



Safe Police Vehicle Operations



Your Instructor

- Chief Chase Stapp (ret)
 - TMLIRP LE Outreach Consultant
 - San Marcos (TX) Police Department – 27 years
 - Officer through Chief
 - Chief – 5 years
 - Commander, Hays County Narcotics Task Force
 - Master Peace Officer
 - Licensed TCOLE Instructor
 - Certified Public Manager (CPM)
 - City of San Marcos – 5 years
 - Assistant City Manager, Public Safety





OUR WHY? To partner with local governments so that Texas communities are **STRONGER TOGETHER**

Our Core Values

- **Public Service:** Serving the public good – for the benefit of local governments and their tax-paying citizens.
- **Fiscal Responsibility:** Responsibly managing our members' pooled funds for the protection of their financial stability.
- **Operational Excellence:** Delivering excellent member service in all components of our risk financing and loss prevention services.
- **Integrity:** Serving with honesty, integrity and professionalism.



Our Coverages



**Workers'
Compensation**



Liability



Property



Cyber Liability



Special Risk



Learning Objectives

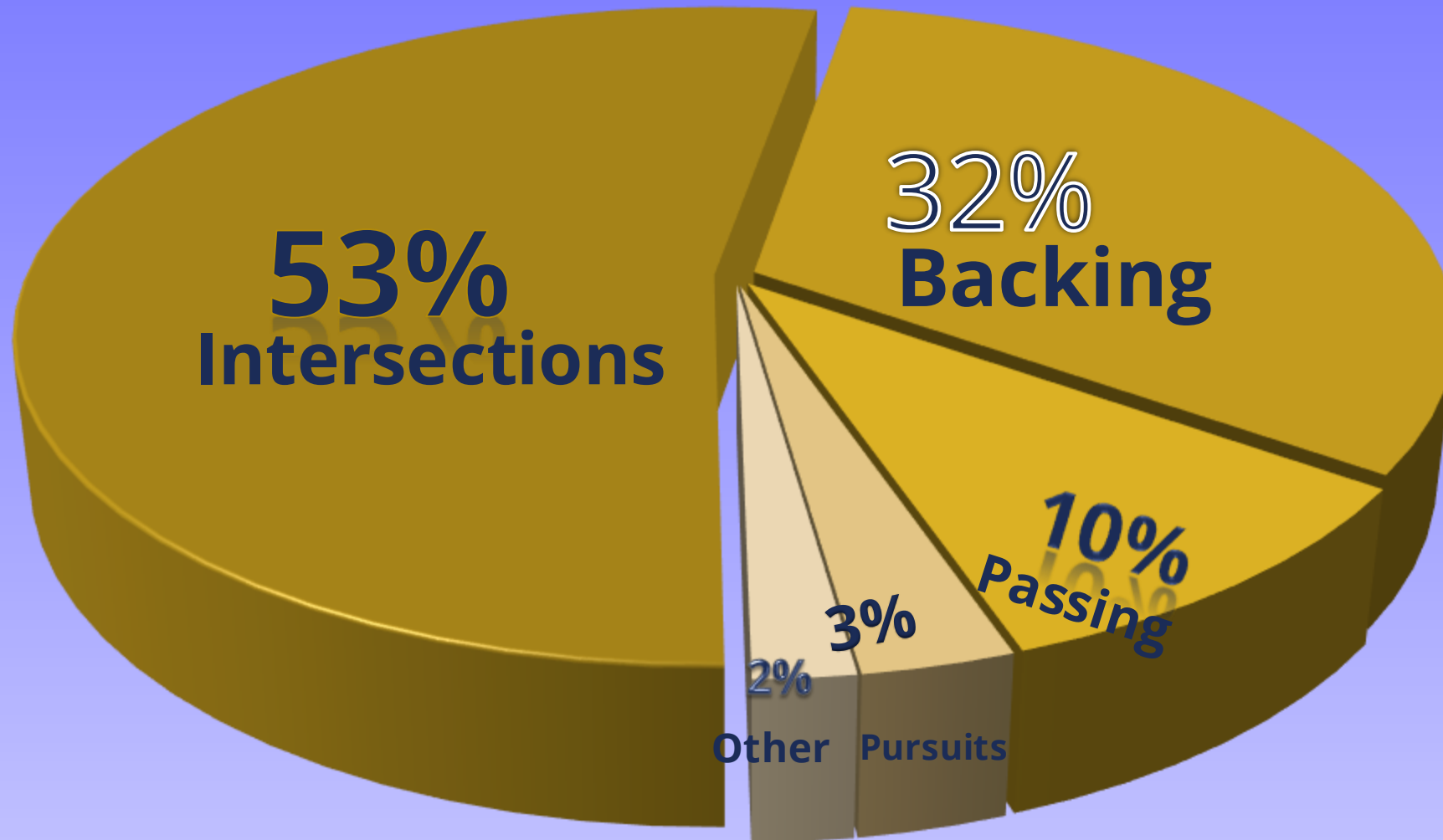
- **Increase awareness of issues where we are held liable, injured and/or killed**
- **Understand how decisions affect our ability to reduce injury, death and liability issues**
- **Identify problem areas in emergency vehicle operations**



Question?

