The DISPATCH

PennDOT Crash Newsletter - News you can use!

What's New?

Labor Day Weekend Crash Statistics

The Pennsylvania State Police (PSP) released the results of its Labor Day weekend enforcement initiative. From Aug. 29 to Sept. 1, the PSP investigated 747 crashes that resulted in 129 injuries and six deaths. Impaired driving was a factor in 64 of those crashes, two of which were fatal, according to the PSP.

Troopers arrested 535 motorists for driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs and issued 24,182 citations, including:

- 6,860 for speeding
- 776 for failing to wear a seatbelt
- 147 for not securing children in safety seats

This year saw more crashes than in 2024, with 747 crashes reported this year and 678 reported last year. There was also an increase in DUI arrests and crashes.

Working Together

Coding an E-Bike

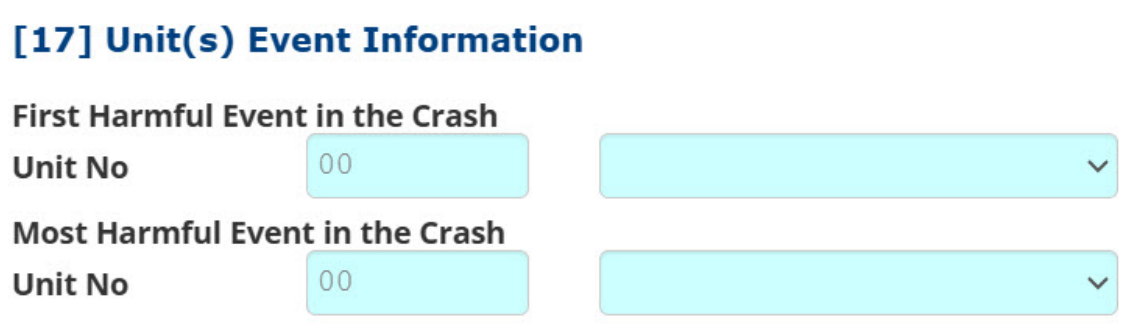
Electric bikes, or e-bikes, are powered by a combination of an electric motor, a battery, and a rider. When coding a crash that involves an e-bike, the Type Unit is Non-Motorist and the Non-Motorist Type is Bicycle. However, the Non-Motorist Type is frequently mis-identified as Other Pedalcycle.

Per MMUCC, the definitions of a bicycle and other pedalcycle for crash reporting purposes are as follows:

Bicycle-a device composed of two wheels held in a frame one behind the other, propelled by foot pedals, and steered with handlebars attached to the front wheel. This includes those solely propelled by human power and those that can be propelled by human power and/or a motor.

Other Pedalcycle-used for any device propelled by pedaling (by foot, hand, or other adaptive means) *other than a Bicycle*. Examples include unicycle, tricycle, pedal car, handcycle, which can be solely propelled by human power and those that can be propelled by human power and/or a motor.

It is important to identify non-motorist transport devices with and without motors, so that specific countermeasures can be designed for each type accordingly. This is information is vital to evaluating crash outcomes and vehicle design, assessing non-motorist device design, identifying behavioral concerns, informing law enforcement and legislative activities, and measuring infrastructure design programs.



