



A Report for

## Safe Communities Project



# SAFE COMMUNITIES SURVEY RESULTS 2000

## SUBSAMPLE: FIRE DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES

**Provided to the  
Corpus Christi Fire Department**

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**August 15, 2001**



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## *ADMINISTRATION OF THE SURVEY*

The Safe Communities Survey was designed to address safety concerns, perceptions of risk, safety knowledge, and driving behaviors. This project was envisioned as a needs assessment or problem identification project in support of the Safe Communities planning effort. The project was committed by grant provisions to collect 1,000 surveys from county residents. Within this number, the Safe Communities Coalition wanted to survey law enforcement, emergency medical service, and health care professionals, as well as young adults, senior citizens, and poor residents. This required the use of several processes. The survey was completed from May to July of 2000.

The most scientifically sound processes involved a survey of the county population by mail and surveys of the city police department's patrol officers and the county sheriff department's staff. The mail survey involved selecting a random sample of county residents from the local phone book. A random number generator was used to select one individual for the survey from each column of names from each page of the phone book. This resulted in a sample size of 1,100. The survey was mailed to each of these individuals followed by a reminder post card 14 days later. A total of 171 surveys were received for a response rate of 15.5%.

For the total population of police department patrol officers and the total population of sheriff department employees, surveys were distributed to each employee with a cover letter from the respective chief or sheriff through departmental mail procedures. From the 250 surveys distributed to the police patrol officers, 99 or 39.6% were returned and from the 230 distributed to sheriff department employees, 122 or 53.0% were returned.

Emergency medical service, fire department, and hospital employees at seven hospitals were surveyed by distribution through organizational procedures not in the control of project personnel. After permission to distribute the surveys was obtained by project staff, coalition members employed at each site worked out distribution and collection procedures as permitted by the site. Emergency room personnel were targeted at the hospitals. No method of accounting for how many surveys were actually distributed nor to whom they were distributed is available for these sites. The project received 45 surveys from the EMS/fire department and 201 from the hospitals.

To generate responses from young adults, senior citizens, and poor residents, the project collected convenience samples from students entering the University Center, seniors coming to programs at senior citizen centers, and clients arriving at the waiting room of the public health clinic. These efforts resulted in 144 surveys from students, 119 from senior citizens, and 179 from health clinic clients. An additional 28 surveys were received from a local private school system where a coalition member distributed surveys to the teachers.

These processes resulted in the collection of a total of 1,108 surveys. While only the first three sub-samples were collected with reasonably sound sampling procedures, the remainder adequately support the Coalition's desire to have the responses of specific groups of county citizens represented in the results.

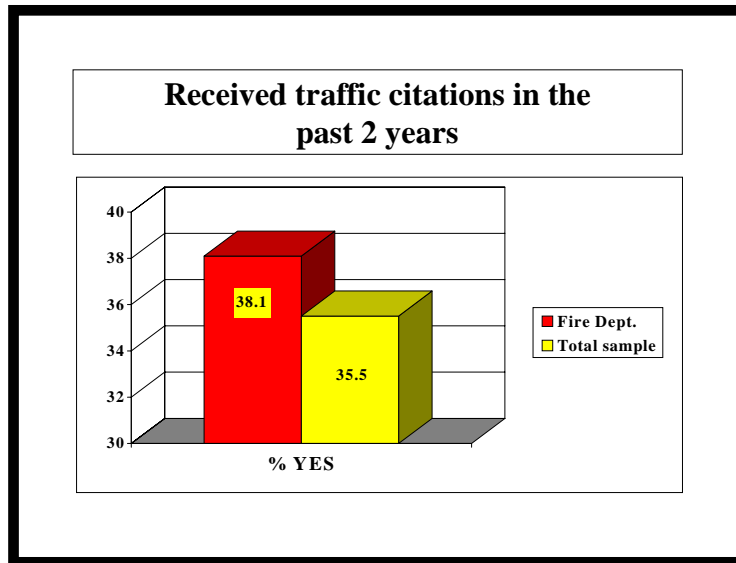
**This report is based on the 45 surveys received from the Fire Department employees. A report for the total sample is available upon request. Here Fire Department employees are compared to the total sample when appropriate.**

## FINDINGS FOR THE FIRE DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES

Of the Fire Department employees, 38.1% had received tickets for traffic violations in the last two years, while 61.9% had not.

<b>How many tickets, warnings, or “discussions” with police officers about traffic violations have you had in the past 2 years? (N=42)</b>	
	Percent
None	61.9
One	33.3
2 or 3	0
4 or 5	2.4
6 or more	2.4

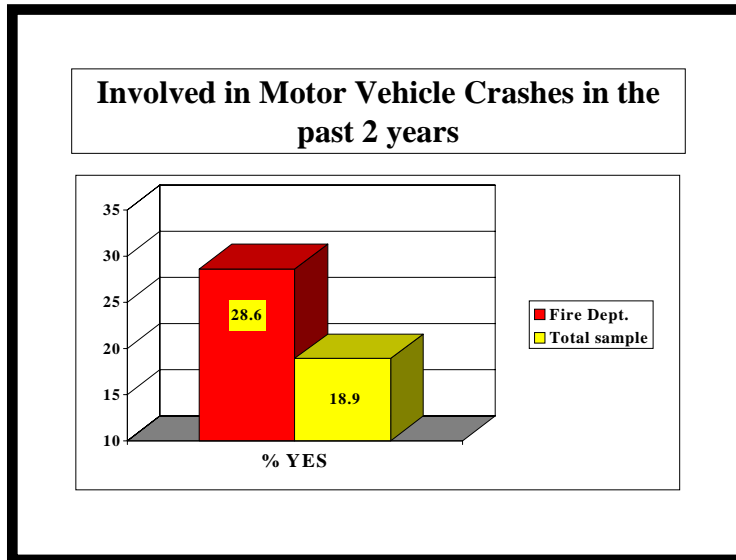
This compares to 35.5% in the total sample, who reported receiving tickets.