- **How many of you know someone who has had an accident while on patrol?**
- **Was the collision at an intersection, backing in a parking lot or in areas with low speed?**

Where do Law Enforcement accidents occur?





41 Action NEWS



BREAKING NEWS LEADER

41 Action NEWS

6:03 68°

Motor vehicle related losses over a 3-year period

• Worker's Compensation	\$4.6
• Liability	\$11.7
• Physical Damage	<u>\$6.2</u>
Total	\$22.5 Million



What major cause of officer deaths has ranked in the top five for the past ten years?

- 1. Health risks**
- 2. Killed by suspect - firearm**
- 3. Suicide**
- 4. Emergency vehicle operations**

2007-2021

Roadway Related Line of Duty Deaths

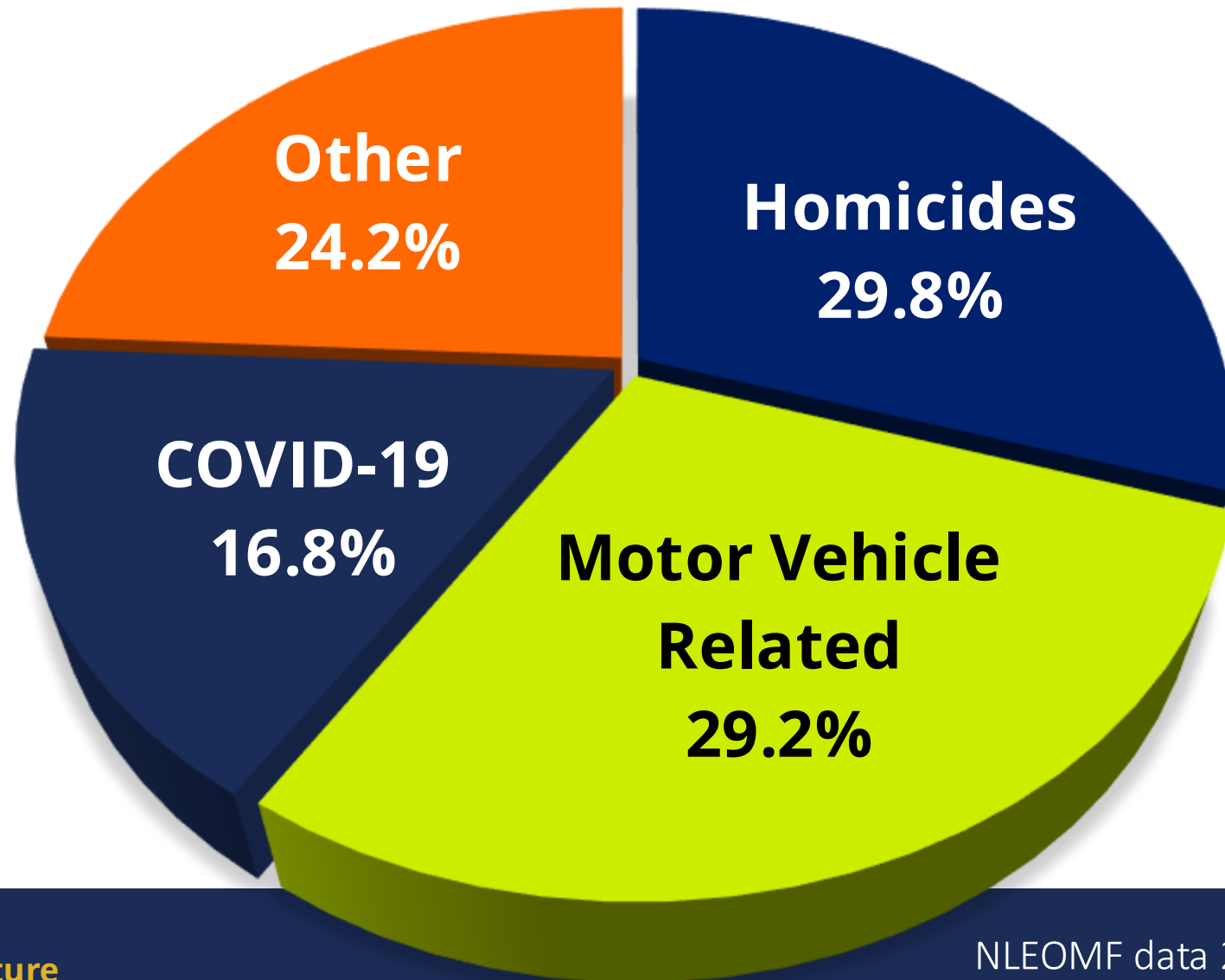
Crashes	622
Struck by	220
Total	842

OFFICERS INJURED

34,700

111 PER WEEK

Line-of-Duty Fatalities From 2007 to 2021



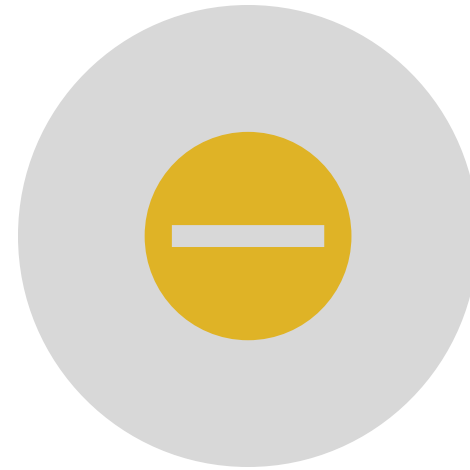
Perceived Likelihood of Officers being Seriously Injured or Killed by Given Risk