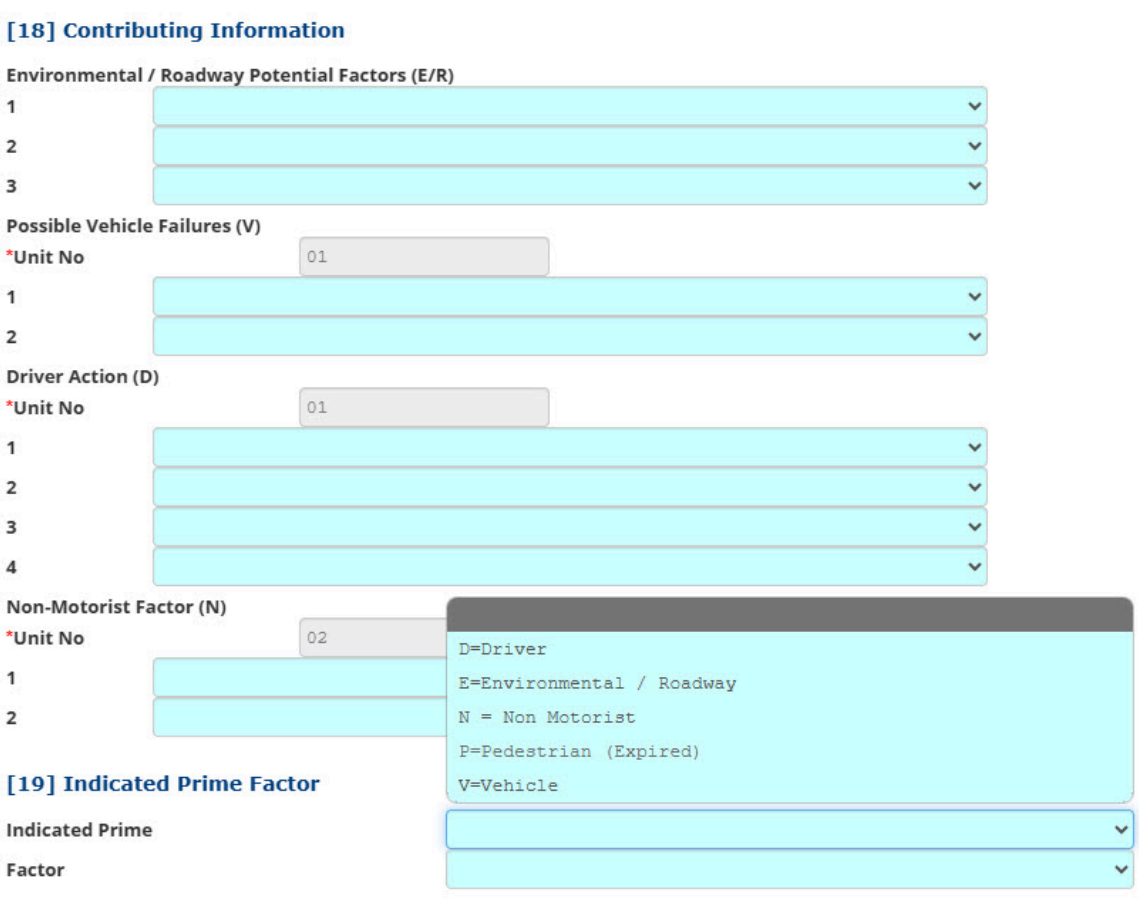
Reporting First & Most Harmful Event

The First Harmful Event is defined as the first injury and/or damage-producing event in a crash. The Most Harmful Event is defined as the event that resulted in the most severe injury or, if no injury, the greatest property damage.

A collision event is a harmful event that involves the collision of a motor vehicle in-transport with another motor vehicle, a non-fixed object (ex. an animal), or a fixed object (ex. a barrier). A non-collision event is a harmful event that does not involve a collision. For example, if a vehicle swerves to avoid hitting a deer, loses control and ends up flipping, this would be classified as a non-collision event.

Each event listed within these drop-down fields is essential to contributing, in one way or another, to understanding crash causation and identifying traffic safety countermeasures. For these reasons, it is imperative these fields are documented as accurately as possible.