The majority of the Fire Department employees (71.4%) had not been involved in motor vehicle crashes in the past two years, while 28.6% had been in crashes.

<b>How many motor vehicle crashes have you had during the past 2 years? (N=42)</b>	
	Percent
None	71.4
One	23.8
2-3	0
4-5	0
6 or more	4.8

The number of Fire Department employees involved in crashes is higher than in the total sample (18.9%). Employees appear to have been at a greater risk of motor vehicle crashes than other county residents.



Within the sample of Fire Department employees, 64.3% had taken a driver safety course in the last 3 years.

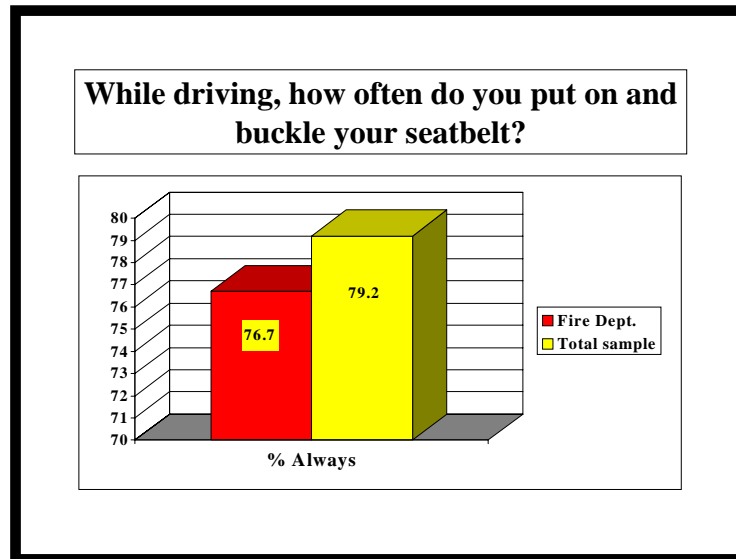
<b>How long ago was it that you last took a driving safety course? (N=42)</b>	
	Percent
1 year or less	11.9
2-3 years	52.4
4-6 years	11.9
6 years or more	21.4
Never	2.4

### **SEATBELT USAGE**

When asked about seatbelt usage, 76.7% of the employees reported that they always wear their seatbelt when driving.

<b>While driving, how often do you put on and buckle your safety belt? (N=43)</b>		
	Frequency	Percent
Always	33	76.7
Very Often	7	16.3
Often	2	4.7
Almost Never	0	0
Never	1	2.3

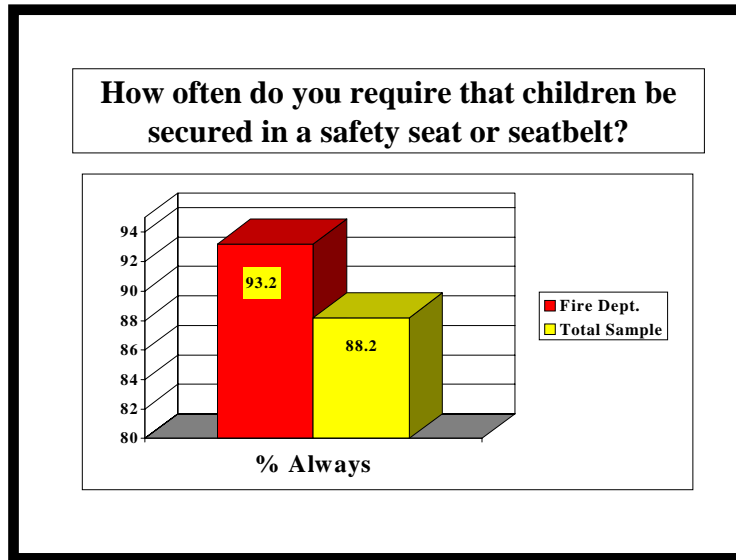
In the total sample, 79.2% reported that they always wear a seatbelt as a driver. This small difference in seatbelt use takes on greater significance when one considers that employees are ticketed more often and are involved in more crashes.



Regarding children and seatbelts, 93.2% of the employees reported that they always require that children be secured in a seat or safety belt. Of the 44 employees who answered this question, only 3 did not respond always.

<b>How often do you require that children be secured in a seat or safety belt? (N=44)</b>		
	Frequency	Percent
Always	41	93.2
Very Often	2	4.5
Often	0	0
Almost Never	0	0
Never	1	2.1

In the total sample, 88.2% of the respondents reported that they always require that children be secured. The employees are much better at securing children than county residents are as a whole.