Is there an exemption for Emergency Vehicle Operators **NOT** to wear their seatbelt?



YES

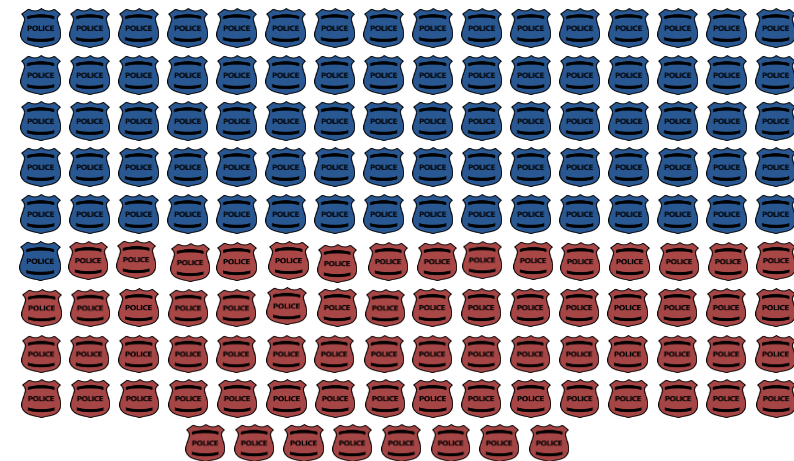


NO

There is no exemption for Emergency Vehicle Operators to NOT wear their seatbelt!!!



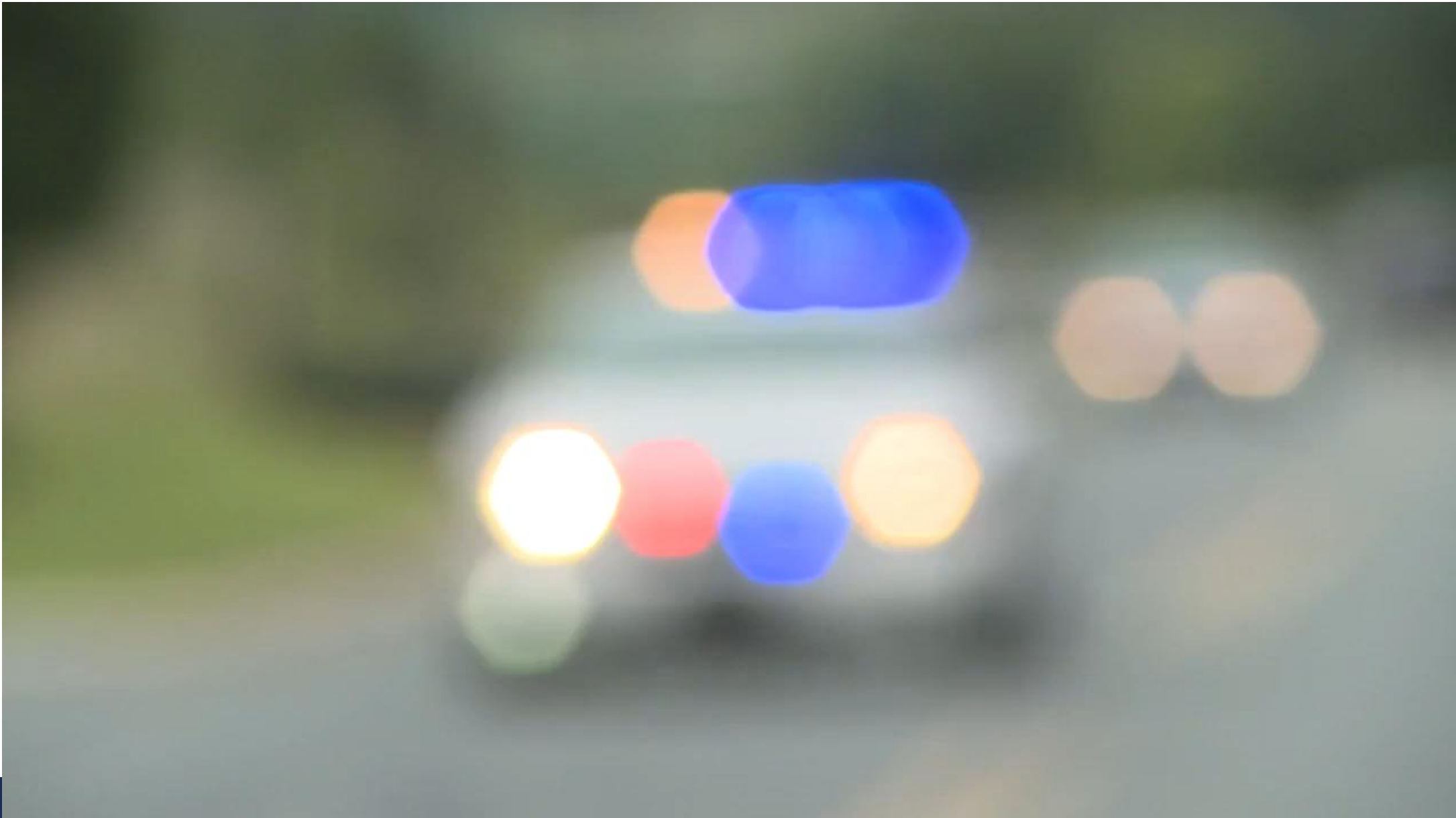
Between 2012 and 2016,
152 officers died in fatal auto crashes