Understanding Crash Terms



Indicated Prime Factor vs. Contributing Factor

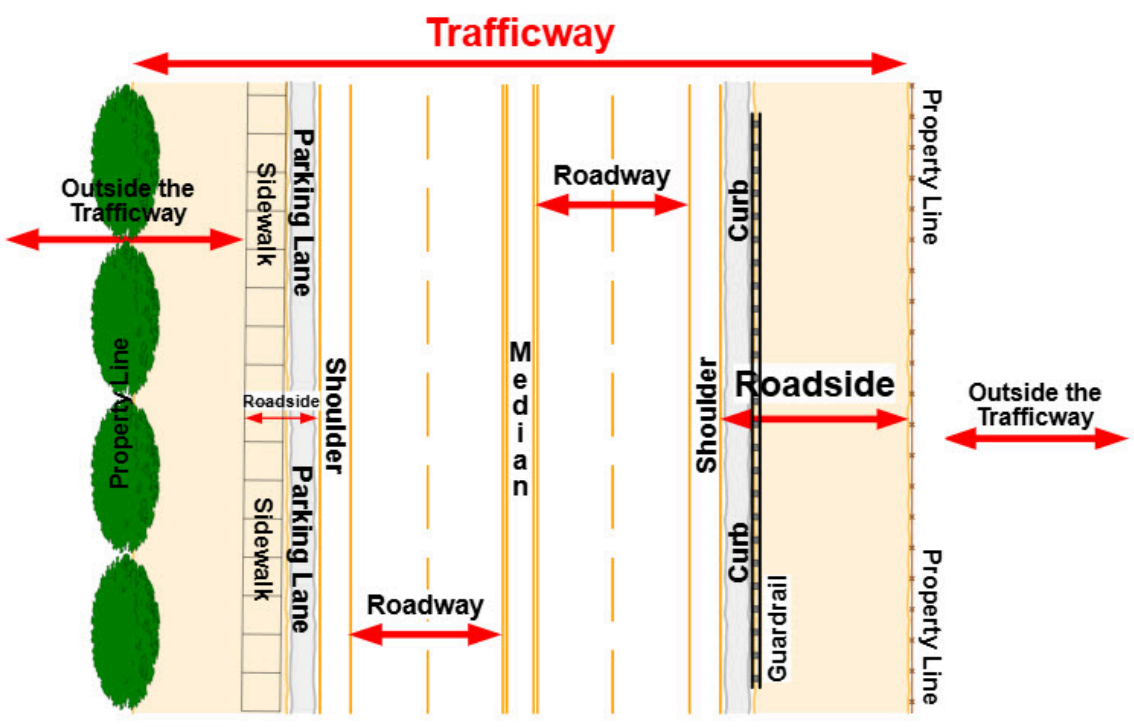
The Indicated Prime Factor is the primary reason for why the crash happened as determined by the investigation. The Contributing Factor is used to identify what contributed to the crash as determined by the investigation. *Please note: Each category must have at least one entry. If a category does not apply to the crash, then 00=None must be entered.*

The indicated prime factor offers four categories that correspond to the contributing factor categories:

- D=Driver / Driver Action (D)
- E=Environmental/Roadway / Environmental/Roadway Potential Factors (E/R)

- N=Non-Motorist / Non-Motorist Factor (N)
- V=Vehicle / Possible Vehicle Failures (V)

The Indicated Prime Factor must have a corresponding factor under Contributing Information. For Example, if the Indicated Prime Factor is V=Vehicle - Unit 01 - 02=Brake System, Possible Vehicle Failure (V) for Unit 01 must also be identified as 02=Brake system.



Relation to Roadway

Relation to Roadway identifies where the first harmful event occurred with respect to the roadway. This data element is important to assist with categorizing motor vehicle traffic versus non-traffic crashes and the relationship to the trafficway infrastructure. **The diagram above should identify the relation to roadway for most situations you will encounter.*

1 = On roadway - The roadway is the portion of the trafficway normally designed for vehicular traffic (i.e., travel lanes).

2 = Shoulder - The Shoulder is the part of a trafficway contiguous with the roadway for emergency use and accommodation of stopped vehicles.

3 = Median - Medians are defined as the area of a divided trafficway between parallel roads separating the roadways for traffic in opposite directions. Medians may be depressed, raised or flush and do not include shoulders or separators.

4 = Roadside - Roadside refers to a location off the roadway, but inside the right-of-way. It is the outermost part of the trafficway, which lay between the outer property line or other barrier and the edge of the first road encountered in the trafficway.

