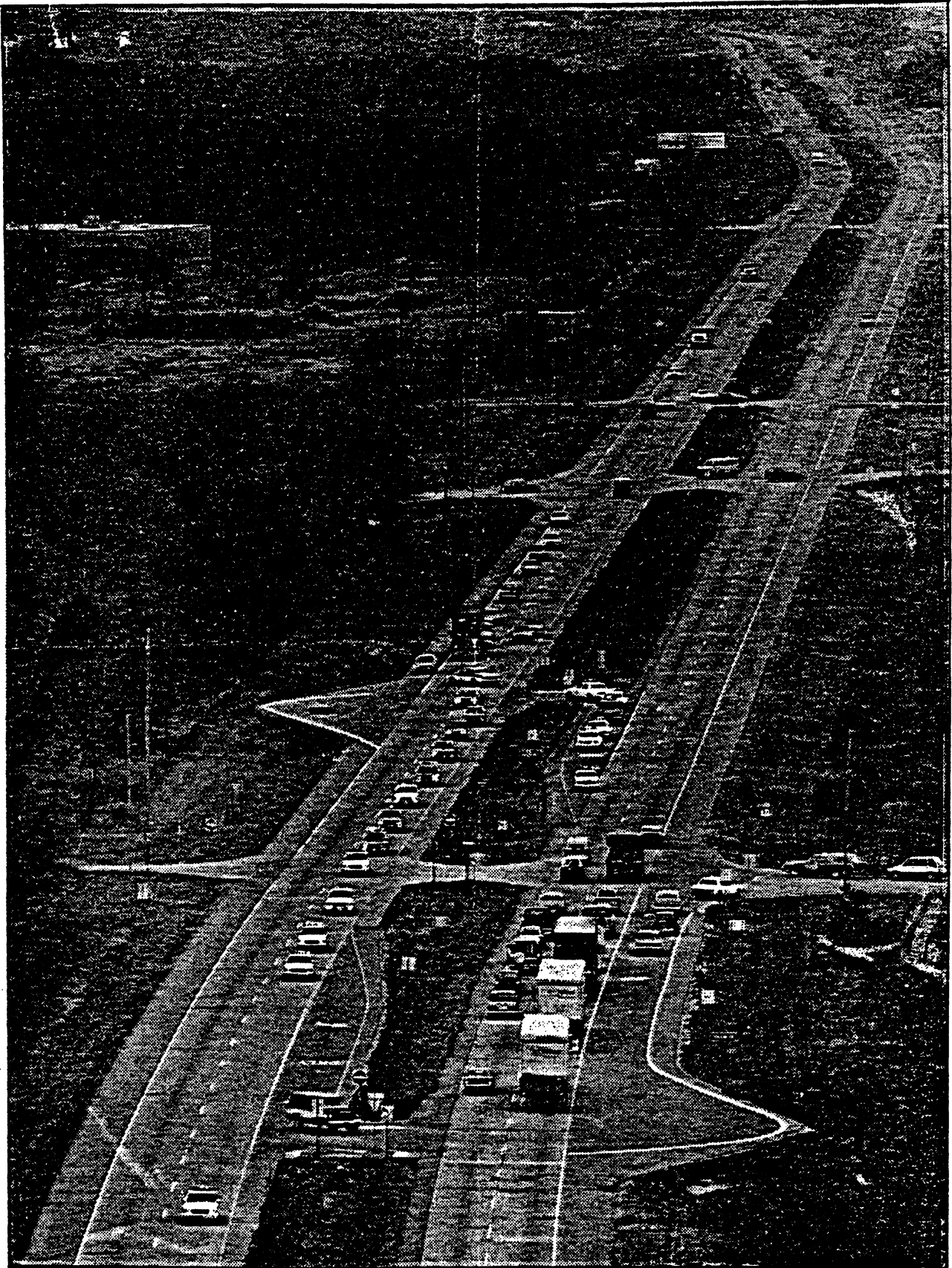
"M-45 was one of the worst roadways in Michigan for fatal accidents," said Ottawa County Sheriff Robert Dykstra. "We have not had one this year."

"U.S. 31 is becoming a dangerous roadway. But I think that with cooperation, we can make this (effort) work."

The project will involve increased road patrol and the state police's "Eye in the Sky" airplanes, which can time speeders without the use of radar.

Lt. Larry Beld of the Ottawa County Sheriff's Department said he is optimistic about what the project will accomplish.

"On M-45, the number of accidents is decreasing and the severity is decreasing also," he said. "This will be a more concentrated effort than that with more agencies involved."



PRESS PHOTO/MARK COPIER

Area police agencies formed a squad-car motorcade on southbound U.S. 31 Monday morning.

OCT-24-89
**U.S. 31
anti-speed
plan starts**

By ROGER MORGENSTERN

Chronicle staff writer

HOLLAND — Tri-Cities motorists will be seeing more of the Grand Haven Police Department as part of beefed-up enforcement along U.S. 31.

The U.S. 31 Shoreline Area Vehicle Enforcement (S.A.V.E.) program officially began Monday, with seven law enforcement agencies in Ottawa, Muskegon and Allegan counties participating.

AS PART of the grant program, Grand Haven police will now have an officer strictly patrolling U.S. 31 for 10 hours each week, Lt. Gregg VanLente said after the program's kick-off brunch in Holland.

Currently, Grand Haven police does not have an officer exclusively assigned to patrol U.S. 31, also known as Beacon Boulevard within the city limits.

Officers will patrol the draw-bridge area and the Jackson Avenue, Washington Avenue and Robbins Road intersections, among others, Deputy Chief Don Tague said. In addition to speeders, police are looking for traffic violations, such as turning left onto northbound or southbound U.S. 31 from Washington, Tague said. The state's seatbelt law will also be enforced.

VANLENTE SAID the main problem within the city is congestion, while speeding is the main concern at the bridge area.

The city of Grand Haven was awarded \$9,170 in federal money for the program, and contributed \$5,000 in local match-funds, according to Lt. Larry Beld of the Ottawa County Sheriff's Department.

In addition to Grand Haven police, other agencies participating in U.S. 31 S.A.V.E. are the Michigan State Police based in Grand Haven and Saugatuck, the Holland Police Department and the sheriff departments in Ottawa, Muskegon and Allegan Counties.

IN MUSKEGON County, a \$13,500 grant for the enforcement program will allow for 20 hours per week of patrol strictly on U.S. 31, said Capt. Orville Budd of the Muskegon County Sheriff's Department. The grant will pay for 10 hours of officer overtime pay while the department will pay for 10 hours of "straight time" for an officer, Budd said.

At Monday's kick-off, state police officials noted that Ottawa County is the fastest growing county in Michigan, with much tourist traffic and two heavily-used state parks.

OCT-24-89

Police seek to SAVE lives on U.S. 31

By Ari B. Adler
Sentinel staff writer

Police agencies in Allegan, Muskegon and Ottawa counties began a drive Monday to improve safety on U.S. 31, the region's main highway and one of its most dangerous.



Called U.S. 31 SAVE, the program aims to control speeding and get motorists

to buckle up properly through education and more stringent law enforcement on the highway.

Local, state and federal funds totalling more than \$180,000 are earmarked for more officers to patrol the highway and for a public information campaign that employs bumper stickers, road



The radar beams will be numerous on U.S. 31 after Monday's kick-off of U.S. 31 SAVE, a seven-agency cooperative effort to enforce speed, seat belt and child safety seat laws.

signs and place mats in restaurants with safety messages.

The drive ends Sept. 30, 1990.

See U.S. 31, A3

(Continued from A1)

The phenomenal growth that U.S. 31 corridor has experienced in recent years has created serious concern with traffic in the area," said Lt. Wiln-Smith of the Michigan State Police.

"The task (of safety on U.S. 31) is too great for any one agency. However, our coordinated efforts will have a very positive effect on addressing the problem."

Ottawa County has been the state's fastest-growing county in the past two years, according to the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission.

years, many of them in four new shopping malls, Smith said. The Holland, Grand Haven and Muskegon state parks each had more than 1 million visitors last year.

"The daily traffic count on U.S. 31 near Holland increased 25 percent from 1983 to 1987, and the 1988 and 1989 counts are expected to show an increase as well," Smith said.

With the increased traffic came an increase in accidents.

In 1988 there were 220 accidents along the highway from Holland to the Muskegon County line, according to State Police records.

Three people were killed in two fatal accidents on the highway

age only.

State and federal grants will total more than \$90,000 and be matched by another \$90,000 from the seven police agencies involved, according to Smith.

Police will shoot for reducing accidents by 2 percent by writing more tickets for hazardous driving, speeding and seat belt neglect. They will use air speed timing, radar-equipped patrol vehicles, and semi- and unmarked patrol vehicles in the effort.