71 of them were NOT wearing their seat belt.

The National Law Enforcement Memorial Fund, in partnership with NHTSA, is working to reduce traffic related line of duty deaths.

<http://www.nleomf.org/facts/nhtsa-officer-safety-initiatives/>



Building for the Future

As You Come to a Stop



**Swimming out of your
seat belt**



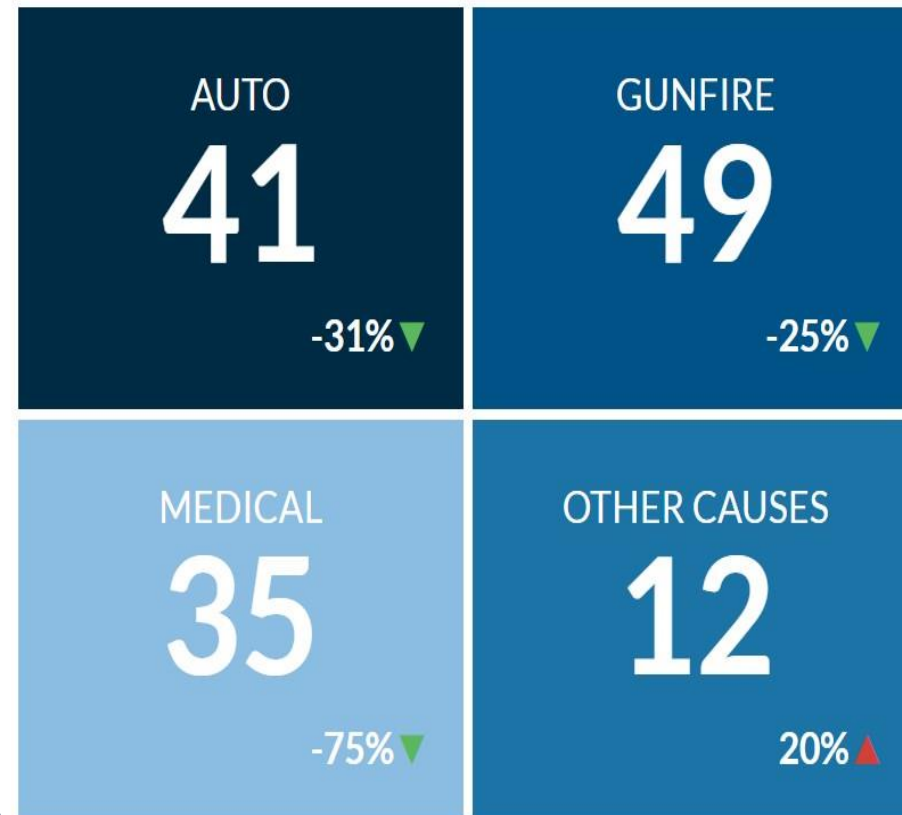
**Include seat
belt wear in
training and
tactical
exercises**