5 = Outside trafficway - An area not meant for crash where the first harmful event was outside the property line boundaries of a trafficway.

6 = In parking lane - Parking Lane refers to a strip of road located on the roadway, or next to the roadway, on which parking is permitted. This includes curbside and edge-of roadway parking (for example, legal residential parking, city street parking, etc.).

7 = Gore - The Gore area is the intersecting area of the ramp and highway.

9 = Unknown - Location Unknown refers to a location off the roadway, but its relationship to the right-of-way is not known.

QUIZ: Parking Lots

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

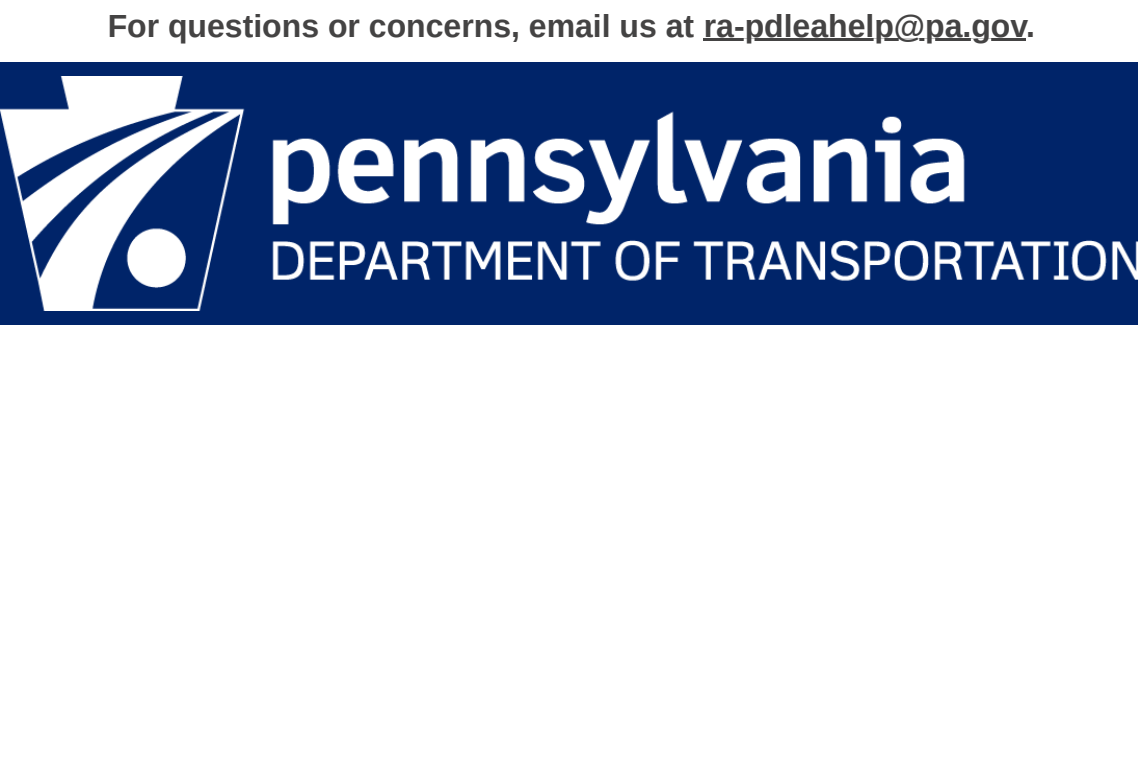
Be sure to save the links below to your favorites for easy access!

Police Crash Reporting Tools

Current AA600 Form

Traffic Records Program Administrator (TRPA) Map

The Regional TRPA Map indicates the Traffic Records Project Administrator who supports your area along with their contact information. The TRPAs serve as the liaison between PennDOT and the police agencies.



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Now that you've made it to the end of the newsletter, how would you rate its content?

Not helpful at all 0 1 2 3 4 Very helpful

For questions or concerns, email us at ra-pdleahelp@pa.gov.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION