SAFETY CANADA

THE MEMBER NEWSLETTER OF THE CANADA SAFETY COUNCIL

OCTOBER 2025 VOL. LXIX NO. 4



THANKSGIVING ROAD TRIP SAFETY

As Canadians gear up for Thanksgiving journeys, visiting family and chasing fall foliage, road safety becomes an especially pressing concern. More vehicles on the road, seasonal weather concerns and longer hours behind the wheel all combine to create conditions for preventable crashes.

At CSC, we believe preparation and awareness can make the difference between a safe holiday and a tragic headline. Read on for tips on how to keep yourself, your passengers, and your fellow road users safe.

- **Plan realistic driving windows.** You don't need to do the whole trip in one fell swoop. Break it up into manageable segments, working rest and recovery into the trajectory.
- **Avoid fatigue.** This point goes hand-in-hand with the previous one; driver fatigue contributes to approximately one-in-five collisions in Canada every year. Rest and ensure you're alert before resuming the drive.

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PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE: TIME FOR TIGHTER REGULATIONS ON E-BIKES

Electric bicycles, or e-bikes, are no longer a novelty on Canadian roads. They've become a common sight in our cities and towns, offering commuters an efficient, affordable, and environmentally friendly way to get around.

But with this rise in popularity comes an urgent question: are our regulations keeping pace with the growth of e-bike use?



According to the Traffic Injury Research Foundation's Micromobility in Canada report, the answer is no.

Until 2020, e-bikes were federally defined as power-assisted bicycles, capped at 500 watts and 32 km/h. When Transport Canada repealed those rules in 2021, responsibility shifted to provinces and municipalities. The result has been a confusing patchwork: some provinces require helmets and set minimum rider ages, others impose few restrictions, and cities often add their own bylaws.

This inconsistency creates real safety risks when riders—and drivers—don't know what to expect on shared roads. Enforcement adds another layer of difficulty. Many e-bikes can be modified to exceed speed limits, and imported models often skirt safety standards.

Data collection is limited, as e-bike collisions are often lumped in with bicycles. What we do know is troubling: Canadian hospital data recorded nearly 400 e-bike injury cases between 2011 and 2022, with numbers rising each year.

It is worth mentioning that this only counts injuries severe enough to merit hospital treatment — this number does not capture the full extent of the impact due in part to injuries that go unreported.

Injuries are often linked to excessive speed, running red lights, or riding against traffic. The risks resemble those of traditional bicycles but are magnified by higher speeds and motorized power.

E-bikes have an important role to play in Canada's mobility future. They reduce congestion, cut emissions, and give people more choice in how they move. But without consistent, enforceable rules, the risks will continue to grow.

What's needed is a clear national framework that applies across the country. That means:

- **Clear categories** for e-bikes, so riders know what's legal and what isn't.
- **Basic safety rules**: age limits, helmet use, speed limits. These need to apply everywhere.
- **Stronger oversight** of imports and modifications, to keep unsafe or overpowered bikes off the roads.
- **Better data collection**, so we can track collisions and design smarter policies.
- Battery standards, given the growing risk of fires from poorly made lithium-ion models.

When federal, provincial and municipal levels are working together, Canada can create a system that protects riders without stifling innovation. E-bikes can and should help us move toward a greener, more efficient future, but only if safety is made a shared priority.

Make Safety a Priority!



Gareth Jones
President and CEO



Thanksgiving Road Trip Safety (Continued from page 1)

- **Drive at appropriate speeds.** It can be tempting to increase speeds in the hopes of arriving to destination more quickly, but remember: the speed limit is a maximum under ideal road conditions. When weather or visibility concerns arise, adjust speeds accordingly.
- **Load smart.** Ensure that all loose objects are properly secured, are not obstructing your view, and are not at risk of moving around unexpectedly. This can affect the vehicle's handling as well as provide an unexpected hazard in the wrong circumstances.
- **Do a pre-trip inspection.** Look closely for seasonal considerations, including windshield washer fluid levels, tire tread, brakes, and the presence of your spare tire. Frost and rain can suddenly join the road trip, posing additional hazards that are best mitigated through prevention rather than reactivity.

Thanksgiving is a time for giving thanks and sharing meals, not grieving the loss of a loved one. Follow the tips provided to ensure that you're doing your part to keep our roads safe.

When multiplied across thousands of drivers, it means fewer tragedies and more families arriving safely home.

CSC Awarded Funding for Specialty Training

On September 22, 2025, the Government of Ontario announced recipients for its Skills Development Fund (SDF) Training Stream.