National LOD Deaths 2023

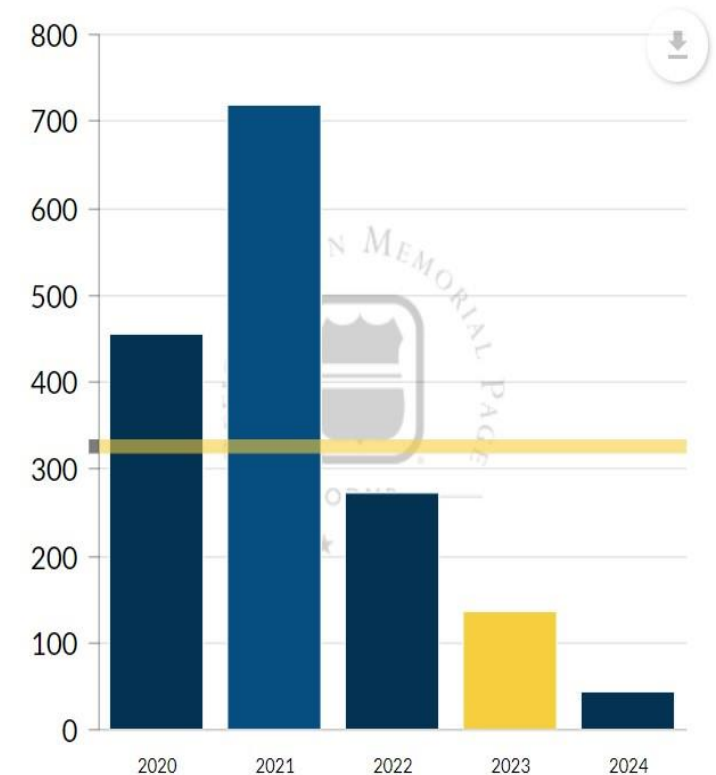
LODDs at a Glance



Leading Causes of Death



LODDs by Year (2020 - 2024)



Officer Down Memorial Page



Building for the Future



A white granite headstone is the central focus, set on a concrete base. The text is engraved in a serif font. The background shows a cemetery with other headstones, trees, and a building under a clear blue sky.

DRIVE
CAREFULLY
WE CAN WAIT

Where do we get our authority to operate an emergency vehicle?

- 1. Penal Code**
- 2. Code of Criminal Procedures**
- 3. Texas Transportation Code**
- 4. Agency Policies**

Where do we get our authority to operate an emergency vehicle?

1. Penal Code
2. Code of Criminal Procedures
3. Texas Transportation Code
4. Agency Policies

Texas Transportation Code 546.001

In operating an authorized emergency vehicle, the operator may:

- **Exceed the posted speed limit**
- **Proceed past a red light or stop sign without stopping**
- **Pass in a no passing zone**

Texas Transportation Code Section 546.001 applies only when the operator is:

- Responding to an emergency call
- Pursuing an actual or suspected violator of the law
- Responding to, but not from a fire alarm
- Directing or diverting traffic for public safety purposes
- Conducting police escort as authorized by law and policy



Texas Transportation Code Section 546.003

Audible or Visual Signals Required

Except as provided by Section 546.004, the operator of an authorized emergency vehicle engaging in conduct permitted by Section 546.001 **shall** use, at the **discretion of the operator**, audible **or** visual signals that meet the pertinent requirements of Section 547.305 and 547.702.

TTC Sec. 546.005 Duty of Care

This chapter does not relieve the operator of an emergency vehicle from:

The duty to operate the vehicle with appropriate regard for the safety of all persons; or the consequences of reckless disregard for the safety of others.



U.S. Department of Justice
Federal Bureau of Investigation



April 2009

FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin



Pursuit Driving

Out of 10,000, how many times do you think officers answered that getting to the scene quickly made a difference or could have made a difference?

U.S. Department of Justice
Federal Bureau of Investigation



April 2009

FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin



Pursuit Driving

**1 out of
10,000**





**In 53% of fatal crashes,
officers were**

**"an officer needs
assistance"** calls

(NLEOMF 2010 -2014)

Dallas Police Department

Date 10-17-2008

Time 19:42:00

Unit 5033

Unit Speed 058

Dir NE



Treat Speed as a Tool

What is your department's pursuit policy?

TML
RISK POOL

Building for the Future



Pursuit Policies

Texas Police Chiefs Association
Best Practices Recognition Program

Least Restrictive

- Any law enforcement officer in an authorized emergency vehicle may initiate a vehicular pursuit when the suspect exhibits the intention to avoid apprehension by refusing to stop when properly directed to do so. Pursuit may also be justified if the officer reasonably believes that the suspect, if allowed to escape, would present a danger to human life or cause serious injury.

More Restrictive: Felonies and Jailable Misdemeanors

- Any law enforcement officer in an authorized emergency vehicle may initiate a vehicular pursuit when the suspect exhibits the intention to avoid apprehension for a felony or misdemeanor that would result in jail by refusing to stop when properly directed to do so. Pursuit may also be justified if the officer reasonably believes that the suspect, if allowed to flee, would present a danger to human life or cause serious injury.
- Pursuits will not be initiated for class C traffic offenses alone.

More Restrictive: Only Felonies

- Any law enforcement officer in an authorized emergency vehicle may initiate a vehicular pursuit when the suspect exhibits the intentions to avoid apprehension for a felony by refusing to stop when properly directed to do so. Pursuit may also be justified if the officer reasonably believes that the suspect, if allowed to flee, would present a danger to human life or cause serious injury.
- Pursuits will not be initiated for traffic offenses or misdemeanors alone.

Most Restrictive: Only Violent Felonies

- Any law enforcement officer in an authorized emergency vehicle may initiate a vehicular pursuit when the suspect exhibits the intentions to avoid apprehension for a violent felony by refusing to stop when properly directed to do so. Pursuit may also be justified if the officer reasonably believes that the suspect, if allowed to flee, would present a danger to human life or cause serious injury.
- Pursuits will not be initiated for traffic offenses, misdemeanors, or property felonies.

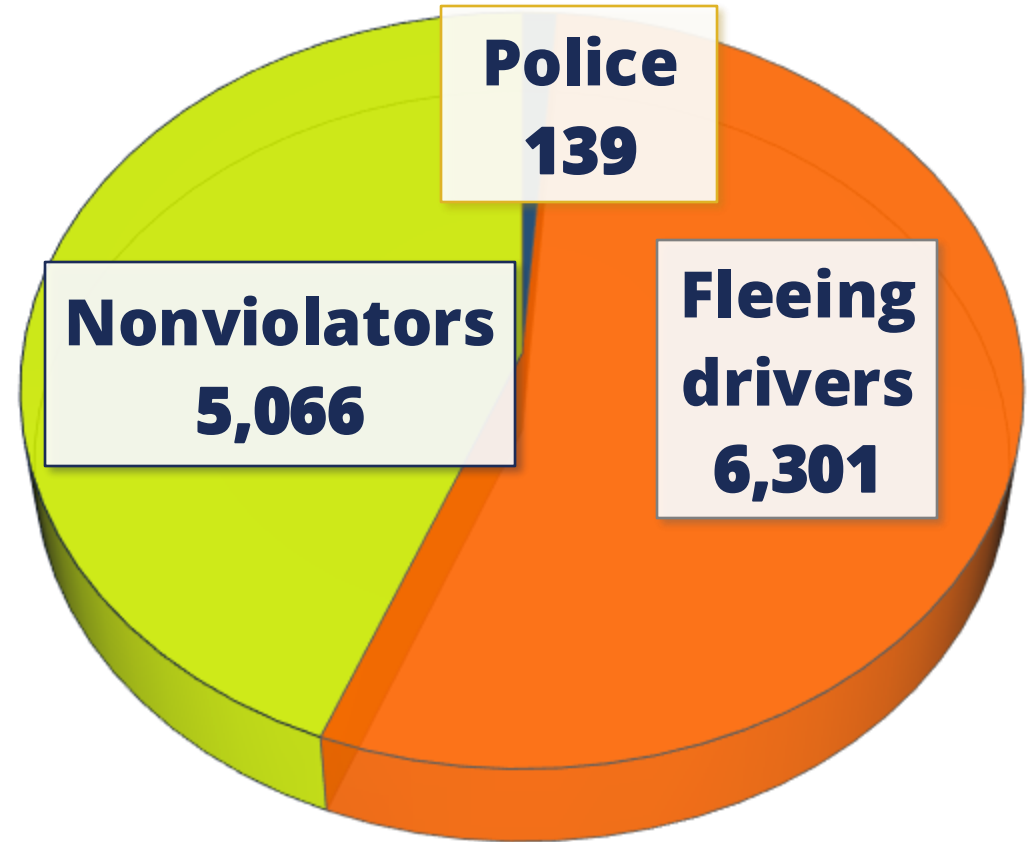
Consistent across all:

In deciding whether to initiate pursuit, the officer shall take into consideration:

- road, weather and environmental conditions
- population density and vehicular and pedestrian traffic
- the relative performance capabilities of the pursuit vehicle and the vehicle being pursued
- the seriousness of the offense
- the presence of other persons in the police vehicle at the time of the offense
- the presence of other persons in the police vehicle.
- and...The decision to initiate pursuit must be based on the pursuing officer's conclusion that the immediate danger to the officer and the public created by the pursuit is less than the immediate or potential danger to the public should the suspect remain at large.