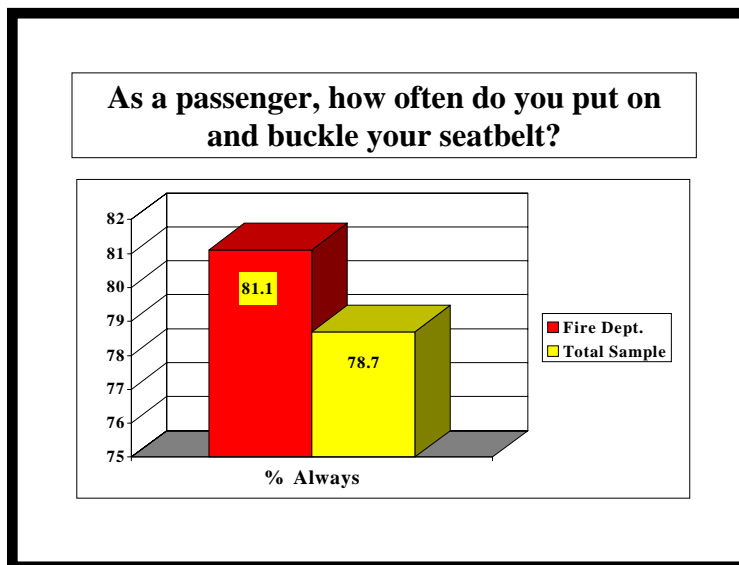


As a passenger, 81.1% of the employees reported that they always wear a seatbelt, while the remaining 18.2% responded that they very often wear a seatbelt as a passenger.

**While a passenger, how often do you put on and buckle your safety belt? (N=44)**

	Frequency	Percent
Always	36	81.8
Very Often	8	18.2
Often	0	0
Almost Never	0	0
Never	0	0

This compares to the total sample, where 78.7% reported that they always wear a seatbelt as a passenger.



## PERCEPTION OF SAFETY

Respondents were asked how safe they feel in various situations. The following table shows the results when these questions were asked of the Fire Department employees. At a gas station, the largest portion (64.4%) reported feeling somewhat safe. At a bank or ATM, 53.3% feel somewhat safe. While alone at the job site, 36.4% reported feeling very safe, and 45.5% somewhat safe. While shopping, 53.3% of the surveyed Fire Department employees feel somewhat safe and 26.7% feel very safe. As for driving in Corpus Christi, 33.3% feel somewhat unsafe, while 26.7% feel somewhat safe. While driving in Nueces County, 26.7% reported feeling somewhat unsafe. At centers of entertainment, 46.7% feel somewhat safe, while in downtown Corpus Christi 40% feel somewhat safe. Walking to their car at night, 34.1% of the surveyed employees reported feeling somewhat safe, while 25% reported feeling somewhat unsafe. Alone in their neighborhoods at night, 55.6% reported feeling somewhat safe, while 31.1% reported feeling very safe.

<b>How safe do you feel...</b>					
	<b>Very Safe</b>	<b>Somewhat Safe</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Somewhat Unsafe</b>	<b>Very Unsafe</b>
Alone, at local gas station (N=45)	20%	64.4%	6.7%	6.7 %	2.2%
Alone, at local bank or ATM (N=45)	15.6%	53.3%	8.9%	20.0%	2.2%
Alone at job site (N=44)	36.4%	45.5%	13.6%	0%	4.5%
Alone in community, shopping (N=45)	26.7%	53.3%	8.9%	6.7%	4.4%
Driving in Corpus Christi (N=45)	13.3%	26.7%	20.0%	33.3%	6.7%
Driving in Nueces County (N=45)	15.6%	17.8%	31.1%	26.7%	8.9%
At centers of entertainment (N=45)	15.6%	46.7%	17.8%	11.1%	8.9%
In downtown Corpus Christi (N=45)	8.9%	40.0%	20.0%	20.0%	11.1%
Walking to car at night (N=44)	11.4%	34.1%	22.7%	25.0%	6.8%
Alone in neighborhood, at night (N=45)	31.1%	55.6%	6.7%	4.4%	2.2%

Looking at the means for this set of questions, the situations where respondents feel the safest are alone at the job site (mean = 4.09) and in their neighborhoods at night (4.09), while overall they feel least safe driving in Corpus Christi (3.07) and also driving in Nueces County (3.04).

In the total sample of respondents, the highest perception of safety was also at one's job site, while the lowest was walking to one's car at night. Comparing the means for the Fire Department to the total sample of respondents, a number of other differences can be seen. Most significant of these differences, is that Fire Department employees reported a substantially higher perception of safety alone in their neighborhoods at night (mean for Fire Department=4.09, and for the total sample=3.58). They also reported feeling safer walking to their cars at night (3.18 compared to 2.84), but less safe driving in Nueces County (3.04 compared to 3.31).

<b>How safe do you feel...MEANS</b>		
	Fire Dept.	Total Sample
Alone, at local gas station	3.93	3.78
Alone, at local bank or ATM	3.60	3.52
Alone, at job site	4.09	3.93
Alone, in community, shopping	3.91	3.80
Driving in Corpus Christi	3.07	3.24
Driving in Nueces County*	3.04	3.31
At centers of entertainment	3.49	3.49
In downtown Corpus Christi	3.16	3.06
Walking to car at night*	3.18	2.84
Alone, in neighborhood at night*	4.09	3.58

## **PERCEPTION OF CHILDREN'S SAFETY**

A number of questions were asked regarding perception of children's safety. Of those respondents with children, 56% reported that they never allow their children to go door to door alone, while 24% responded not very often, 8% often and 12% very often. When asked how often they allow their children to play alone in the neighborhood, 45.7% responded never, 29.2% not very often, 16.7% often and 8.3% very often. The total sample's responses for these two questions were very similar to that of the Fire Department employees, with the exception being that only 3% of the total sample reported that they very often allow their children to go door to door (compared to 12% for the Fire Department employees).