Just being seen, however, is as important as catching motorists breaking laws, said Lt. Larry Beld of the Ottawa County Sheriff's Department.

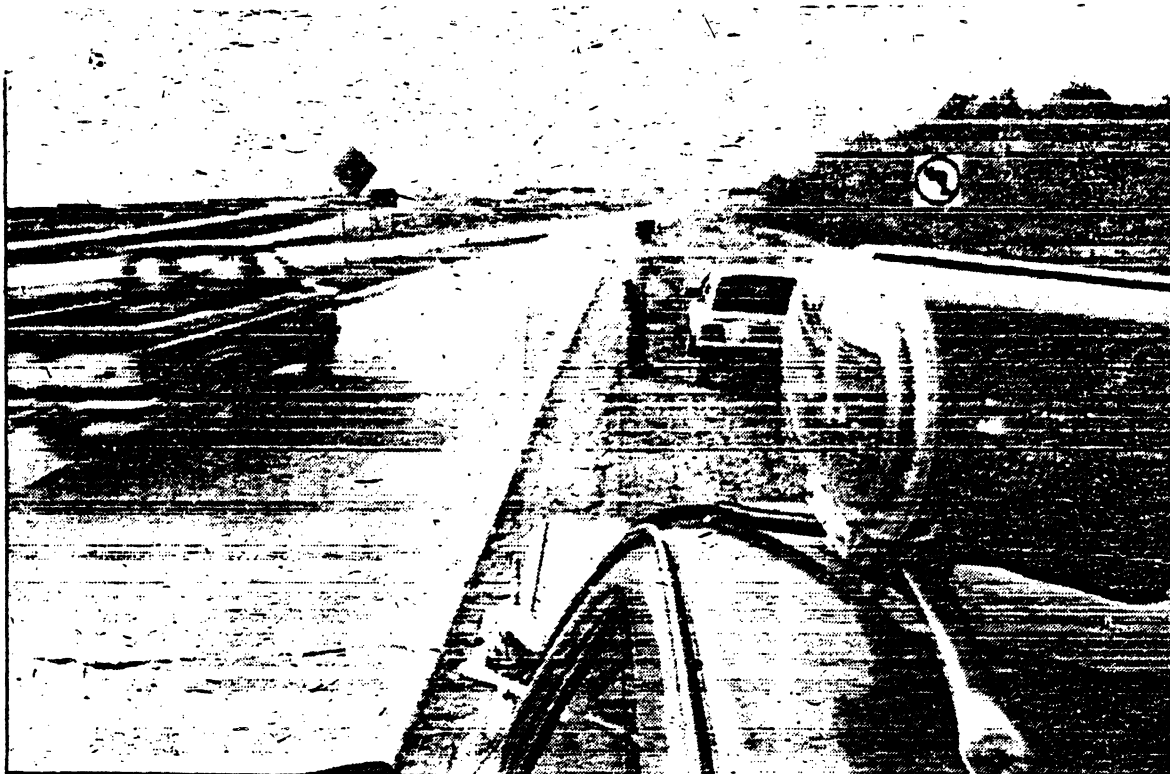
"What we learned from a similar program on M-45 is that visibility is needed," Beld said.

"Increasing the number of tickets isn't the goal. The goal is less accidents."

Ottawa County has assigned an officer to patrol U.S. 31 full time. The other agencies will use the grants to help cover overtime costs.

The agencies participating in the program are the Michigan State Police, the Allegan, Ottawa and Muskegon County sheriff's departments, the Holland Police Department and the Grand Haven City Police Department. The Motor Carrier Division of the Michigan State Police will participate by enforcing truck safety laws.

Lt. Blaine Koops of the Holland Police Department said, "Together, we can make U.S. 31 safer."



Sentinel photos by Dave Odette

Holland Police Officer Bob DeVries talks with a motorist on U.S. 31. The Holland Police Department is participating in the

new cooperative patrol effort known as U.S. 31 SAVE (Shoreline Area Vehicle Enforcement).

MUSKEGON, MI
CHRONICLE
E-44,936; S-46,697

OCT-24-89

Putting the brakes on U.S. 31 expressway

Such are the economic facts of life in West Michigan that many are forced to work miles from where they live. This has created a new class of commuters who can be seen, morning and afternoon, hurrying up and down U.S. 31 between Muskegon, Grand Haven and Holland — even as far south as Allegan.

Some of us, it seems, have been hurrying a little too much along this already heavily traveled highway — hence the birth of the U.S. Shoreline Area Vehicle Enforcement program, or S.A.V.E.

S.A.V.E., which began officially on Monday, is a combined effort by seven law enforcement agencies in Muskegon, Grand Haven and Holland. During its 2-year life, it will beef up enforcement of speed limits along an 80-mile stretch of 4-lane highway and also enforce seat belt laws. By various means, it will attempt to remind motorists that the speed limit is exactly what the signs say it is.

By any standard, it's a good program. Let's remember that the whole point of going to work and bringing home a paycheck is to advance our lives, not cut them short.

MUSKEGON, MI
CHRONICLE
E-44,986; S-46,697

OCT-29-89

LOCAL NEWS HIGHLIGHTS, OCT. 22-28

MONDAY

GRAND HAVEN — Law enforcement agencies in three West Michigan counties officially kicked off the U.S. 31 Shoreline Area Vehicle Enforcement program. Funded by both federal grants and local contributions, the two-year program will work to not only reduce speeding along the U.S. 31 corridor, but increase enforcement of the state's seat belt law and provide information on officers' efforts to motorists using the heavily traveled route, said Lt. Richard Housenga, commander of the State Police's Grand Haven post:

DEC- 4-89

BELTLINE: Ottawa County drivers on U.S. 31 are more likely to use seat belts

By Jon Brandt
The Grand Rapids Press

Seatbelt use by Ottawa County drivers on U.S. 31 is higher than the state average, according to a recently released University of Michigan study.

A study of drivers on the federal highway by U-M's Transportation Research Institute from Sept. 20-22 showed that 59 percent of drivers on U.S. 31 in Ottawa County were wearing their seatbelts, more than 12 percent higher than the state average of 46.7 percent.

Officials from the institute hope to use the results of the survey to get a grant to study the affects of the recently implemented U.S. 31 Shoreline Area Vehicle Enforcement (SAVE) project, which is aimed at reducing speeds and accidents and increasing safety on the highway.

In October, seven law enforcement agencies, including two Michigan State Police posts, sheriff's departments from Ottawa, Allegan and Muskegon counties and police departments from Holland, Grand Haven joined forces in the two-year U.S. 31 SAVE project.

"The U.S. 31 project is a cooperative project between seven agencies, so it will be interesting to evaluate the cooperative nature of the agencies," said Fredrick Streff, researcher with the U-M institute. "It makes it ripe for evaluation."

Streff said the averages in Ottawa County were higher than the state norms, "but not much higher."

"The use looks like it is higher in Ottawa County than statewide," he said, "but a lot of those areas are freeway areas where seatbelt use is typically higher."

Holland Police Department Lt. Blaine

Koops, who coordinates the U.S. 31 SAVE project, said he was surprised by the results of the survey.

"I thought it would have been a little lower," he said.

"I guess what is more surprising is the age groups that use the seatbelts."

According to the survey, drivers over the age of 60 had the highest compliance rate of 75.2 percent, compared to 60.2 percent for drivers aged 30-59 and just 47.5 percent for drivers under the age of 30.

"The people in the age groups that have supposedly been trained to use the seatbelts — the younger people — don't use them," Koops noted.

Streff said the institute has applied for a grant from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to study seatbelt use during the two-year span of the project.

"I think they have a good thing going with the project and we want to document its effects," he said. "We wanted to reduce a baseline of information on which we could track change in the usage (during the project)."

The NHTSA is looking to to achieve 70-percent compliance with seatbelt use by the end of 1991, Streff said, but he added that goal had been pushed back from 1989.

"It's a very difficult nut to crack," he said. "The people that were swayed easily are already using their seatbelts, but the people that don't are the ones that most likely will be in crashes."

Koops said he is "very interested" to see the data produced by the study and said it could be key in getting money to continue the U.S. 31 SAVE project.

"This could well be the test for the entire granting procedure as we know it," he said.

GRAND RAPIDS, MI
PRESS
F-125.607; S-138.885

DEC- 4-89

U.S. 31 study shows high rate of seat belt use

By Jon Brandt
The Grand Rapids Press

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A study of drivers on the federal highway by U-M's Transportation Research Institute from Sept. 20-22 showed that 59 percent of drivers on U.S. 31 in Ottawa County were wearing their seat belts, more than 12 percent higher than the state average of 46.7 percent.

