



WorldSafe™ Top 20 List 2009 Health & Safety Objectives

Editor's note: the content of this text was duly researched by the staff of the Safe America Foundation for presentation during the *2007 Congressional Health and Safety Briefing* held 25 October, 2007

1. Intelligent Transportation System:

America is only starting to hear about the Intelligent Transportation System-Smart vehicles that will actually help prevent crashes and resulting tragedies. Safe America is partnering with Motorola, world-wide technology leader, to raise awareness about this amazing new technology frontier.

According to “Urban Mobility Report” recently published by the Texas Transportation Institute, in the average peak period, travelers in 2005 spent 38 hours and wasted an extra 26 gallons of fuel waiting in traffic, costing \$710 per person.

In the larger context of the U.S. economy, this translates to a loss of

- \$78 billion
- 4.2 billion hours, and
- 2.9 billion gallons of fuel.

We can combat the longer commutes, higher costs of personal trips, and higher costs of shipping and transportation through the use of Smart technologies such as the Intelligent Transportation System. The benefits of such measures can be clearly observable in reduced crashes with injuries and fatalities and improved traffic flow. Additionally, indirect benefits include reduced road construction and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

2. Bridge Inspections:

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Tragedies like the bridge collapse in Minneapolis in 2007 must never happen AGAIN! The Safe America Foundation proposes expanded inspection of bridges over 40 years old and expediting the process for repair and rebuilding. An Urban Land Institute study published in May found 83% of the nation’s transportation infrastructure system “not capable of meeting the country’s needs over the next 10 years.” The American Society of Civil Engineers rated the system as “D” in last year’s report card. One of the authors, C. Michael Walton from UT Austin, opines that, he is, “not sure transportation falls to the top of the priorities as it should barring a catastrophic failure.”

There are currently about 600,000 highway bridges in use the US transportation system, averaging a daily total of 4 billion vehicle crossings. These serve an integral part of our transportation system, enabling trade, mobility, and communication. Although the average life span of a highway bridge is around 70 years, damage resulting from nature, usage, and other sources generally necessitates bridge repair by half that time. **The bulk of bridges today were constructed after 1945, but as of 2003, the American Society of Civil Engineers deemed 160,570 bridges (27%) to be structurally deficient or functionally obsolete.**

According to the DOT, the funding backlog for bridge maintenance is \$32 billion. Currently, there is a bill before Congress by Rep. James Oberstar of Minnesota, who advocates,

“Addressing the needs of bridges on the NHS is critical to public safety, regional and national mobility and economic competitiveness. It demands a national response.”

3. Social Distancing:

Another top Safe America priority is evaluating the ability of America – and the world – to handle any pandemic flu outbreak... using Social Distancing as a mitigation strategy.

Social distancing is a method to combat the spread of influenza, reducing the impact of a pandemic and burden on the healthcare system. Since particular strains of influenza vaccines and antiviral shots may not be available at the outbreak of an influenza pandemic, social distancing may be implemented to reduce transmission. Communities can be defended by restricting travel, closing public venues, and closing businesses. A study published

From a WHO study of the 1957-1958 pandemic, a panel found that the influenza outbreak often followed public gatherings, such as conferences and festivals. This panel also observed that in many countries the pandemic broke out first in camps, army units and schools; suggesting that the avoidance of crowding may be important in reducing the peak incidence of an epidemic.

Raising awareness of pandemic preparedness through proper healthcare, hygiene and social distancing is an important element of **WorldSafe™**.

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4. Window Safety:

Glass and windows continue to be one of the safest and most dangerous elements of all buildings – providing strength and protection – but also becoming deadly projectiles. Potentially deadly shards can be mitigated by using safety film. Additionally, safety film also serves to hold cracked or shattered glass together and to prevent damage to property. Safe America will continue its collaborative work with the window film and glazing industries, educating the public about the importance of protective features in windows and glass.

5. Testing Drivers over 75:

Safe driving has always been a top priority of Safe America. Elderly drivers are involved in more crashes with injuries and fatalities than average, and the resulting injuries are more numerous and serious. Several factors can contribute to reduced driving ability: visual decline, hearing loss, limited mobility, increased reaction time, medications, drowsiness, dementia, brain impairment. Instances of car crashes with injuries and fatalities are high from ages 16-25, decreasing as drivers gain experience. From ages 25-70, crashes with injuries and fatalities rates

remain fairly steady, but from ages 70-75, the rates generally approach a comparable rate as the newly-licensed teen drivers.

Safe America is working with partners to develop a practical means of testing drivers over 75 years old to decrease auto collisions. We encourage regular driving evaluation through local DMVs, refresher driving lessons, and self-evaluation tools. Alternative modes of transportation also serve as useful tools.

6. Volunteer Screening:

It is our responsibility to further protect our youngsters by ensuring the people they come in contact with are genuine, sincere, and well-intentioned. The majority of children who are sexually abused in outside-of-home cases are the targets of serial, preferential predators. These predators generate high victim counts often by infiltrating youth-service organizations. Although these programs are not necessarily venues for committing the crimes themselves, they are grounds for selecting and grooming the victims. Trust and authority are cultivated in well-meaning organizations, and the abuse occurs elsewhere, in private.

Again, it is too often true that our youth-oriented organizations reexamine screening policies only after a tragedy has occurred. Safe America advocates a proactive approach through the *WeScreen* Program with ChoicePoint to more non-profits whose mission it is to care for our youngest citizens. Safe America aims to raise the percentage of non-profits and churches screening volunteers to 100% within five years.

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7. Drivers' Ed Requirement:

According to a recent CDC report, in 2004, 4,767 teenagers aged 16-19 died in fatal car crashes and an additional 400,000 were in injury-related crashes in 2005. A joint AAA Foundation and Johns Hopkins study released this year 41% of all deaths at ages 15-19 were the results of injuries sustained from car crashes, again earning the distinction of the leading cause of death for those ages. This study examined graduated driving license programs and their key finding is that a 16 year old driver's rate of involvement in fatal crashes was reduced by 38% and involvement in injury crashes by 40%. Safe America supports the policy recommendations from the study that drivers' education be a pre-requisite to obtaining a drivers' license.

8. Motorcyclist Helmets:

Motorcycle safety has become a national priority as more and more riders hit the roadways everyday. As the number increase, so does the need for laws requiring helmets for riders – regardless of age or state. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)

reports, per mile driven, motorcycle crash fatalities occur about 34 times more often than car crash fatalities. Motorcycle helmets reduce fatalities in a motorcycle crash by 39%. In non-fatal accidents, the risk of traumatic brain injuries was reduced by 75%.

Currently, there are 3 states that do not have motorcycle helmet laws. 26 states have partial laws that cover young riders or passengers, and only 20 states (and the District of Columbia) have universal coverage that protects all motorcyclists. Our goal here is to ensure legislation that requires helmets for all motorcyclists.

9. Transportation:

Each year, more than 42,000 lives are lost needlessly to highway and pedestrian accidents. In particular, pedestrian injury is the second leading cause of death for children aged five to nine here in the U.S. A pilot concept of using flags to cross city streets is being piloted in Wisconsin and is already showing active community involvement and promising results. Safe America, in cooperation with Madison, Wisconsin's Safe Communities Program will look at expanding and enhancing the innovative program.

Cell phones are here to stay, so as a nation we must actively embrace ways to use them safely while behind the wheel. A 2002 Harvard Center for Risk Analysis study estimated that drivers using cell phones were responsible for 2,600 fatalities, 330,000 injuries, and 1.5 million cases of property damage. Hands-free devices provide the most realistic, safest way to talk and drive, and Safe America proposes to raise awareness of the devices available today.

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10. End Daylight Savings Time earlier:

The general purpose of Daylight Savings Time (DST) is that we move our clocks forward by one hour in the spring and return them to Standard Time in the autumn. This allows the summer months in-between to have one additional hour of sunlight. The argument for extending DST relies on the theory that the additional hour of light conserves energy and reduces the electricity demand.

Given the economic and environmental imperatives driving efforts to reduce energy consumption, the Energy Policy Act of 2005 was passed and began taking effect March of this year. A study published by the Center for the Study of Energy Markets out of the University of California system challenges the theory of energy savings, as well as the studies underlying it. Using statistical analysis of the data on electricity consumption, the study found that while extending DST does reduce electricity consumption in the evening, the increased demand in the morning cancels this benefit out. A separate hypothesis they reject is the idea that the consumption load would be more balanced by hour, reducing blackouts during critical times. Instead, the study shows that sharp peak loads and prices still occur, with the time of occurrence shifted to the morning.

Opponents of the 2005 bill raised several concerns against the legislation. First, they stated this is a straightforward child safety issue. Young students would have to await school buses in morning darkness. Accidents involving children would be more likely as they wait and drivers have reduced visibility. Specific crimes, such as victimizing children, would occur more frequently with the additional cloak of darkness.

11. Pandemic Flu Preparedness:

The issue of infectious diseases, such as influenza, is particularly important to Safe America. The three influenza pandemics in the previous century: the 1918 “Spanish influenza,” the 1957 “Asian influenza,” and the 1968 “Hong Kong influenza.” killed an estimated 40-50 million, 2 million, and 1 million people, respectively. Easily spreading across national borders, healthcare issues require international cooperation and responses to be effective in today’s globalized world.

Many of these same issues apply to outsourcing abroad and Safe America and **WorldSafe™** will host a series of national and international summits to raise awareness by the public and private sectors to these looming health and safety threats.

12. ‘Norms’ In Product Manufacturing:

WorldSafe™ seeks to hold a healthy dialogue on the ‘acceptable’ norms for oversight standards in outsourcing product manufacturing abroad. Quality control testing of products requires a holistic approach that tests not just the product samples but also requires regulating the manufacturing and testing environments. Especially important in GMP is the documentation of the processes, activities, and operations such that the chain can be fully transparent allowing for measures such as recall to be effective.

Currently, Good Manufacturing Practices vary from country to country around the world. The World Health Organization (WHO) has a GMP in place to regulate the pharmaceutical industry, applying these standards to around 100 countries. However, the developed world generally adheres to a stricter set of GMDP – the US (regulated by the FDA), the EU (regulated by the EU-GMP), Australia, Canada, Japan, and Singapore, to name a few.

ISO- the International Organization for Standardization is the international standards-setting body founded in 1947 to spread world-wide industrial and commercial standards. Since its inception, ISO has been creating technical standards starting from photo film to computers components. However, the current attempts to transform from technical engineering standards to environmental and social policy have been largely unnoticed and unpublicized.

13. Expand Food Inspection:

Currently, the FDA inspects about 1% of the imported foods it regulates. The USDA, responsible for meat and poultry, inspects about 16% of imported food. To give rough estimate of what may be slipping through, the state of New York has its own state food-monitoring programs, which recalled 676 food shipments from 2005-2006. 80% of the recalls were imports that should have been stopped at the border, if the FDA had correctly identified contamination.

Safety applies to the foods we consume and in this we must rely solely on the government to conduct adequate inspection and certification. But the public can play an important role in insisting that those inspectors exceed our expectations by raising the standards and instituting a “security seal” that will provide assurance and confidence for consumers nationwide.

14. Earthquake Mitigation:

Focus more resources on earthquake mitigation – both in North America and abroad. Every measure taken towards mitigation before disaster strikes can reduce casualties, damages, and economic losses. Political figures, planners, developers, construction firms, and insurance companies must be informed of the potential consequences of earthquakes. Natural disasters affect all of these parties and play a huge role in business risk. A public/private partnership would be natural in drawing together leaders across the globe in **WorldSafe™** to continue this dialogue.

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15. Import Inspection Updates:

No less important to the safety of this nation’s shipments. The chief initiative is to provide online, real-time updates to business leaders on products that are suspect to federal inspection, investigation, or recall.

16. Fire Department Equipment Fund:

Our nation’s first responders – fire, EMS, and law enforcement personnel – continue to be our heroes, saving lives and lessening suffering every day. The Council on Foreign Relations released a study in 2003 estimating that federal funding for first responders would face at \$98.4 billion shortfall from 2004-2008. ((In 2006, the DHS Office of Domestic Preparedness proposed budget was \$600 million less than the 2004 budget, resulting in a re-estimated figure of \$100.2 billion shortfall by 2008)). Now, Safe America will launch an initiative to create a multi-million dollar fund to equip fire departments with critical supplies replacing outdated equipment.

17. Rx Drug Packaging:

With the advances of medical technology, come new diseases that we are simply not prepared for or immune to. As new vaccines and treatments come to the market, so too come opportunities for tampering with them. Safe America has discussed with multi-national pharmaceutical companies the value of extending tamper-proof technology to include those prescriptions that many people need to take on a regular basis. At issue is protecting the consumer from the ‘tampering’ with monthly prescriptions... which are all filled ‘by hand.’ Addressing the packing of prescriptions – and the use of ‘safety/security seals’ or ‘blister packs’ – needs to be considered in the near term... and can be done ‘voluntarily’ – with a little bit of encouragement.

18. Youth and Public Health Education:

Having youth be a part of our ‘health care equation’ is a good idea... And Safe America is evaluating how to teach youth simple techniques to minimize likelihood of a pandemic.

One pilot initiative is for Girl and Boy Scouts to develop emergency training as a mandate and promote merit badges and insignia for emergency readiness. Another program Safe America is involved in is the ‘Safest Kid in America’ contest. We will expand to include training modules via PTAs and Boys and Girls Clubs.

(The Boy Scouts award several related merit badges: First Aid; Safety; Fire Safety; Emergency Preparedness. The Girl Scouts award: Emergency Preparedness.)

19. Leader to Leader Foundation:

Bringing good leadership to public policy concerns is a key Safe America objective. And, through our **WorldSafe™** initiative, the Foundation plans on working with key national and international groups – both non-governmental as well as governmental and academic – in shaping the next generation of leader.

A new partnership with the ‘Leader to Leader’ Foundation hopes to be the cornerstone of this program. Thanks to Dr. Betty Siegel’s introduction, Safe America has met with Leader to Leader Foundation CEO Frances Hesselbein, offering to grow an annual training program for those engaged in global commerce and concerns.

The University of Pittsburgh, Johns Hopkins University’s Nursing School and other Fortune 500 firms (such as long-time supporter Delta Air Lines) will be sought to help guide our new programming... hoping to address how leaders can ‘build’ safe communities – not only in North America but on every continent.

Dr. David Nabarro of the United Nations has agreed to partner with Safe America, believing our vision – of shaping safer communities, through enhanced leadership – brings the promise of long-term improvements in health care and safety.

Safe water, safe food, safe transit and safer lives – all start with individuals who are committed to protecting life.

Safe America hopes to make this program a ‘hallmark’ of our efforts over the next decade... and earn the trust of a generation yet to be born.

20. Travel Safety Network:

As a critical element of **WorldSafe™**, we will work with partner airlines to create a ‘Travel Safety Network’ that provides on-board messages, updated weekly for global air travelers. Additionally, **WorldSafe™** seeks to collaborate with global partners in creating a fund that ‘stockpiles’ supplies and creates reserves to fund rapid movement of critical supplies for relief efforts.



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