<b>How often do you / would you let your children (under the age of 12)...</b>				
	Very Often	Often	Not Very Often	Never
Go door to door alone in neighborhood (N=25)	12.0%	8.0%	24.0%	56.0%
Play in neighborhood alone (N=24)	8.3%	16.7%	29.2%	45.8%

The following table shows the results of when respondents were asked about concern for children's safety in various situations. The means indicate that the employees were most concerned with children wandering off unsupervised (mean =

3.97), drowning accidents (3.95), and crossing the street (3.95). The total sample of 1,108 respondents also rated wandering off unsupervised as their highest concern. Means for this set of questions ranged from 3.72 to 3.97, indicating little variation among the level of concern for the different situations.

<b>On a scale of one to five, how would you rank your concern for child safety (all children) in regards to:</b>						
	<b>Most Concerned</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Least Concerned</b>	<b>MEAN</b>
Drowning accident (N=39)	48.7%	15.4%	20.5%	12.8%	2.6%	3.95
Wandering off unsupervised (N=39)	46.2%	23.1%	15.4%	12.8%	2.6%	3.97
Kidnapping (N=39)	38.5%	25.6%	23.1%	7.7%	5.1%	3.85
Riding as a passenger in a car (N=39)	28.2%	28.2%	35.9%	2.6%	5.1%	3.72
Riding a bicycle on your street (N=39)	33.3%	23.1%	30.8%	7.7%	5.1%	3.72
Crossing the street (N=38)	42.1%	23.7%	26.3%	2.6%	5.3%	3.95

Looking at the means for the following set of questions, the perceived safest of the seven locations is churches (mean = 4.05). Parents rated the least safe place as malls (2.64), followed by parks (2.85) and shopping centers (2.87). In the total sample, respondents also perceived churches as the safest place, and they rated parks and malls as the least safe. Two large differences exist between the Fire Department and total sample for this set of questions. Fire Department employees felt their children were less safe at malls than the total sample (2.64 compared to 2.99 for the total sample), and also felt that their children were less safe at schools (3.18 compared to 3.47 for the total sample).

<b>How would you rank the safety of your children in the following public places?</b>						
	<b>Most safe</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Least safe</b>	<b>MEAN</b>
Malls (N=39)	7.7%	10.3%	38.5%	25.6%	17.9%	2.64*
Parks (N=39)	10.3%	7.7%	51.3%	17.9%	12.8%	2.85
Grocery store (N=39)	15.4%	23.1%	46.2%	12.8%	2.6%	3.36
Shopping centers (N=39)	7.7%	15.4%	41.0%	28.2%	7.7%	2.87
Movie theaters (N=38)	13.2%	15.8%	42.1%	23.7%	5.3%	3.08
Church (N=39)	43.6%	30.8%	17.9%	2.6%	5.1%	4.05
Schools (N=39).	7.7%	35.9%	33.3%	12.8%	10.3%	3.18*

## **PERCEIVED RISK OF INJURY OR DEATH**

While driving in Nueces County, Fire Department employees indicated that they perceive the greatest risk of injury or death from intoxicated drivers (mean = 4.37). For

this set of questions, respondents were asked to choose from a five-point scale, where 5 indicated the greatest risk and 1 the least risk. Next to DWI, employees rated inattentive drivers and drivers running traffic lights as the next riskiest (means for both = 4.19). They rated improper lane changes as the least risky (mean = 3.44). The total sample also rated DWI as the greatest risk. Next to DWI, the total sample rated speeding as the next riskiest behavior.

<b>While driving in Nueces County, how do you rate your risk of injury or death from the following? Motor vehicle crashes resulting from...(N=43)</b>	
	Means
Wet roads	3.67
Speeding	4.02
Running traffic lights / signs	4.19
Unsafe aggressive driving	4.00
Inattentive drivers	4.19
Improper lane changes	3.44
DWI	4.37

When asked to rate risk of injury from five causes, respondents rated motor vehicle crashes as the riskiest (mean = 3.84) and home accidents as the least risky (2.35). The total sample also rated crashes as the highest risk of injury or death, but recreational accidents as the least risky.

<b>In Nueces County, how do you rate your risk of injury or death from the following? (N=43)</b>	
	Means
Home accidents	2.35
Violent crime	3.14
Motor vehicle crashes	3.84
Accident at work	3.40
Recreational activities	2.53

Within this sample, 64.3% rated motor vehicle crashes as the one greatest risk of injury or death. An accident at work was chosen by 23.8% of the employees as the greatest risk, while 4.8% selected home accidents, 4.8% violent crime, and 2.4% recreational activities. A majority of the total sample of respondents (69.6%) rated crashes as the highest risk.

When asked which age group they believe creates the greatest risk of injury or death, 46.5% replied the 16-18 year old age group, while 25.6% replied the 19-25 age group, 14% replied the 26-55 age group, and 14% replied that the 66 and older age group creates the greatest risk. When the total sample was asked which age group they believe creates the greatest risk for motor vehicle crashes, the largest percentage (39.6%) responded 16-18 year olds.