The Canada Safety Council was awarded $1 million for use in delivering interactive, scenario-based training for drivers of four types of speciality vehicles, critical to the health care and construction sectors.

We will once again be collaborating with Canadian training technology leader Bluedrop ISM in this project's delivery. Our friends at Bluedrop have been terrific partners and we're excited to keep moving ahead together!

The project, titled Specialty Vehicle Operation (SVO) Ready, will offer safety training for specialty vehicle professionals, including winter service drivers, paramedics, school bus drivers and motorcyclists.

"By investing in skills and safety, Ontario is investing in people," said Gareth Jones, President & CEO of the Canada Safety Council. "We are proud to partner in expanding and advancing safety education, working together to continue building a culture of protection, confidence, and lasting impact in safety training."

More details will be made available through this and other CSC channels, so be sure to stay tuned for all the latest information. In the meantime, you can trust that we are doing our part to ensure the high-quality, well-researched training programs that you have rightfully come to expect of us!



VEHICLE & ROAD SAFETY

SPEED CAMERAS AND CHANGING BEHAVIOURS

Speed safety cameras, on the surface, seek to address one of Canada's most pressing road safety issues: Transport Canada identifies a total of 1,768 collisions in 2023, of which speed was a contributing factor to 24.8 per cent or approximately 420 of these. At higher speeds, collisions happen more frequently and with greater impact.

How do they work?
Cameras are effective tools in helping reduce speeds on roadways, particularly in areas where extra caution should be exercised including school zones, playgrounds and hospital zones. These cameras automate the enforcement of speed limits, capturing a photo of the licence plate and issuing a fine to the owner of the vehicle via mail and freeing police resources to address more urgent matters.

How many are there?
As of 2023, research from the Traffic Injury Research Foundation identified 494 speed safety cameras across 13 municipal and provincial jurisdictions in Canada. All 13 jurisdictions examined installed these cameras based on a variety of factors including existing speed data, traffic volume and collision frequency.

What is the impact?
Studies are clear: speed cameras have a proven track record of reducing speeds. Research studies including Hitchens (1994) in the United Kingdom, Li et al. (2020) on behalf of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in the United States and Hu and McCartt (2016) on behalf of the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety in the U.S. all reported findings supporting speed safety camera effectiveness.

They have been linked to a reduction in collisions, injuries and fatalities. Evidence demonstrates that, even in the event of a collision, the impacts are lessened when a speed safety camera is present and clearly signed to allow driver the opportunity to react.

Criticism
Speed cameras are often the target of criticism, with the most common argument being that the cameras are used to unfairly ticket minor infractions and can be seen to shift the priority from safety to revenue.

The Canada Safety Council disagrees with this argument. An infraction is an infraction. Speed safety cameras are not targeting drivers going one kilometre over the speed limit and, while there is a threshold at which the cameras will trigger, these vary from municipality to municipality and are often not advertised.

The solution: stay within the speed limit and there'll be no fine coming your way.



For many children, Hallowe'en is the highlight of the fall season: costumes, door-to-door adventures, and of course, bags of candy.

For parents and caregivers, the excitement is balanced with a need for caution. A few simple steps can make sure the evening's fun doesn't come with hidden risks.

Check Before They Chew
After trick-or-treating, go through all collected candy before it's eaten. Look for:

- Torn or punctured wrappers
- Unusual appearance, discolouration, or unsealed packaging
- Homemade items from unfamiliar sources

When in doubt, throw it out. This long-standing advice remains the gold standard.

Watch Out for Allergies

With food allergies on the rise, candy exchanges are common among kids. Remind children to avoid sharing if they have dietary restrictions, and keep epinephrine auto-injectors close at hand if required.

Avoid Overindulgence
While the occasional sugar binge is part of Hallowe'en tradition, moderation matters. Too much candy can cause stomach upset, sleeplessness, and tooth decay. Setting a limit, such as a few pieces each evening, helps children enjoy their haul without overdoing it.

Keep an Eye on Age-Appropriate Treats
Hard candies, small toys, or gum can be choking hazards for younger children. Separate those items from their stash before the excitement makes them forget.

Safety Beyond the Candy
Remind youth to:

- Carry flashlights or glow sticks while trick-or-treating
- Stay in familiar neighbourhoods and travel in groups
- Cross streets at corners and obey signals

These simple precautions can help prevent collisions on a night when pedestrian injuries typically spike.

A quick inspection of candy, sensible limits, and allergy awareness can keep the night safe while still leaving plenty of room for treats. By staying alert, parents and caregivers can ensure children enjoy the treats of Hallowe'en without any unwanted tricks hidden in their bags.