From 1979 to 2013, 11,506 people were killed during pursuits

- NHTSA data, reported by USA Today



U.S. Department of Justice
Federal Bureau of Investigation



April 2009

FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin



Pursuit Driving

**40%
of
Pursuits
Result in
Crashes**

LEO Near Miss Reporting System



DECISION MAKING



71%

PURSUIITS

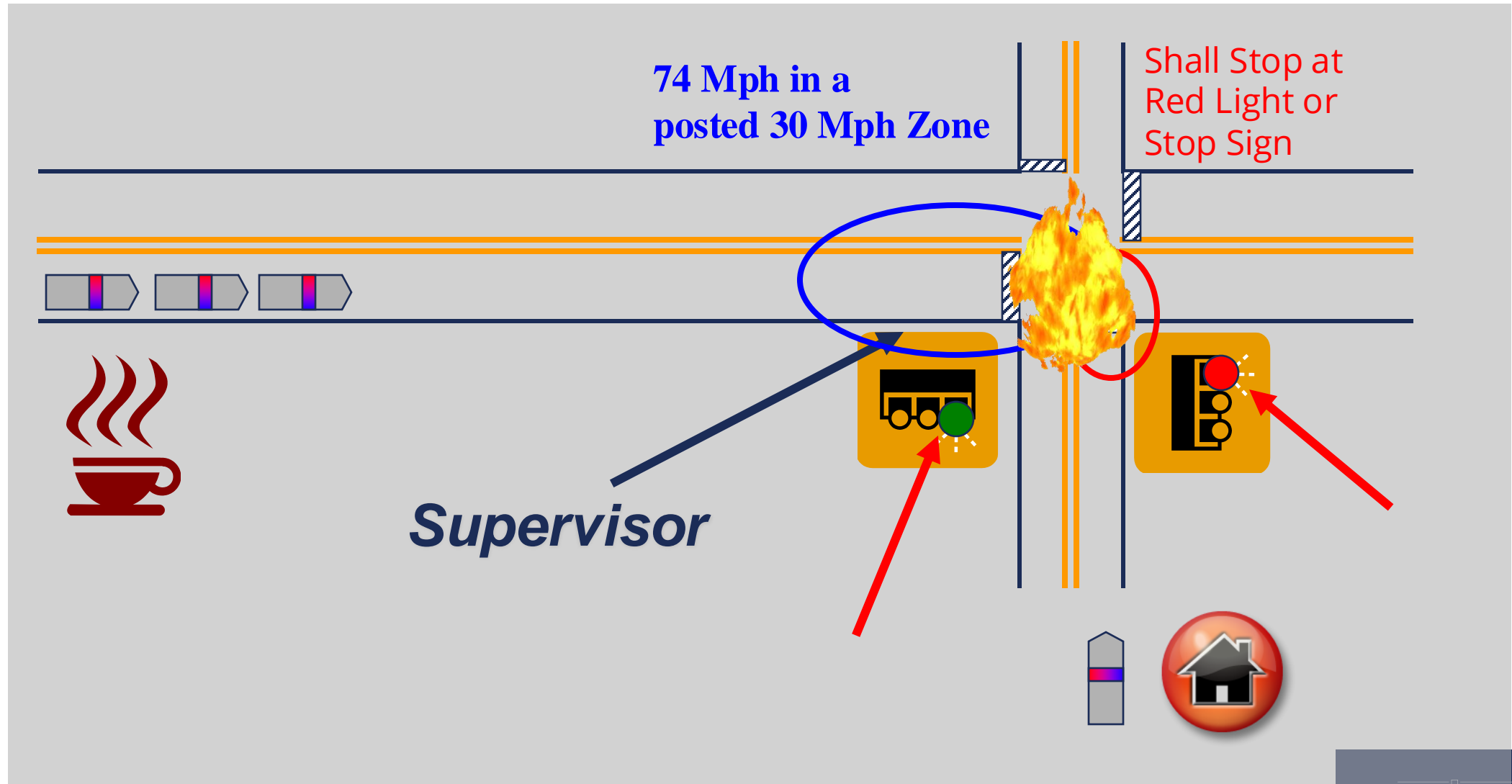


**Immediate
Apprehension**

**Risk to Public
Safety**

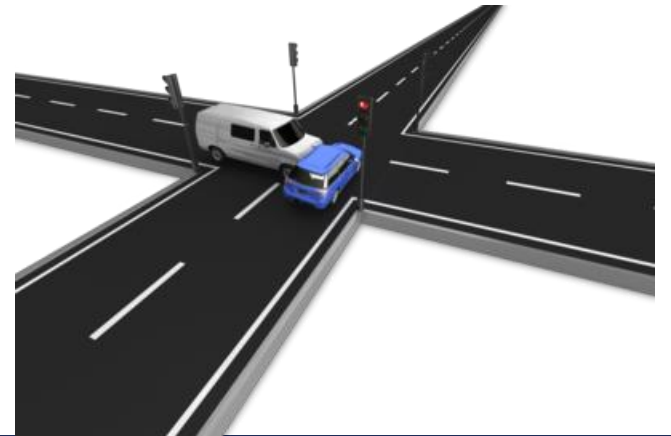
**Risk to Officer
Safety**

Example of a Dangerous Situation



More Than One Emergency Vehicle

- Use caution at intersections
- The second emergency vehicle will not be expected by yielding traffic.
- Do not tail gate
- Allow the lead vehicle plenty of room to operate safely and stop



An emergency exists if there is a high probability of death or serious injury to an individual, or significant property loss, and action by an emergency vehicle operator *MAY* reduce the seriousness of the situation.



- *How much time can you really save in an average response?*
- *Is the increased risk worth the reward?*

What is the average driver's reaction time?

1. 1 second
2. 1.6 seconds
3. 2 seconds
4. 2.5 second



What is the average driver's reaction time?

1. 1 second
- 2. 1.6 seconds**
3. 2 seconds
4. 2.5 second



How many feet per second does a vehicle travel at 60 MPH?

1. 100

2. 88

3. 78

4. 65



How many feet per second does a vehicle travel at 60 MPH?