## DRIVER WORRY

Four questions were asked concerning driver worry. When driving, 44.4% of the respondents reported that they are somewhat worried about being injured by someone speeding, while 31.1% are worried very much. Half of the employees (50%) indicated that they worry very much about being injured by someone running a red light, while 36.4% indicated that they worry somewhat in this situation. Of the Fire Department employees, 60% reported that they worry somewhat about being injured by someone driving while intoxicated, and 35.6% indicated that they worry very much in this situation. Being injured by someone doing other things while driving, very much worries 48.9% of the employees, and somewhat worries 35.6% of the employees

<b>While driving a car, how much do you worry about being injured by someone...</b>					
	Very much	Somewhat	Neutral	Not much	Not at all
Speeding (N=45)	31.1%	44.4%	8.9%	15.6%	0%
Running a red light (N=44)	50.0%	36.4%	11.4%	2.3%	0%
Driving while intoxicated / drunk (N=45)	35.6%	60.0%	4.4%	0%	0%
Doing other things (eating, reading, putting on makeup, etc.) (N=45)	48.9%	35.6%	13.3%	2.2%	0%

Looking at the means for this set of questions, the highest amount of worry is associated with other drivers running red lights (mean = 4.34), while the least amount of worry is associated with other drivers speeding (3.91). While the total sample also found the least amount of worry associated with other drivers speeding, they worried the most about intoxicated drivers.

<b>While driving a car how much do you worry about being injured by someone...MEANS</b>	
Speeding	3.91
Running a red light	4.34
Driving while intoxicated / drunk	4.31
Doing other things	4.31

## DRIVER BEHAVIOR

Of the surveyed Fire Department employees, 62.2% indicated that everyday they see someone tailgating, while 44.4% see swerving everyday, 73.3% see unsafe lane changes, 64.4% see other drivers disobeying lights or signs, and 71.1% see aggressive driving each day.

For the total sample, everyday 51.8% see tailgating, 31.5% see swerving, 49.4% see unsafe lane changes, 44.4% see someone disobeying lights or signs, and 54.3% of the

total respondents see aggressive driving. Thus, the employees report these poor driving behaviors more frequently than in the total sample.

<b>How often do you see someone driving in the following ways? (N=45)</b>					
	Everyday	Almost everyday	A few times a week	Less than once a week	Never
Tailgating	62.2%	22.2%	11.1%	4.4%	0%
Swerving	44.4%	20.0%	26.7%	8.9%	0%
Making unsafe lane changes	73.3%	13.3%	8.9%	4.4%	0%
Disobeying lights or signs	64.4%	15.6%	17.8%	2.2%	0%
Driving aggressive	71.1%	20.0%	6.7%	2.2%	0%

The means for this set of questions indicate that, most often employees see aggressive driving (mean = 4.6) and least often they see swerving (4.0). The findings from the total sample also found aggressive driving as the most common behavior and swerving as least common.

<b>How often do you see someone driving in the following ways? MEANS</b>	
Tailgating	4.42
Swerving	4.00
Making unsafe lane changes	4.56
Disobeying lights or signs	4.42
Driving aggressive	4.60

Looking at the employees' own driving behavior, 51.1% indicated that they never tailgate, 62.2% never swerve, 47.7% never make unsafe lane changes, 50% never disobey lights or signs, and 40% reported that they never drive aggressively. Of the other respondents, 17.7% reported that they tailgate a few times a week or more often and 11.1% reported that they swerve a few times a week or more often. While 13.6% reported that they make unsafe lane changes at least a few times a week, 6.8% reported that they disobey lights or signs at least a few times a week and 33.4% reported that they drive aggressively a few times a week or more often.

<b>How often do you drive in the following ways?</b>					
	Everyday	Almost everyday	A few times a week	Less than once a week	Never
Tailgating (N=45)	4.4%	4.4%	8.9%	31.1%	51.1%
Swerving (N=45)	4.4%	0%	6.7%	26.7%	62.2%
Making unsafe lane changes (N=44)	4.5%	0%	9.1%	38.6%	47.7%
Disobeying lights/signs (N=44)	4.5%	2.3%	0%	43.2%	50.0%
Driving aggressively (N=45)	6.7%	6.7%	20.0%	26.7%	40.0%

In the total sample, 53.7% reported that they never tailgate, 64.5% never swerve, 51.6% never make unsafe lane changes, 65.3% never disobey lights or signs and 53.3% reported that they never drive aggressively. More employees reported engaging in each of these risky behaviors than did other county residents.

Looking at the means for this set of questions, most often drivers drive aggressively (mean = 2.13), and least often they swerve (1.58). In the total sample, the respondents also indicated that most often they drive aggressively.

<b>How often do you drive in the following ways?</b>	
<b>MEANS</b>	
Tailgating	1.80
Swerving	1.58
Making unsafe lane changes	1.75
Disobeying lights or signs	1.68
Driving aggressive	2.13

While 48.9% reported that they never get mad and retaliate against bad drivers, 44.4% reported that they almost never retaliate, and 6.6% reported that they always or often retaliate. Of the respondents, 59.1% reported that they almost never get impatient at traffic lights, and 11.4% reported that they never get impatient in this situation. The remaining 29.5% reported that they often, very often or always get impatient at lights. When a car ahead of them slows down, 48.8% of the surveyed employees reported that they often get impatient, while 30.2% reported that they almost never get impatient in this situation and 11.6% reported that they never get impatient behind slow drivers. The remaining 9.3% of the Fire Department employees reported that they always or very often get impatient behind slow drivers. Over half (55.8%) of the employees reported that they never yell or gesture at other drivers, while 34.9% reported almost never. The remaining 9.4% reported that they always or often yell or gesture.

Looking at the total sample, 48.3% reported that they never retaliate, 18.8% never get impatient at lights, 13% never get impatient when a car ahead slows, and 54.3% never yell or gesture at other drivers.