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"The U.S. 31 project is a cooperative project between seven agencies, so it will be interesting to evaluate the cooperative nature of the agencies," said Fredrick Streff, researcher with the U-M institute. "It makes it ripe for evaluation."

Streff said the averages in Ottawa County were higher than the state norms, "but not much higher."

"The use looks like it is higher in Ottawa County than statewide," he said, "but a lot of those areas are freeway areas where seat belt use is typically higher."

Lt. Blaine Koops of the Holland Police Department, who coordinates the U.S. 31 SAVE project, said he was surprised by the results of the survey.

"I thought it would have been a little lower," he said. "I guess what is more surprising is the age groups that use the seat belts."

According to the survey, drivers over the age of 60 had the highest compliance rate of 75.2 percent, compared to 60.2 percent for drivers aged 30-59 and just 47.5 percent for drivers under the age of 30.

"The people in the age groups that have sup-

posedly been trained to use the seat belts — the younger people — don't use them," Koops said.

Streff said the institute has applied for a grant from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to study seat belt use during the two-year span of the project.

"I think they have a good thing going with the project and we want to document its effects," he said. "We wanted to produce a baseline of information on which we could track change in the usage (during the project)."

The NHTSA is looking to to achieve 70 percent compliance with seat belt use by the end of 1991, Streff said, but he added that goal had been pushed back from 1989.

"It's a very difficult nut to crack," he said. "The people that were swayed easily are already using their seat belts, but the people that don't are the ones that most likely will be in crashes."

Koops said he is "very interested" to see the data produced by the study and said it could be key in getting money to continue the U.S. 31 SAVE project.

"This could well be the test for the entire granting procedure as we know it," he said.

JAN- 3-90

Fatal crashes along M-45 cut in 1989

OTTAWA COUNTY

By Jon Brandt
The Grand Rapids Press

If 1989 was any indication, Ottawa County should be a safer place for drivers in the 1990s.

For the first time in 10 years, no traffic fatalities were recorded along M-45 in Ottawa County, according to county and state law enforcement officials.

Officials from the Ottawa County Sheriff's Department and the Michigan State Police post at Grand Haven say the statistics show that their stepped-up patrols along the stretch of road have been worth the expense and effort.

In addition, it has given renewed hope to agencies involved in a similar project along U.S. 31 in Ottawa, Allegan and Muskegon counties.

"It has been excellent," said Ottawa County Sheriff's Department Lt. Larry Beld of the effects of the M-45 patrols. "I think we ended 1989 on a high note."

Since late 1988, the sheriff's department and the Michigan State Police have posted signs along the road warning motorists of increased traffic enforcement along the road. Increased awareness, combined with stricter enforcement, have made the road safer, Beld said.

"This isn't just a unique year," said Lt. Richard Housenga, Grand Haven post commander for the Michigan State Police. "Those things don't just happen."

From 1980 through 1988, at least 15 fatalities were recorded along the state highway, which runs from Standale west to Lake Michigan. Traffic on the road has steadily increased for a number of reasons, including ever-growing enrollments at Grand Valley State University.

"Did we do it? I think we had a significant impact, but we didn't do it alone," he explained. "The drivers had a big part in it. If the drivers are looking for us, they're looking out for each other, too."

Although the number of accidents along the roadway continued to climb in 1989 — Beld said approximately 4,300 accidents occurred, up from 4,117 in 1988 and 3,169 in 1980 — the seriousness of the accidents has declined.

"Call it a lot of luck, call it a little of everything," Housenga said. "But I've never seen a situation like this, where this is cut off to nothing. To have gone from where we were to where we're at, the results are just phenomenal."

"The grant has paid for itself."

During the same time period, Beld reported that county deputies issued more than 2,700 tickets along M-45, up from about 500 in 1988. Citations issued by state troopers have increased as well, but Beld said it's unfair and unrealistic to measure the success of the program by the number of tickets issued.

"No one gains from that," he said. "The object of the program is to bring people into compliance, not to issue tickets."

"If we could bring people into compliance without issuing any tickets, the program would still be a success."

Both men said the success of the M-45 project has made them optimistic that a similar project along U.S. 31 that began in October will have similar results.

In all, more than \$50,000 in state and federal grants, combined with various local matching funds, are paying for the increased patrols along M-45 and U.S. 31.

Lt. Blaine Koops of the Holland Police Department said figures on the U.S. 31 SAVE project are just beginning to be compiled, but early statistics are heartening.

Koops, who coordinates the project for the seven law enforcement agencies involved, said 1,082 tickets were issued from late October through Nov. 30, including 713 speeding tickets. Koops noted that 116 of the vehicles pulled over for speeding were equipped with radar detection systems.

"The message is if they spend money to circumvent the system, they're still going to get nailed," Koops said. "A radar detector does not make you immune to a speeding citation."

In addition, Koops said 136 passenger restraint violations were cited, along with 307 verbal warnings issued. An end-of-the-year compilation of detailed statistics from the project will be released later this month, Koops said.

"I think we're doing really well," Koops said. "But this is only one side of the issue. We still have to wait to see if the accident volume is going down like we want."

"I think it's too early to tell if it has been effective so far," Beld said. "I don't think the number of hours we have put out there have been enough to change the drivers' attitudes out there, (but) I am still optimistic."

Koops, Beld and Housenga all agreed that education on the U.S. 31 project needs to be stepped up in the coming months to make the project successful. Signs informing drivers will soon be in place, and information is being distributed in restaurants, schools and other outlets.

"The money is well-spent," Koops said. "The short dollar will have long effects. We want to keep

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JAN- 3-90

No fatal crashes occurred along M-45 in 1989

OTTAWA COUNTY

By Jon Brandt
The Grand Rapids Press

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JAN-23-90

U.S. 31 speeders get swift lesson

By JON BRANDT

Chronicle News Service
with local reports

Speeders are getting the message: U.S. 31 is an expensive place to put the pedal to the metal.

The U.S. 31 S.A.V.E. (Shoreline Area Vehicle Enforcement) project, a coordinated police attack on unsafe driving operated with grant funding since last October, is paying off with safer traffic flow and more tickets issued, police officials said.

IN MUSKEGON County's portion of the road, sheriff's deputies wrote five times more tickets since the program began last Oc-

tober than in any period before, said Capt. Orville Budd, head of the department's operations division.

In the final quarter of 1989, police of several departments issued 2,110 traffic citations. Of those, Muskegon County Sheriff's officers wrote 183 tickets — 166 tickets for moving violations including speeding, no seat belts or drunken driving — and 17 for such non-moving infractions as having only one headlight, bad brakes or bald tires.

Budd said grant funds allowing his department's participation in the program also allowed sheriff's deputies to patrol the roadway, which they previously did not do routinely.

"OUR ATTENTION to the ... state highway was limited before because of our duties on the secondary roads, which is our main responsibility," said Budd. "This grant has brought about extra monies for patrol of U.S. 31 per se."

Officials for the U.S. 31 S.A.V.E. project said Monday the results from the first three months of the project were both "expected" and "shocking."

But most of all, they said, the stepped-up efforts to patrol the roadway's 85-mile segment through Allegan, Ottawa and Muskegon counties seems to be working.

LT. RICHARD Housenga, commander of the Michigan State Police's Grand Haven post, said he's been pleased with the program.

"The effort, I think, is excellent. For results, I think it's too early to tell," he said, adding he's hopeful the results will be just as encouraging as those found on 20 miles of selected enforcement on M-45.

In 1989, for the first time in 10 years, there were no fatal car accidents on M-45 within Ottawa County, due in part, officials have said, to a stepped-up enforcement effort between the State Police and the Ottawa County Sheriff's Department.

HOUSENGA ACKNOWLEDGED that fatalities are not as large a problem on U.S. 31 as they have been on M-45, but he's looking for good results with the U.S. 31 S.A.V.E. program in terms of speeding and seat-belt enforcement.

The Grand Haven Police Department wrote up 132 traffic violations through Dec. 31 as part of the U.S. 31 program, said Lt. Gregg VanLente, patrol coordinator for the department. The citations included 31 speeding tickets.

In total, 2,110 traffic citations were issued by officers from seven law enforcement agencies along U.S. 31 from October through December 1989. Among those were 1,264 speeding tickets, including 253 issued to drivers using radar detectors. In addition, a total of 565 verbal warnings were made during the three-month period.

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JAN-23-90

U.S. 31 enforcement up

HOLLAND

By Jon Brandt
The Grand Rapids Press

Drivers beware. Not even your radar detectors will save you from speeding tickets on U.S. 31.

Just ask the woman who was caught driving 98 miles per hour northbound through Holland Friday afternoon. Hers was just one of the 2,110 traffic citations that have been issued since the U.S. 31 SAVE project began last October.

Officials for the U.S. 31 SAVE (Shoreline Area Vehicle Enforcement) project said Monday the results from the first three months of the project were both "expected" and "shocking." But most of all, they say the stepped-up efforts to patrol the 85-mile-long stretch of U.S. 31 in Allegan, Ottawa and Muskegon counties seems to be working.

"We knew there was a problem out there," said Holland Police Lt. Blaine Koops, "but when we see the number of violations that we have, it's shocking to realize the problem that we do have."

Although there are no firm numbers to back him up, Koops estimated that nearly three times as many tickets have been issued along the stretch of highway this year than during the same period last year.

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PRESS PHOTO/MARK COPIER

Signs were posted Friday along U.S. 31.

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the three-month period.

To aid the public's awareness of the 12-month, \$175,000 project, officials have installed six signs

along U.S. 31 reminding drivers that "Safety's #1 on 31." Koops stressed that the object of the project is not to write tickets, but to reduce accidents and save lives.

"If we can save just one life or reduce someone's suffering by any degree, I think it would be a total success," he said. In Holland, officers have issued a total of 712 citations, including 297 speeding tickets.

Lt. William Smith, commander of the Saugatuck post of the Michigan State Police, said the program

is going "extremely well."

"I think it's meeting our expectations so far," he said. "Unfortunately, it will be a little while before we know if we've made some of our original goals."

Smith, chairman of the program said he's heard no negative comments about the project from the public so far.

"The program is still in its infancy," he said. "But I think the agencies involved are making a tremendous cooperative effort."

Lt. Richard Housenga, commander of the Michigan State Police's Grand Haven post, said he's been pleased with the program.

"The effort, I think, is excellent.

For results, I think it's too early to tell," he said, adding he's hopeful the results will be just as encouraging as those found on 20 miles of selected enforcement on M-45.

In 1989, for the first time in 10 years, there were no fatal car accidents on M-45 within Ottawa County, due in part, officials have said, to a stepped-up enforcement effort between the State Police and the Ottawa County Sheriff's Department.

Housenga acknowledged that fatalities are not as large a problem on U.S. 31 as they have been on M-45, but he's looking for good results with the U.S. 31 S.A.V.E. program in terms of speeding and seat

belt enforcement.

The Grand Haven Police Department wrote up 132 traffic violations through Dec. 31 as part of the U.S. 31 program; said Lt. Gregg VanLente, patrol coordinator for the department. The citations included 31 speeding tickets.

"I think its going real well. Our officers are working 10 hours a week (as part of the grant)," VanLente said.

Other agencies involved with the project include the sheriff's departments from Ottawa, Allegan and Muskegon counties. Koops said Ottawa deputies have issued 453 citations since October, including 281 speeding tickets.

JAN-24-90

Law enforcement officials praise U.S. 31 venture

Law enforcement agencies of the "U.S. 31 S.A.V.E." project today announced successful results for the first three months of the cooperative enforcement along U.S. 31.

Seven area agencies report that a total of 2,110 traffic citations have been issued from Oct. 1, 1989 through Dec. 31, 1989. Of those citations, 1,264 were speeding violations, 255 for other hazardous violations and 537 other non-hazardous violations. Records indicated that 174 of the speeders who were stopped were using radar detectors at the time of the ticket, 253 motorists stopped for speeding were cited for seatbelt violations. To date, the project has netted 30 arrests and of those, three were felony arrests for various offenses and six arrests were for operating a vehicle while intoxicated.

During the initial three-month period, agencies involved with the project travelled over 21,000 miles along U.S. 31 and logged over 1,300 man hours. The two-year project focuses on encouraging safer travel through strict enforcement policies along U.S. 31 in Ottawa, Muskegon and Allegan counties. Data on accidents and speed counts are not available yet, according to reports.

Agencies involved in the U.S. 31 S.A.V.E. include the 5th and 6th District of the Michigan State Police, Allegan, Ottawa and Muskegon County sheriff's departments and the Holland and Grand Haven police departments. The program is funded in part by the Office of Highway Safety Planning and the U.S. Department of Transportation.

FEB- 6-90

Crime is on increase in Ottawa

Chronicle News Service

GRAND HAVEN — Criminal arrests rose slightly in Ottawa County last year, following a 4.33 percent jump in calls for service, according to the sheriff department's annual report.

Sheriff Robert Dykstra said while the department did not see a dramatic increase in many serious crimes, like murder and aggravated assault, deputies are busier than ever trying to handle the growing complaint load.

IN 1989, complaints rose 4.33 percent, from 31,012 in 1988 to 32,356. Criminal arrests increased from 2,957 in 1988 to 3,075 in 1989, representing a 3.99 percent jump.

The department reported one murder arrest, 29 arrests on criminal sexual conduct, 10 robbery arrests and 46 arrests for aggravated assault in 1989.

The department experienced an increase in murder complaints — from none in 1988 to two in 1989 — and in sexual penetration complaints, a jump from 52 in 1988 to 67 in 1989.

But some crimes decreased in number. Aggravated assault complaints, for instance, fell from 115 in 1988 to 64 last year, and burglaries decreased from 567 in 1988 to 460 in 1989.

"I SUSPECT with the number of complaints increasing, the arrests will continue to increase," Dykstra said. "The county is growing so rapidly in terms of population. So with that comes additional complaints and calls for service."

Among the busiest areas for complaints, Dykstra said, is around Westshore Mall at James Street and U.S. 31 area. He speculated that area alone accounts for the large increase in larcenies from cars, burglaries, disorderly conduct, and check violations last year.

For instance, simple larcenies rose from 770 in 1988 to 814 in 1989. Complaints of grand larcenies increased from 844 in 1988 to 1,048 in 1989. And check violations more than doubled, from 100 in 1988 to 214 last year.

"I COULD put a deputy out there all day long and he would always be busy," Dykstra said.

Meanwhile, criminal sexual conduct complaints — are still on the rise, a trend Dykstra said has been continuing for several years.

In 1989, the department handled 67 sexual penetration complaints, and 37 sexual contact cases.

Those figures represented increases from 1988, when the department received 52 complaints of sexual penetration and 28 sexual contact complaints.

Dykstra credited the state and federal grants increasing patrol along M-45 and U.S.31 for the rise in traffic arrests last year.

The SAVE U.S. 31 program went into effect in the latter part of the year, but the beefed-up patrol on M-45 — one of the most dangerous stretches in Ottawa County — started last January.

DYKSTRA SAID that effort may in part account for the rise in speeding arrests throughout the county last year, 4,831, up from 3,443 in 1988. Seat belt arrests catapulted from 410 in 1988 to 1,196 last year.

Overall, the department reported a 31.2 percent increase in traffic arrests, a jump from 9,508 in 1988 to 12,489 last year.

The number of fatal accidents dropped by one — from 25 in 1988 to 24 in 1989. In total, 28 people died on Ottawa County roads last year, compared to 29 in 1988.

Alcohol was involved in 317 of the traffic accidents last year, down from 331 in 1988.

Of the alcohol-related accidents, drinking was a factor in eight fatalities, up from six in 1988.

Dykstra doesn't expect the growing number of criminal complaints to decrease, in light of the burgeoning county population.

HE PLANS to push the county to hire more deputies and an additional investigator next year, if the current hiring freeze ends.

FEB- 6-90

Ottawa County crime up in 1989

HOLLAND

By Melissa Birks
The Grand Rapids Press

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Dykstra doesn't expect the growing number of criminal complaints to decrease, in light of the burgeon-

ing county population.

He plans to push the county to hire more deputies and an additional investigator next year, if the current hiring freeze ends.

"I don't know what 1991 is going to bring," he said.

"I'll be in there next year asking for more staff. . . . The only answer is more manpower."

FEB-15-90

Police hope citations make U.S. 31 safer

Police opened the year continuing to teach motorists on U.S. 31 to drive safer the hard way: with citations.

In January alone, 766 citations were issued to drivers as part of the U.S. 31 SAVE Project, Shoreline Area Vehicle Enforcement, said coordinator Lt. Blaine Koops of the Holland Police Department. Another 300 motorists were given verbal warnings.

Between Oct. 1 and Dec. 31, 2,110 citations were issued by the seven police agencies involved in the one-year project funded by the federal government and local agencies to make an 85-mile stretch of highway between Allegan and Muskegon counties safer.

Six signs posted along the roadway warn drivers that traffic laws are heavily enforced. Koops said the road handles more traffic than it was designed for and the slower speeds of drivers should make it safer.

Police officials hope this project can show the same success as a similar one on M-45. Last year was the first in at least 10 years no one was killed on M-45, although 22 people died on that highway between 1985 and 1988. Accidents there are down 25 percent from previous years. That two-year project ends Sept. 30.

No fatal-accident statistics were available yet to U.S. 31.

Of the 766 citations issued in January on U.S. 31, 431 were for speeding and 95 were for violating passenger restraint laws, Koops said.

The agencies involved are Holland and Grand Haven police departments; Allegan, Ottawa and Muskegon sheriff's departments; and Michigan State Police posts in Saugatuck and Grand Haven.

GRAND HAVEN, MI

TRIBUNE

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APR-18-90

City police pitch in for S.A.V.E. project

The Grand Haven Police Department continues its strict enforcement policy along U.S. 31, handing out 87 hazardous citations, 57 speeding violations and 28 seatbelt violations during a five month period.

Police reported that overall, the seven agencies participating in the U.S. 31 S.A.V.E. program have issued over 4,400 citations since October 1, 1989. Agencies involved have cooperatively logged over 3,131 hours and traveled close to 40,000 miles along the 85 miles of the project area.

Agencies involved in the U.S. 31 S.A.V.E project include the fifth and sixth districts of the Michigan State Police, Allegan and Ottawa county sheriff's departments and Holland and Grand Haven city police departments.

State police post enforces its way to safety award

SAUGATUCK

By Jon Brandt
The Grand Rapids Press

MAY 2 1990 PILS

Thanks to the success of the U.S. 31 Shoreline Area Vehicle Enforcement (SAVE) program, the Saugatuck team of the Michigan State Police has been honored for promoting the use of seat belts and child restraints.

The Michigan Coalition for Safety Belt Use recently named the post, commanded by Lt. William Smith, as one of 25 recipients of its annual Safety Belt and Child Restraint Leadership Award. The winners were selected from a field of 250 entrants, according to Connie Soma, executive director for the coalition.

The award was presented at a Lansing ceremony last week by Secretary of State Richard Austin and Dr. Robert Burton, coalition chairperson.

see AWARD, page 7

AWARD

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"This is an honor for Lt. William Smith and all the officers who have dedicated themselves to reducing traffic fatalities," Austin said in press release announcing the award.

"Safety belts and child safety seats are proven lifesavers. Any time a community becomes involved in such an intensive effort, there are measurable reductions in crash deaths and injuries. We applaud this excellent example of community service."

During 1989, Smith said the post issued 475 tickets for seat belt use violations and made another 350 verbal warnings.

In addition, the post also cited six

child restraint violations, he said. Many of the citations came as a result of the U.S. 31 SAVE program, which Smith called the post's "highlight of 1989 safety restraint effort."

"I guess it's a real honor," said Smith, whose post was also honored with a special Legislative resolution co-sponsored by Rep. Paul Hillegonds and Sen. Edgar Fredricks. "We were the smallest location to be selected (for the award). It's a real honor and statement to my staff."

The Saugatuck post is one of seven law enforcement agencies involved in the U.S. 31 SAVE project, which is a coordinated traffic enforcement programs focussed on an 85-mile stretch of U.S. 31 in Allegan, Ottawa and Muskegon counties.

MAY-10-90



THE SAUGATUCK TEAM of the Michigan State Police was honored for its community traffic safety program. The team also received a special tribute from legislators State Senator Ed Fredricks (R-23rd District) and State Representative Paul Hillemonds (R-54th District).

Pictured above (l to r) are Dr. Robert D. Burton, chairperson of the Michigan Coalition for Safety Belt Use; Secretary of State Richard H. Austin; race car driver Lyn St. James; Saugatuck Team, Lt. William Smith, Trooper David Jeffers and Major Michael Robinson.

Saugatuck state police team earns first safety belt award

The Saugatuck team of the Michigan Department of State Police, under the command of William W. Smith, is one of 25 Michigan winners of the Safety Belt and Child Restraint Leadership Award, presented April 25 by Secretary of State Richard H. Austin and Dr. Robert D. Burton, chairperson of the Michigan Coalition for Safety Belt Use.

This is the first year the Saugatuck team received an award for its community traffic safety

programs, according to Austin. The staff promoted use of safety restraints through public service announcements prior to holidays. An important component was the "SAVE" program, a seven-agency coordinated traffic enforcement effort on an 85 mile section of US 31 in Allegan, Ottawa and Muskegon Counties.

"It (the award) was not anticipated," Smith said. "We are pleased with this recognition."

Officers issued 475 safety belt and six child restraint citations in 1989.

"This is an honor for Smith and all of the officers who have dedicated themselves to reducing traffic fatalities," said Austin. "Safety belts and child safety seats are proven lifesavers. Any time a community becomes involved in such an intensive effort, there are measurable reductions in crash deaths and injuries. We applaud this excellent example of community service."

The Saugatuck team was selected by the coalition from among 250 entrants.

GRAND RAPIDS PRESS
JUN-3-90

Officials call SAVE a success

HOLLAND

By Jon Brandt
The Grand Rapids Press

Michigan State Police Lt. William Smith used to back up traffic when he drove from his post to Grand Haven on U.S. 31. But not anymore.

Smith, the commander of the state police's Saugatuck post, said when he used to drive on the highway in a marked police vehicle at the 55 mph speed limit, other cars would move up behind him until he had a small procession following behind him.

But now, six months into the U.S. 31 Shoreline Area Vehicle Enforcement (SAVE) program, Smith is happy to report he does not create bottlenecks on the highway anymore.

"That sends a very clear message that the efforts we are making are definitely paying dividends," Smith said. "It is a neat experience to see those end results."

The U.S. 31 SAVE project is a cooperative effort formed last October between seven law enforcement agencies that patrol the 85-mile stretch of U.S. 31 in Allegan, Ottawa and Muskegon counties. The two-year project, which has increased law enforcement patrols on the roadway, is aimed at decreasing speeding and accidents and increasing seat belt usage.

So far, officials are calling the project "very effective."

"I feel the statistics are very impressive," Smith said. "I guess only time will tell if we have a lasting effect, but amazingly, people are beginning to follow the rules on their own."

Other officials echo Smith's sentiments.

"I think it's been very effective," said Ottawa County Sheriff's Department Lt. Larry Beld. "We've had a lot of positive comments about our presence on the road."

In the first six months of the project, officials report that a total of 5,674 traffic arrests, including 3,320 speeding tickets, have been issued along the roadway. Among the speeders, 435 were using radar detectors.

In addition, officers have issued 818 citations and 896 warnings for failure to wear seat belts.

"I think it's probably gone better than we expected in the beginning," Smith said. "Because of the tremendous growth around here and the cry to do more with less, we didn't know how it would work."

The program has had an excellent six-month review from our standpoint," said Lt. Blaine Koops of the Holland Police Department. "Overall in the city, accidents are way down."

Koops said accidents along U.S. 31 within the city limits from Nov. 1 through April 30 were down 18 percent over the same period the year before. Furthermore, personal injury accidents have decreased by 56

see TRAFFIC, page 5

TRAFFIC

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

percent, from 16 to seven, he said. Project-wide accident statistics are not yet available from the state.

"This is just a snapshot of the project," Koops said. "(But) it gives us an indication that the resources that have been expended have defi-

nately been worthwhile.

"The community is responding to the problem on 31."

Another example of what the project has accomplished so far, Koops said, are the results of a speed study done along the roadway in the city.

Koops said speeds on the road's 55 mph zone averaged 62 mph in a study done March 10, 1989, but an-

other study done last Feb. 7 showed that average speeds were down to 57 mph — a decrease of 5 mph. Speed comparisons for the entire route are not yet available.

"We're extremely pleased to date," Smith said. "The total cooperative spirit between the seven agencies has just been terrific. And the public response is that they are aware of the problem."

JUN- 4-90

U.S. 31 campaign puts brakes on speeders

By ADAM BLUST

Chronicle staff writer
with wire service reports

Capt. Orville Budd of the Muskegon County Sheriff's Department said a crack-down on speeders on U.S. 31 is meant to change drivers' habits over the long term, not just sting them for ticket fees.

"We're not looking for tickets," Budd said. "We're looking for compliance."

And it appears to be working.

LAW ENFORCEMENT officials in Muskegon, Ottawa and Allegan counties have been heavily promoting the U.S. 31 Shoreline Area Vehicle Enforcement program on signs and in local media so drivers can have a chance to police themselves, Budd said.

The U.S. 31 SAVE project is a coopera-

tive effort formed last October among seven law enforcement agencies that patrol the 85-mile stretch of U.S. 31 in Muskegon, Ottawa and Allegan counties. The two-year project, funded by federal grant money that allows increased law enforcement patrols on the roadway, is aimed at decreasing speeding and accidents and increasing seatbelt use.

So far, officials are calling the project "very effective."

"I FEEL the statistics are very impressing," said Michigan State Police Lt. William Smith of the Saugatuck post. "I guess only time will tell if we have a lasting effect, but amazingly, people are beginning to follow the rules on their own."

Other officials echo Smith's sentiments:

"We're real pleased with the results

that we've gotten," Budd said.

IN THE first six months of the project officials report a total of 5,674 traffic arrests, including 3,320 speeding tickets have been issued along the roadway. Among the speeders, 435 were using radar detectors.

In addition, officers have issued 818 citations and 896 warnings for failure to wear seatbelts.

"I'm a firm believer that if we see people without seat belts and write citations to all of them, that will save lives," said Michigan State Police Lt. Richard Housenga of the Grand Haven post.

"THE PROGRAM has had an excellent six-month review from our standpoint," said Lt. Blaine Koops of the Holland Police Department. "Overall in the city, a

idents are way down."

Koops said accidents along U.S. 31 within the city limits from Nov. 1 through April 30 were down 18 percent over the same period the year before. Furthermore, personal injury accidents have decreased by 56 percent, from 16 to seven, he said.

Project-wide accident statistics are not yet available from the state.

"WE'RE EXTREMELY pleased to date," Smith said. "The total cooperative spirit between the seven agencies has just been terrific. And the public response is that they are aware of the problem and they are making an attempt to change the situation."

But Housenga said tourist traffic on U.S. 31 is more difficult to affect because seasonal drivers don't see the day-to-day

changes on the road. Housenga also said regular patrols will have to continue after the special project is over if officials want to see long-term effects.

"If after two years we were just to pull out, (drivers) would revert back to their old ways," Housenga said. "You need that continuing enforcement."

OTTAWA COUNTY Lt. Larry Beld said it is unlikely that the flow of tickets will subside anytime soon.

"It has exceeded our expectations in writing tickets, unfortunately," Beld said. "That means that there are a lot of violators and that will probably go up with the summer months."

"It's not that we are out there to write tickets and pick on out-of-state drivers, but I would expect that tickets will probably increase."

JUN-12-90

U.S. 31 SAVE project shows real results

Here's another law-enforcement program that is showing positive results — the crackdown on speeders along the busy U.S. 31 corridor between Muskegon, Ottawa and Allegan counties.

Since the U.S. 31 SAVE project began last October, accidents have declined 18 percent from the same period the year before, and the number of personal injury accidents has dropped from 16 to 7, or 56 percent.

To get that kind of results, officers had to write 3,320 speeding tickets, plus numerous warnings to stick to the speed limit (yes, it is 55 mph) and to wear seat belts.

The program's life is two years, and we're encouraged to hear that even after that, the enforcement will continue.

JUN-13-90

Operation SAVE slows speeders

By Carlise Hauptman
Tribune writer

In the past six months drivers on U.S. 31 through Muskegon, Ottawa and Allegan counties have slowed down and people using the highway know they will most likely see a police car anytime they use the highway.

Since the initiation of Seven Area Vehicle Enforcement (SAVE) task force a little more than six months ago, police patrolling U.S. 31 through the three counties have seen changes in the driving habits.

"Prior to the pick-up of tourist traffic on U.S. 31, the troopers out there have seen the drivers slowing down and driving differently. Those people who use the highway on a daily basis know the strict enforcement is out there... strict enforcement works, M-45 proved that first," said Lt. Richard Housenga.

SAVE is a traffic enforcement program consisting of the cooperative efforts of seven police agencies along an 85-mile stretch of U.S. 31 through Muskegon, Ottawa and Allegan counties.

"I am a firm believer that this really works. The high visibility of the program helps to get the word out there," Housenga said.

The traffic enforcement program is funded through state grants provided by the Office of Highway Safety and Planning. A total of \$90,000 in grant monies were extended for one year for the program which is used to pay officers for overtime to have the additional patrols on the highway, according to SAVE Chairman, Lt. William Smith out of the Saugatuck Team.

"We are very pleased with the six-month results we are seeing now. There are positive effects in speed reduction. On the average the speeds are five mph under what they use to be on U.S. 31," Smith noted.

According to statistics gathered by the SAVE committee a total of 725 hours of overtime in man hours were expended, added to the 3,258 regular hours of patrol on the highway resulting in 5,674 traffic arrests.

A breakdown of the traffic arrests includes, 3,320 tickets for speed violations, capped with 818 seatbelt violations. A total of 61 people were arrested in for criminal charges, 18 fugitives were caught, 884 investigations resulted and 320 cars were assisted by police, according to Smith.

Of the 3,320 traffic tickets issued, 435 drivers were using radar detectors, and police answered 294 complaint investigations.

Police also issued 896 verbal warnings for seatbelt violations.

"The clear message is that we are having an impact. People are compiling with the speed limits more and the spirit of cooperation we have felt by the agencies is terrific," Smith said.

The current grant monies provided for SAVE by the state is good through September and is renewable for one year, Smith said.

Although it would be helpful for SAVE to study the number of accident on U.S. 31 during the past six month time period on the 85-mile stretch Smith said those types of statistics won't be available for about a year.

"Everyone involved is optimistic about the program," Smith added.

JUN-21-90

U.S. 31 speed control gets fast results

By John Agar
Sentinel staff writer

Stricter enforcement of traffic laws on U.S. 31 in the area has convinced most motorists to slow down, and those who haven't gotten the message about speeding are being caught at a fast clip, police reported.

"When I drove from Holland to Grand Haven in a marked patrol car, I generally would create a bottleneck," said Lt. William Smith of the Michigan State Police in Saugatuck. "Now, no one is pushing me, there are no traffic tie-ups, whether I'm in a marked or plain car. We're starting to get voluntary compliance."

Area police teamed up for the U.S. 31 SAVE program that began last October in an effort to slow down traffic and prevent accidents in an 85-mile stretch of the highway through Allegan, Ottawa and Muskegon counties.

Officers from the state and local departments have logged 3,258 regular hours and 724 hours of overtime patrolling the highway. They have issued 5,674 citations — 3,320 for speeding.

The program has been effective enough in Holland to get 85 percent of the drivers to reduce their speed by an average of 8 mph from Oct. 1, 1989, through the end of April, compared to the same time period last year, Holland Police Lt. Blaine Koops said this morning. The average speeds have dropped to the posted speed on the highway in the city, 50 and 55 mph.

He called the drop in speed "significant."

With the lower speeds, the accident rate in the city has dropped by 18 percent, from 92 crashes in Oct. 1, 1988 to May 30, 1989, to 75 in the same period this year.

But Koops cautioned that the busy season for accidents is approaching, with tourists crowding the roads and everyone inclined to drive faster in the warm and drier weather.

County and state figures were unavailable for the accident rate on other parts of the highway.

U.S. 31 wasn't designed to handle the heavy flow of traffic near Holland that increased 25 percent from 1983 to 1987 and is still on the rise, Koops remarked.

"Traffic is increasing dramatically between Grand Haven and Holland," he said.

Holland police cover about five miles of the highway that pass through the city. Sheriff's departments, state police and municipal police patrol the rest of the highway covered by the enforcement program.

U.S. 31 SAVE also is getting more motorists to wear their seat belts, according to a University of Michigan study that found 60 percent of drivers on the highway are buckling up, Koops said.

"Our goal is 70 percent, which may be attainable," he said.

The statewide average for seat-belt use is slightly under 50 percent.

GRAND HAVEN, MI

TRIBUNE

F-9.420

JUN-29-90

Officers to offer holiday tips

GRAND HAVEN TOWNSHIP — Officers from the seven area police agencies involved in the U.S. 31 SAVE traffic enforcement program will be on hand at the rest area north of M-45 until 8 p.m. today to provide information and driving tips for holiday travelers.

SAVE consists of officers from Ottawa County Sheriff's, Michigan State Police, Holland Police, Muskegon County Sheriff's and Allegan County Sheriff's departments.

The patrol officers cover 85 miles of U.S. 31 through Allegan, Ottawa and Muskegon counties.

The traffic enforcement program has been in operation for about six months and is funded in part by a grant from the state office of highway safety.

GRAND RAPIDS PRESS
JUN-30-90

Patrols have aided safety of U.S. 31, police think

GRAND HAVEN TWP.

By Jon Brandt

The Grand Rapids Press

Touting the success of their U.S. 31 Shoreline Area Vehicle Enforcement (SAVE) program, law enforcement officials from Ottawa, Allegan and Muskegon counties Friday provided a respite for travelers on the busy highway.

Officials from the seven participating police agencies provided motorists with coffee, cold drinks, cake and other treats, as well as information about the project, at the state rest stop on U.S. 31, north of the intersection of M-45.

"This was something to attract the motoring public to stop by and take advantage," said Lt. William Smith of the state police post in Saugatuck. "My feeling is that if we can keep this in front of the public, this will help and save some lives."

The two-year project, which began last October and is funded by local, state and federal funds, is being termed a success by organizers, who say the extra patrols have reduced speeds and accidents and increased the use of seatbelts along the 85-mile stretch of highway.

"It's definitely better than it was," Smith said.

Maggie Easterbrook, of the state Office of Highway Safety and Planning, said funding for the project will run out at the end of the 1990-91 fiscal year, but added she hopes local governments will continue to fund it. State funding for a similar project on M-45 from Allendale to the Ottawa/Kent county line is to end this September.

"The concept that the federal and state government has is that they provide the seed money so we can identify and address a problem with the hope that the local government will pick it up," Easterbrook said.

Ottawa County Sheriff Lt. Larry Beld said he hopes the Ottawa County Board of Commissioners will approve funding to maintain the M-45 project once state funding runs out. He said the project has "proven itself."

"I think it's proven that yes, increased patrols do work," Beld said. "It's a proven concept. We know what the results are going to be."

Since the inception of the M-45 project in October 1988, no fatalities have been reported on the

JUN-30-90

Police promote safety while handing out refreshments

By John Agar
Sentinel staff writer

Drivers along U.S. 31 expect to see police officers handing out tickets to speeders on the heavily enforced highway.

But on Friday afternoon, area police officers were handing out snacks, coffee and orange drink, at least to those who stopped at the rest stop just north of M-45.

As part of the U.S. 31 SAVE program, officers from the seven police agencies involved distributed along with the treats pamphlets on driving safety, seat-belt and child-restraint use, and the hazards of drinking and driving.

Lt. William Smith said the six-hour "traffic safety break" would help promote safety on the 85-mile stretch of highway that runs through Ottawa, Allegan and Muskegon counties, and remind drivers that everyone shares in the responsibility of keeping the roadways safe.

Food items were donated by Family Fare and Burger King. Canteen 800, a volunteer organization that aids police and firefighters during emergencies, disasters and long-term fires by offering food, drink and supplies, also helped at the rest stop.

With the targeted enforcement on the road, police are noting slower speeds, more compliance with seat-belt laws, and fewer accidents. The bottle-



Sentinel photo by Dave Odette

Ottawa County Road Commission employees Bob Welsh (left) and Fred Cherrette

place a new selective-enforcement zone sign along U.S. 31 on Friday.

necks on the highway that used to be created when a patrol car drove through the area are gone, Smith said, because the road now doesn't have speeders who suddenly have to slow down.

Since Oct. 23, when the heavy patrols began, 6,842 traffic arrests have been made and 71 people arrested on various criminal charges. Twenty-two people were arrested on fugitive warrants.

Police also gave 2,183 warnings for various traffic offenses, and 1,033 tickets and 520 warnings for violating passenger-restraint laws. Of the 4,050

vehicles involved in speeding citations, 546 had radar detectors.

Seat-belt use of surveyed areas on the road is 60 percent, compared with a statewide average of 49 percent, Smith said.

"It's apparent that the statistics generated during the first eight months of the U.S. SAVE project are very impressive," Smith said.

"It's reassuring to note that the motoring public is taking note of the effort and is voluntarily complying with the traffic laws through the targeted zone."

In Holland, accidents are

down 18 percent from Nov. 1 through April 30, compared with last year. Personal-injury accidents are down 56 percent during the same time periods. Figures were unavailable for the rest of the county.

The police agencies involved — sheriff's departments in Allegan, Ottawa and Muskegon, state police in Saugatuck and Grand Haven, and city departments in Holland and Grand Haven — will try to obtain a second grant to fund the program, which expires in October. North Shores and Muskegon Township police departments will join the cooperative effort.

SEP-30-90

Enforcement on M-45 continues

Although drivers along M-45 may not realize it Monday, a joint effort between the Ottawa County Sheriff's Department and the Michigan State Police Grand Haven post to patrol the road will have ended.

Although state and federal fund-

ing for the two-year project runs out at midnight tonight, the signs which have declared Lake Michigan Drive a special enforcement zone will remain up and at least one of the agencies will attempt to

maintain the stepped-up patrols.

Meanwhile, a second directed enforcement project along U.S. 31 in Allegan, Ottawa and Muskegon counties will continue for a second year, officials learned this week.

"We will be running an abbreviated directed patrol on M-45," said Lt. Larry Beld, director of the department's road patrol activities. "The patrols will continue, but not to the extent they did in the past."

Beld said he has been happy with the results of the program, which saw an increase in the number of speeding and seat-restraint violation tickets written and a reduction in accidents and fatalities.

From 1980 until the program began in Oct. 1988, 15 people were killed on M-45 in Ottawa County. Since the program was initiated, no fatalities had been recorded until a tragic double fatality last month.

Final statistics on the M-45 project won't be available until next month, Beld said.

"I think the M-45 patrol project was very successful in cutting down accidents as well as fatalities," Beld said. "If I were able to do it, I wouldn't alter the program at all."

However, Beld said the officer that has been dedicated to the M-45 patrol has been transferred to cover policing activities at Grand Valley State University, which has seen an increase in activity since the opening of school.

"Because of budget considerations, we still have to address Grand Valley, and that means pulling in some patrols," he said.

Meanwhile, officials for the U.S. 31 Shoreline Area Vehicular Enforcement (SAVE) project said they have received approval for funding the second year of the pro-

ject.

Lt. Blaine Koops of the Holland Police Department said the department has been approved for a \$32,059 federal grant, which he hopes to have approved by the Holland City Council this month.

The county portion of the project has been set for \$48,231, with the cost being split between a federal grant and the townships along the highway.

Koops said the project, which began last October, has been "extremely successful" in the city, where personal injury accidents have been reduced by 53 percent, from 30 to 14, while injured persons declined from 55 in 1989 to just 18 in 1990.

Countywide, a University of Michigan report has shown that seat belt use along U.S. 31 is currently pegged at 78 percent compliance, one of the highest rates in the state, Koops said.

"I'm extremely pleased," he said. "We knew we could hit our objectives, but to reach our objectives and also hit our ultimate goal of reducing accidents and saving lives is great. We are real proud that our citizens have taken to this."

The SAVE project, which covers seven law enforcement agencies in Allegan, Ottawa and Muskegon counties, registered more than 1,500 passenger restraint violations and nearly 6,500 speeding tickets, 888 of which were issued to drivers using radar detectors, statistics Koops and Beld said were encouraging.

"The project is aimed at making drivers aware of the existing conditions and at speed reduction," Beld said. "We've had some very encouraging results with seat belt usage."

Beld said he hopes to see these projects continue even after the grants end because he sees them as effective.

OCT-23-90

City police assist U.S. 31 SAVE

Grand Haven city police worked 487 hours on the U.S. 31 SAVE project and issued 465 traffic citations, made 40 other additional arrests and responded to 50 complaints.

The city police will provide 10 hours weekly to traffic enforcement on U.S. 31 between Robbins Road and the Grand River. The officers assigned will be watchful for speeding and other traffic violations. Special emphasis will be placed on issuing citations for violations of seat belt and child restraint laws, according to the police department.

OCT-24-90

Officials say highway program paying off

By ROGER MORGENSTERN

Chronicle staff writer

GRAND HAVEN — A coordinated law enforcement program along U.S. 31 in Ottawa, Muskegon and Allegan counties seems to be paying off, according to statistics released Tuesday.

The U.S. 31 Shoreline Area Vehicle Enforcement program kicked off a year ago and has resulted in more than 11,500 traffic offense arrests, said Michigan State Police Lt. William Smith, chairman of the program. Within Grand Haven, local police reported making more than 500 arrests, including 465 traffic citations, Lt. Gregg VanLente said.

A total of 11,586 traffic arrests were recorded, including 7,097 for speeding violations and 1,719 for violations of seat belt and child restraint laws. Smith, commander of the state police's Saugatuck Team, said 879 verbal warnings were given for safety restraint violations and 956 motorists stopped for speeding were using radar detectors at the time.

In addition, 131 people stopped were arrested for various criminal offenses and 30 were picked up on outstanding warrants.

The totals also included 3,686 warnings.

Smith said patrol cars logged a

total of 5,623 regular patrol hours and 2,251 overtime hours on the 85-mile stretch of roadway. Locally, VanLente said officers worked 487 hours on the SAVE program, and will continue to put 10 hours weekly toward the program in its second year.

Working in the city limits, between Robbins Road and the Grand River "the officers assigned will be especially watchful for speeding and other traffic violations," VanLente said, adding there will be continued special emphasis on enforcement seat belt and child restraint laws.