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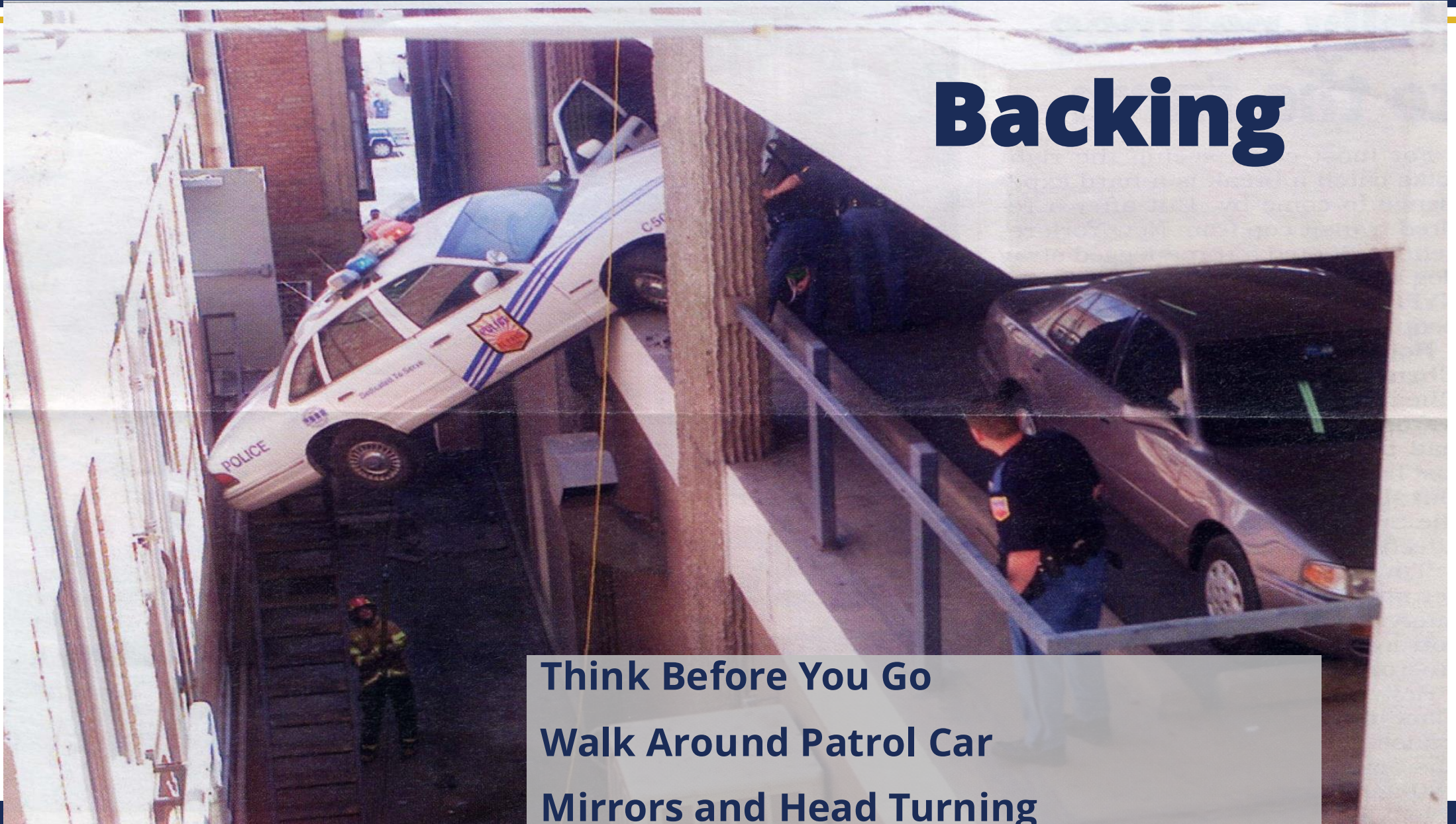
FATIGUE





Stephen James PhD
Sleep & Performance Research Center, WSU

Backing



**Think Before You Go
Walk Around Patrol Car
Mirrors and Head Turning
Slow!!**

Tires and Wheels

- **Manufactured Date**
- **Pressure**
- **Wear**
- **Temperature**



Where on your vehicle will you find the recommended tire pressure?

1. Side of the tire
2. Owners manual
3. Door jam
4. All of the above



Where on your vehicle will you find the recommended tire pressure?

1. Side of the tire
2. Owners manual
3. Door jam
4. All of the above



How often is checking your tire pressure recommended?

1. Yearly
2. Monthly
3. Weekly
4. Daily



How often is checking your tire pressure recommended?

1. Yearly
2. Monthly
3. Weekly
4. **Daily**

TPMS is your friend!



Vehicle Inspections



Check list

- ✓ ***Emergency Equipment***
- ✓ ***Tires***
- ✓ ***Backseat***
- ✓ ***Trunk***
- ✓ ***Undercarriage***
- ✓ ***Fluids & Belts***

In Conclusion

**Return home safe
every after every
shift...**

You are the operator

Approach Intersections with caution

Use your mirrors

Maintain a cushion of safety

Wear your seatbelt

Arrive safe to every call



The R.O.A.D. Ready is an initiative of the Texas Municipal League Intergovernmental Risk Pool (TMLIRP) to strengthen partnerships with our members and work towards increasing awareness of roadway exposures and the impacts losses have on our members.



Questions?

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