<b>How often do you...</b>					
	Always	Very Often	Often	Almost Never	Never
Get mad and retaliate against “bad drivers” (N=45)	2.2%	0%	4.4%	44.4%	48.9%
Get impatient at traffic lights (N=44)	4.5%	2.3%	22.7%	59.1%	11.4%
Get impatient when a car ahead slows down (N=43)	2.3%	7.0%	48.8%	30.2%	11.6%
Yell or gesture at other drivers (N=43)	4.7%	0%	4.7%	34.9%	55.8%

The means for this set of questions show that getting impatient at slow drivers and at lights are the most common of the four behaviors (means = 2.58 and 2.3 respectively). For the total sample, the means indicate that impatience when a car ahead slows down is most common.

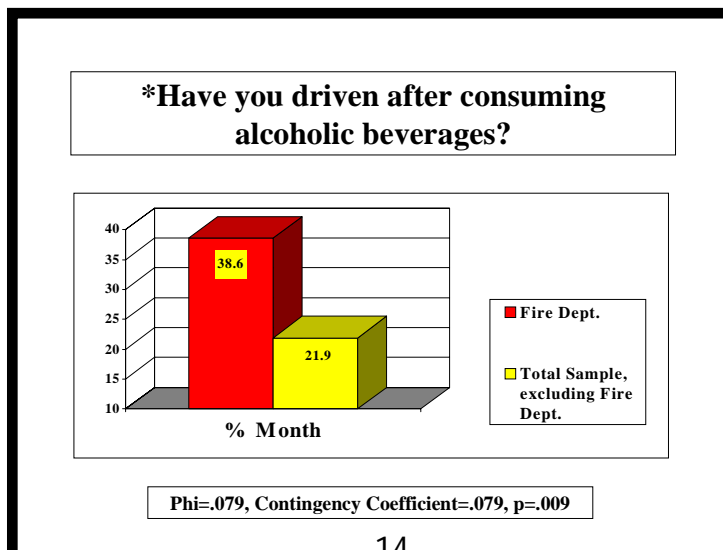
<b>How often do you...MEANS</b>	
Get mad and retaliate	1.62
Get impatient at lights	2.30
Get impatient when car ahead slows	2.58
Yell or gesture at other drivers	1.63

In the past month, 88.6% of the Fire Department employees reported that they had driven above the speed limit, while 36.4% had driven through a traffic signal after it turned red, 38.6% had driven after consuming alcohol, and none of the employees had driven after taking mind-altering drugs.

<b>Have you driven...in the past month (N=44)</b>	
	<b>YES</b>
Above the posted speed limit	88.6%
Through a traffic signal after it turned red	36.4%
After consuming alcoholic beverages	38.6%
After taking drugs (other than alcohol)	0%

For the whole sample (1,108), 73.7% reported that they had driven above the speed limit in the last month, 35.5% had driven through a red signal, 22.6% had driven after consuming alcohol, and 4.5% had driven after taking drugs in the past month. The employees report serious problems of poor driving behavior with higher levels of speeding, running red lights, and driving after alcohol consumption than the total sample.

The following table shows the significant difference between Fire Department employees and the other survey respondents, when asked about driving after consuming alcohol. While 21.9% of the total sample (excluding the Fire Department employees) reported engaging in this risky behavior, 38.6% of the Fire Department employees reported driving after consuming alcohol, within the past month (Phi=.079, Contingency Coefficient=.079, p=.009).



In the past week, 76.2% of the employees admitted that they had driven above the speed limit, 11.9% had driven through a red signal and 11.9% had driven after consuming alcohol. This compares to the total sample, where in the past week, 62% had driven above the speed limit, 15.1% had driven through a red light, 9.3% had driven after consuming alcohol, and 3.6% had driven after taking drugs.

<b>Have you driven...in the past week</b>	
	<b>YES</b>
Above the posted speed limit (N=42)	76.2%
Through a traffic signal after it turned red (N=42)	11.9%
After consuming alcoholic beverages (N=42)	11.9%
After taking drugs (other than alcohol) (N=43)	0%

## **PERCEIVED CAUSES OF MOTOR VEHICLE CRASHES**

Respondents were asked how likely nine driving behaviors are as causes of motor vehicle crashes involving injuries or death. Of the surveyed employees, 78.6% indicated that becoming sleepy or tired while driving is very likely to cause a motor vehicle crash, while 21.4% thought sleepiness is somewhat likely to cause a crash. Of the respondents, 64.3% reported that getting angry at other drivers is very or somewhat likely to cause crashes involving injury or death. Concerning tailgating or following too closely to other drivers, 83.4% responded that it is very or somewhat likely to cause a crash.

<b>How likely is it for the following behaviors to cause a motor vehicle crash with injuries or death? (N=42)</b>					
	<b>Very Likely</b>	<b>Somewhat likely</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Not very likely</b>	<b>Not at all likely</b>
Becoming sleepy or tired	78.6%	21.4%	0%	0%	0%
Getting angry at other drivers	14.3%	50.0%	23.8%	9.5%	2.4%
Tailgating / following too closely	40.5%	42.9%	14.3%	2.4%	0%
Arguing with passengers	28.6%	40.5%	19.0%	9.5%	2.4%
Making an improper turn	26.2%	47.6%	11.9%	14.3%	0%
Passing in a no passing zone	45.2%	35.7%	14.3%	4.8%	0%
Disregarding stop sign / traffic light	71.4%	28.6%	0%	0%	0%
Speeding	26.2%	45.2%	21.4%	7.1%	0%
Failing to yield right of way to other vehicle	47.6%	45.2%	4.8%	0%	2.4%

Of the respondents, 69.1% feel that arguing with passengers is very or somewhat likely to cause a crash, while 73.8% feel that making an improper turn is very or somewhat likely to cause a crash, and 80.9% feel that passing in a no passing zone is very or somewhat likely to cause a motor vehicle crash involving injury or death. A large portion of the respondents (71.4%) reported that disregarding a stop sign or traffic light is very likely to cause a motor vehicle crash. Another 28.6% reported that disregarding a stop sign or red light is somewhat likely to cause a crash. Of the respondents, 71.4% reported that speeding is very or somewhat likely to cause a crash, and 92.8% reported that failing to yield right of way to another vehicle is somewhat or very likely to cause a crash.