YOUTH SAFETY TRAINING

Safety training for our youth remains important in building their confidence and life skills. We offer programs for youth to build their skills, including Babysitter training, Home Alone training, and more!

Contact us at csc@safety-council.org for more information.

SAFETY CANADA



As autumn deepens and winter edges closer, slippery sidewalks, wet leaves, early frosts, and darker evenings all combine to make slips, trips, and falls more likely.

These incidents aren't minor — falls are a leading cause of injury among Canadians. The good news is that with a few simple steps, we can all reduce the risks.

Outdoor Hazards
Wet leaves can be as slick as ice. Clear walkways regularly, especially near entrances, steps, and driveways. As temperatures dip, frost may form overnight on stairs, porches, and sidewalks. Use salt or sand to improve traction, and ensure railings are sturdy and well-maintained. Good exterior lighting can also help reveal uneven surfaces before they become a hazard.

Indoor Considerations
Autumn weather means more moisture tracked indoors. Place mats at all entrances to absorb water and mud, and keep floors dry and free of clutter. Pay extra attention to stairwells: ensure they are decluttered and well lit, with secure handrails.

Personal Preparedness
Footwear matters. Choose shoes or boots with slip-resistant soles, especially when walking outdoors in damp or icy conditions. Carrying less helps, too — keeping hands free allows you to react quickly if you lose your balance. Walking aids with proper tips or grips can add extra stability should it be needed.

Workplace Awareness
Employers should recognize that slip and trip hazards rise in autumn. Wet floors in entrances, poor outdoor lighting in parking areas, and debris from seasonal maintenance can all increase risk. Regular inspections and prompt cleanup are essential parts of a safe workplace.

A few minutes of prevention can save weeks — or months — of recovery.

Looking Ahead

As we approach our annual Fall campaign season, here's what you can look forward to seeing:

National School Safety Week (October 17-23**)**: This year's campaign will focus on rising rates of school-based violence in Canada. Violence in the classroom, including tantrums, biting, spitting, and striking, has seen a sevenfold rise since 2010 across Ontario, according to a study done by the University of Ottawa.

National Community Safety & Crime Prevention Month (November**)**: We'll be empowering Canadians to take simple, practical steps that deter theft, vandalism, and break-ins — especially as darker evenings and holiday travel create higher risks.

National Senior Safety Week (November 6-12**)**: As technology becomes more deeply woven into daily life, the threat of scams, frauds, and cyber schemes grows. Older adults are disproportionately targeted. We'll spotlight tactics to reduce risks.

National Home Fire Safety Week (November 24-30**)**: Working alarms and practiced escape plans are the difference between survival and tragedy. Prevention and preparedness work hand-in-hand to keep Canadians safe. We'll discuss best practices to limit home fires and ensure your personal safety in the event of a blaze.

It's going to be a busy campaign season you won't want to miss. Stay tuned!

SAFETY CANADA

HOME & COMMUNITY SAFETY

CARBON MONOXIDE AWARENESS



As temperatures drop and heating season begins, Canadians face a serious but often overlooked risk: carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning. Colourless, odourless, and tasteless, CO is impossible to detect without an alarm, yet it is a leading cause of unintentional poisoning deaths in Canada.

Why CO is So Dangerous

Carbon monoxide forms when fuels like natural gas, oil, propane, wood, or charcoal burn incompletely. Common sources include furnaces, fireplaces, wood stoves, water heaters, and vehicles left idling in attached garages. Because you can't see, smell, or taste it, CO can build up silently in enclosed spaces.

Symptoms often resemble the flu: headache, dizziness, nausea, fatigue, or confusion. If several household members suddenly feel unwell, especially in winter, CO may be to blame. On average, 300 Canadians die each year from unintentional CO poisoning. Most of these tragedies are preventable.

Prevention is Key

- Install CO alarms on every level, especially outside sleeping areas. Replace them per manufacturer instructions (usually every 7–10 years).
- Test monthly to confirm function, and replace batteries annually as needed.
- Maintain appliances: have furnaces, fireplaces, and chimneys inspected yearly by qualified technicians.
- Keep vents clear of snow and ice to prevent CO buildup.
- Never use generators, barbecues, or fuel-burning tools indoors or in attached garages. Even with doors open, CO can seep inside.
- Don't idle vehicles in garages. Always pull out before warming up.

If the Alarm Sounds

Leave immediately and call 911 or local emergency services from outside or a neighbour's home. Do not re-enter until professionals say it is safe.

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