The two-year project's goal is to reduce vehicle accidents by 2 percent by increasing the number of citations for hazardous moving violations, speeding, and seat belt neglect by using air speed timing and special traffic group patrols along the three-county stretch of U.S. 31.

The program is funded in part by the Office of Highway Safety Planning and the U.S. Department of Transportation National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. City police departments Michigan State Police posts and county sheriff's departments have also contributed extra patrol time in effort, supported in part by local funding.

GRAND HAVEN, MI
TRIBUNE
E-9,420

OCT-25-90

More patrols credited for drop in mishaps

By Mark Fellows
Tribune writer

A year of increased law enforcement along 85 miles of U.S. 31 has resulted in a drop in average speeds and in the severity of traffic accidents, according to authorities, not much of a drop in accident numbers.

According to statistics for the first nine months of the U.S. 31 Save program between Oct. 23, 1989 and June, 1990, accident frequency was down slightly with a more significant drop in severity, according to program Chairman Lt. William Smith of the Michigan State Police in Saugatuck.

Smith reported average speeds have been cut as a result of the multi-agency effort through Allegan, Ottawa and Muskegon counties, and

seat belt use increased.

"THE OVERALL goal, of course, is to reduce accidents," noted Grand Haven police Lt. Gregg VanLente, but the number of accidents on Beacon Boulevard actually increased instead of decreased last year.

Grand Haven police recorded 215 property damage accidents and 55 injury accidents the year before the program and 181 property damage and 49 injury accidents the last year. VanLente said bridge repairs in 1988 probably slowed traffic enough to reduce accidents, and so that year doesn't provide a valid comparison to the first year of the program.

The city police department is happy to participate in the grant pro-

gram, VanLente said, but most of the accidents on Beacon involve rear-end collisions or accidents from improper lane changes. He feels there isn't a lot city police can usually do to enforce traffic on the highway "just because of the congestion during the daytime. It's difficult to enforce the speed regulations and a lot of the other violations."

IF A SPEEDER, for example, can be identified by police and singled out in the midst of heavy traffic, it is often difficult for cruisers to catch up with the vehicle because of the congestion, the lieutenant explained.

The government-funded program this year operates with a

\$106,333 budget. Police agencies logged 2,251 overtime and 5,623 regular patrol hours on the highway and made 11,586 traffic arrests and 131 criminal arrests, plus 3,686 warnings for traffic offenses.

Seat belt surveys at various locations indicated compliance rose from 57.5 percent last October to 69.5 percent in July.

For the program's second year, the Allegan County Sheriff's Department has declined to participate, but the Norton Shores and Muskegon Township police departments have joined.

The program was started last year with a goal of reducing traffic accidents 2 percent by increasing the number of citations issued along the highway.

NOV- 6-90

SAVE betters traffic safety on U.S. 31

Safety has improved along the 85-mile stretch of U.S. 31 since the U.S. 31 Shoreline Area Vehicle Enforcement or SAVE was instituted a year ago.

U.S. 31 SAVE is a coordinated effort among seven law enforcement agencies in Allegan, Ottawa and Muskegon counties to reduce accidents along the highway by increasing patrols and issuing more tickets.

According to a release with the slogan Safety #1 on 31 prominently displayed, SAVE officials report 11,586 traffic arrests, with 131 people arrested on various criminal offenses and 30 fugitive apprehensions.

A total of 675 cars were assisted, 2,759 were investigated and 3,686 warnings were issued for traffic offenses. Slightly more than 7,000 speeding tickets were issued and 1,719 tickets were given for violation of passenger restraint laws.

SAVE's goal is to reduce accidents by 2 percent. Comparing accident rates from

October 1988 to June 1989 with October 1989 to June 1990 shows only a slight decrease in accidents, however the severity of those crashes has diminished.

Speeds also have decreased on U.S. 31 and seat belt compliance has risen from 57.5 percent in October 1989 to 69.5 percent in July 1990.

The participating police agencies plan to keep up the enforcement program this fiscal year with money from the Office of Highway Safety Planning and U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Last year police agencies dedicated 2,251 overtime hours and 5,623 regular hours to the project.<

APPENDIX C
PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS



Advisory sign placed along US-31 corridor

ATTENTION



"A Cooperative Law Enforcement Effort"

You are part of a very special law enforcement project designed to significantly reduce accidents and fatalities on the Allegan, Ottawa, and Muskegon county US-31 corridor.

You may have been cited by a police officer for one of the following reasons:

- **Exceeding the maximum speed**
- **Violating the safety belt laws**
- **Violating other Michigan traffic laws**

Whether you received a warning or a traffic citation you should be aware that obeying the law makes this stretch of highway safer for everyone.

So please...

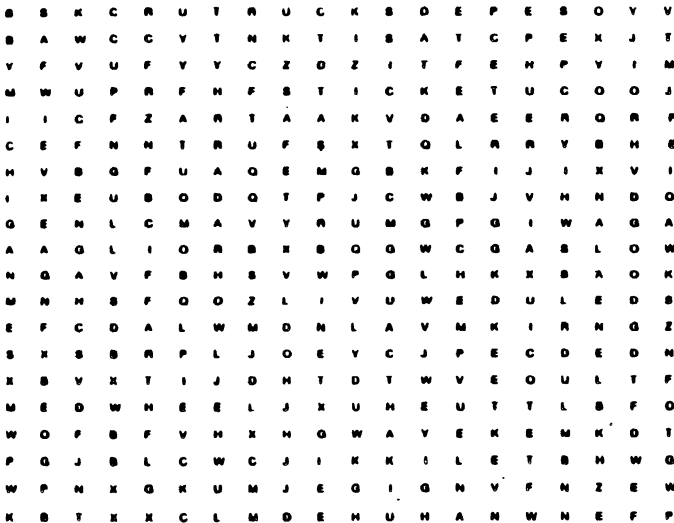
Buckle-Up And Slow Down!

Flyer distributed to persons stopped for violations

BUCKLE-UP AND SLOW DOWN!

Make your trip a safe one... Drive within the speed limit and keep your safety belt buckled!

SAFETY WORD SEARCH



Find the words in this puzzle

AUTOMOBILE
 BUCKLE-UP
 CHANGE
 HIGHWAY
 LANE

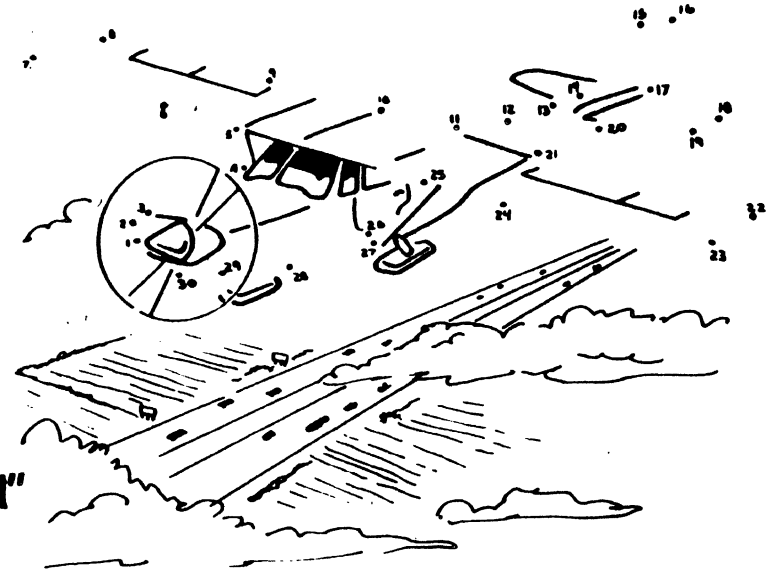
MICHIGAN
 RADAR
 SAFETY
 SLOW
 SPEED

STEERING
 TICKET
 TRAFFIC
 TRUCKS
 WHEEL



"A Cooperative Law Enforcement Effort"

THE EYE IN THE SKY



As you travel US-31 North and South through Allegan, Ottawa, and Muskegon counties your trip will be safer thanks to efforts of the agencies listed below

- Grand Haven State Police Post
- Saugatuck State Police Post
- Ottawa County Sheriff Department

- Allegan County Sheriff Department
- Traffic Services Division of Michigan State Police

- Grand Haven City Police Department
- Muskegon County Sheriff Department
- Motor Carrier Division of



Placemat distributed to restaurants along US-31 corridor



Decal distributed in the field and at police stations



Key rings distributed in the field and at police stations



Car trash bag distributed at festivals and other events

Poster distributed for display by businesses along US-31 corridor



**BUCKLE-UP AND
SLOW DOWN!**

"A Cooperative Law Enforcement Effort"



Office of Highway
Safety Planning