Looking specifically at the means for this set of questions, the driving behavior that is perceived to most likely cause a motor vehicle crash is becoming sleepy or tired (mean = 4.79), followed by disregarding a stop sign or traffic light (4.71). For the total sample, becoming sleepy or tired was rated highest, and disregarding a stop sign or light was the second highest.

<b>How likely is it for the following behaviors to cause a motor vehicle crash with injuries or death? MEANS</b>	
Becoming sleepy or tired	4.79
Getting angry at other drivers	3.64
Tailgating or following too closely	4.21
Arguing with passengers in your car	3.83
Making an improper turn	3.86
Passing in a no passing zone	4.21
Disregarding a stop sign / traffic light	4.71
Speeding	3.90
Failing to yield right of way to other vehicle	4.36

Respondents were asked how important a number of environmental issues are as causes of motor vehicle crashes. Increased rush hour traffic is perceived to be very important as a cause of motor vehicle crashes by 47.6% of the surveyed employees. Intersection design problems are perceived to be very important by 43.9% of the respondents, while holes or ruts in the pavement are considered very important by 19% of the sample. When an animal is on the roadway, 11.9% of the employees indicate that this is very important as a cause of crashes. Of the respondents, 16.7% indicated that an object in the roadway is a very important environmental issue, while 56.1% indicated that a slippery, wet roadway is a very important issue. An automobile defect was considered a very important issue by 16.7% of the employees, and 14.3% indicated that roadway construction is a very important issue.

<b>How important are the following environmental issues as causes of motor vehicle crashes with injury or death?</b>					
	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Neutral	Not Very Important	Not at all Important
Increased Rush hour traffic (N=42)	47.6%	45.2%	7.1%	0%	0%
Intersection design problems (N=41)	43.9%	22.0%	17.1%	17.1%	0%
Holes or ruts in pavement (N=42)	19.0%	31.0%	26.2%	19.0%	4.8%
Animal on roadway (N=42)	11.9%	40.5%	31.0%	11.9%	4.8%
Object on roadway (N=42)	16.7%	47.6%	26.2%	9.5%	0%
Slippery, wet roadway (N=41)	56.1%	34.1%	7.3%	0%	2.4%
Automobile defect (N=42)	16.7%	38.1%	23.8%	19.0%	2.4%
Roadway construction (N=42)	14.3%	45.2%	21.4%	16.7%	2.4%

The means on this set of questions indicate that employees reported wet roadways as the most important environmental issue (mean = 4.41). The total sample rated rush hour traffic as the most important issue.

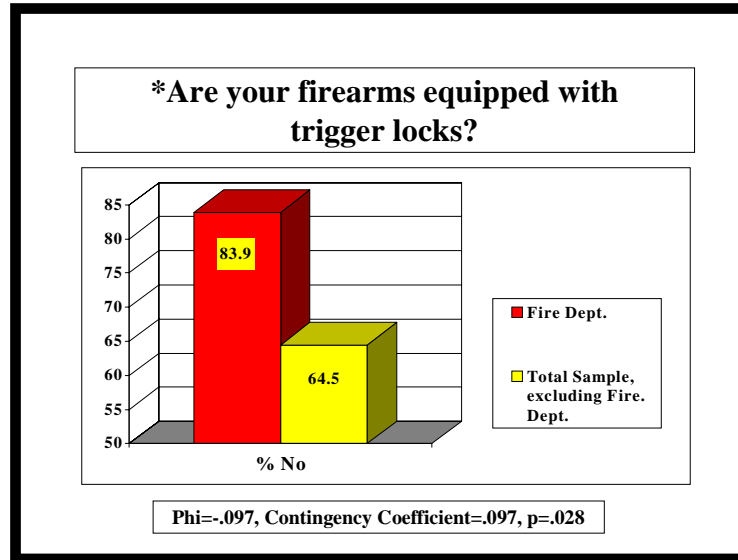
<b>How important are the following environmental issues as causes of motor vehicle crashes with injury or death? MEANS</b>	
Increased rush hour traffic in Nueces County	4.40
Intersection design problems	3.93
Holes or ruts in pavement	3.40
Animal on roadway	3.43
Object on roadway	3.71
Slippery, wet roadway	4.41
Automobile defect	3.48
Roadway construction	3.52

