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AAA FOUNDATION RISK MAPS PRIORITIZE SCARCE RESOURCES FOR ROAD SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS

Salt Lake City, UT (December 09, 2010) – Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for ages 1-34 and accounted for nearly 34,000 deaths last year. Specifically in Utah, 244 people died last year as a result of traffic crashes and, of these deaths, 122 (50 percent) occurred on rural roads. Therefore, making roadway improvements based on areas of risk as identified on the United States Road Assessment Program (usRAP) would help the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT) reduce deaths.

“In this age of scarce resources, now, more than ever, it is important to ensure our road safety investments are returning the largest benefit,” said Robert Hull, Director of Traffic and Safety of UDOT. “We will continue to use the usRAP maps as a tool to generate safety projects that maximize our resource allocation and move us toward our goal of zero fatalities in Utah.”

The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety and AAA Utah, in partnership with UDOT, have developed maps showing the relative risk of rural road segments. The maps educated the transportation commission as well as the motoring public in community meetings about the crash history and relative risk of roadways, and demonstrated prioritization of resources toward specific road improvement projects. These maps also were used in the field by UDOT regional traffic engineers as an initial screening tool to determine what roads need further examination, to identify road improvement projects, and to benchmark progress.

“We are always seeking ways to improve roadways and the safety of motorists,” said Rolayne Fairclough, spokesperson for AAA Utah. “We are pleased that UDOT finds these maps so useful that they’re becoming the first formal usRAP member. As such, they’ll be updating and maintaining the maps on an ongoing basis as part of their safety management efforts for the Utah state highway system.”

(MORE)



Implementation
of usRAP will
reduce the number
of deaths and
serious injuries
on U.S. roads.



“The United States Road Assessment Program (usRAP) identifies potential road safety problems, allowing UDOT to more effectively allocate its resources, ultimately leading to enhanced highway safety improvements,” said Peter Kissinger, President and CEO of the AAA Foundation. Kissinger added, “We are delighted that our collaboration will continue and hope that it will be emulated in other states.”

The AAA Foundation recently completed the third phase of a usRAP pilot study that rated the relative risk of road segments on state roads in Utah, Kentucky, Illinois, and New Mexico. The first two phases evaluated roads in Michigan, Iowa, New Jersey and Florida. A road safety program of the AAA Foundation, usRAP is affiliated with the International Road Assessment Program (iRAP), which is active in more than 50 countries throughout Europe, Asia Pacific, North, Central, and South America, and Africa.

The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety is an independent, publicly funded, 501 (c) (3) charitable research and educational organization established in 1947 by AAA. The AAA Foundation’s mission is to prevent traffic deaths and injuries by conducting research into their causes and by educating the public about strategies to prevent crashes and reduce the impact when they do occur. “usRAP Phase III” along with all AAA Foundation reports are available online at www.usRAP.us.

AAA Utah offers a wide array of automotive, travel, insurance, DMV, financial services and consumer discounts to more than 175,000 members. AAA has been a leader and advocate for the safety and security of all travelers since it was founded more than 100 years ago.

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