## **FIREARM OWNERSHIP AND STORAGE**

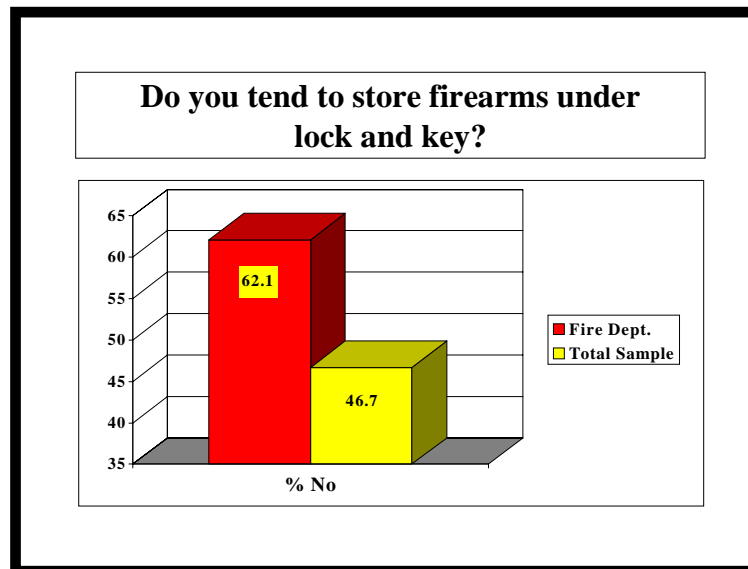
When employees were asked if they own a firearm, 69.8% replied yes. Of these, 73.3% (22) own a hand gun, 70% (21) own a rifle, and 70% (21) own a shotgun. When asked if their firearms are equipped with trigger locks, 83.9% replied no, and 62.1% replied that they do not store their firearms under lock and key.

For the total sample, 42.8% of the respondents own firearms. The majority of these (81.5%) own at least one handgun, while 56.8% own a shotgun, and 54.8% own a rifle. When asked if their firearms are equipped with trigger locks, 65.7% responded no, while 46.7% indicated that their firearms are not stored under lock and key.

As seen in the following chart, the difference between the responses of Fire Department employees and that of the other surveyed respondents is statistically significant. While 64.5% of the total sample of respondents (excluding Fire Department employees) reported that they do not have trigger locks on their firearms, a much greater percentage (83.9%) of the Fire Department employees reported that they do not have trigger locks (Phi=-.097, Contingency Coefficient=.097, p=.028).



The following chart shows the difference between the Fire Department employees and the total sample's responses on whether they store their firearms under lock and key. As can be seen in the chart, a smaller percentage of Fire Department employees reported storing their firearms under lock and key. Both of these charts illustrate that Fire Department employees are far less safe in the storage of their own firearms, compared to the total sample of respondents.



## BICYCLE SAFETY

When asked how often they ride a bicycle, 27.5% of the employees responded never, 35% replied almost never, 20% often and 17.5% very often. When asked about helmet use, 58.1% of those who ride bicycles responded that they never wear helmets, while 12.9% replied almost never, 3.2% often, 3.2% very often, and 22.6% always. Of the respondents, 62.2% were correct in answering that wearing a helmet reduces the probability of head injury by 70%. When asked which set of laws bicycle riders in Texas must adhere to, 89.7% were correct in answering motor vehicle laws.

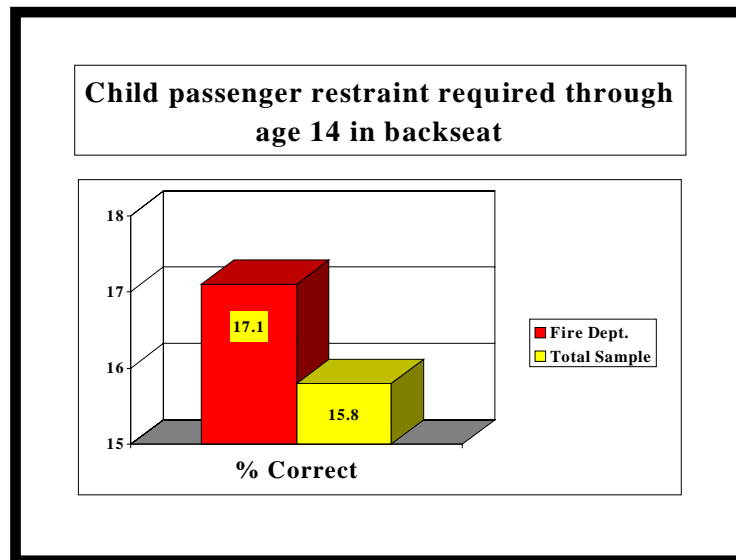
For the total sample, 57.1% of the bicycle riders never wear a helmet, while 20.6% always wear a helmet. In regards to the knowledge questions, 58.4% were correct in answering that helmets reduce the chance of injury by 70%, and 73.3% were correct in that bicycle riders must adhere to motor vehicle safety laws.

The results show significant failure of the employees to take the most basic safety step of wearing a helmet when riding a bicycle.

## SAFETY KNOWLEDGE

When asked what the legal limit for alcohol concentration in the blood is while driving in Texas, 77.3% were correct in answering .08. Respondents were also asked how chemicals, medicines, and cleansers should be stored in homes with children. For the Fire Department, 65.9% were correct in answering in a locked cabinet. Respondents were asked what age Texas law requires that child passengers be restrained up to. Of the Fire Department employees, 17.1% were correct in responding age 14.

For the total sample, 60.6% gave the correct BAC, and 75.2% gave the correct response for chemical storage. When asked about child passengers in the back seat, 15.8% were correct in answering 14 years of age. Employees were more correct in answering questions relating to motor vehicle laws than the total sample. However, a significant majority does not know that children in the back seat must be restrained, as seen in the following chart.



The Safe Communities Project staff and the Safe Communities Coalition hope that the information provided in this report is helpful to you. The information in the report may provide you with ways to improve the safety knowledge and behavior of your employees. Hopefully, with your assistance, Nueces County and Corpus Christi can become safer places to live.

You may want to share this information with your safety coordinator, training staff, or others. Please, feel free to duplicate this report as you choose.