

RECOGNIZE · REACT · RECOVER

Using **Rumblestrips** to prevent run-off-the-road crashes



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IT COULD BE THIS

You're answering a call...checking a text message...or doing your
and hit something. **AND LIFE IS NEVER THE SAME AGAIN.**



School photo of Presley Logan Melton at age 15, prior to being involved in a run-off-the-road crash.

You might be injured, permanently...you might kill a pedestrian or face time in jail...you might kill your passenger, your best friend, your relative...or even yourself.

Every 30 minutes in the U.S., someone runs off the road and crashes. At least one person dies everyday in a single car, run-off-road crash that was likely preventable. About half of all deadly crashes in the U.S. are run-off-road (ROR) crashes.

The majority of ROR crashes do not occur on our interstates. Instead, they typically occur on rural roads where the shoulders are narrow and there are not medians between you and oncoming traffic. On these rural roads, there is no room for error.

Highway departments across the U.S. are installing rumble strips and making other safety improvements to help you avoid a ROR crash. These improvements take time and money. You can start reducing ROR crashes right now – by being a safer, more attentive driver.

Presley Melton after facial reconstruction surgery. Presley was the sole survivor of a horrific run-off-road crash. Her best friend, who was driving, died from injuries sustained in the crash. Neither girl was wearing a seat belt; both girls were ejected through the rear window of the vehicle. Presley broke every bone in her face, and almost every bone in her body. Presley's best friend was thrown into a tree; the impact broke her neck and her back and resulted in her death.



SIMPLE:

make-up. You're distracted, just for a second...you run off the road



Kelsey Mead Schumpert at age 16, holding a live, baby tiger while on a trip to the beach. Kelsey called home and told her mother that if she never did anything else in life, holding the baby tiger was the most incredible experience she had ever had. Her life ended two days later when she was killed in a run-off-road crash on I-20 in South Carolina.



Remains of the vehicle in which a teenage driver lost control, ran-off-the road, and struck a tree. Kelsey Schumpert was killed in the crash. She was sitting in the rear seat on the passenger side of the vehicle and was NOT wearing a safety belt. She and two other teens were returning home from a trip to the beach when the crash occurred.

WHAT ARE RUMBLE STRIPS AND HOW DO THEY WORK?

Rumble strips are raised or grooved patterns in the pavement. Rumble strips are raised patterns within the pavement edgeline markings or centerline markings. Drive over one and your car vibrates. Your tires make noise. Rumble strips and rumble stripes act as alarms for drivers, letting you know if your car has veered out of the lane. Rumble strips “sound the alarm” and get drivers’ attention before it’s too late. They help reduce highway hypnosis – that “checked-out” feeling some drivers get when they drive long stretches of monotonous road.

Rumble strips work! They reduce ROR crashes by as much as 80 percent. That’s a significant reduction that will prevent thousands of ROR crashes from occurring.

A shoulder rumble strip has the added benefit of providing a warning which may prevent an inattentive or drowsy driver from traveling very far onto the shoulder and possibly striking a parked car, a bicyclist, or a pedestrian.

A rumble strip also helps a driver locate the edge of the travel lane during periods of heavy rain, in fog, or at night. Some states and counties are also using rumble stripes on the edgeline of the road and in the centerline of the roadway to help drivers maintain their proper lane position under conditions of poor or limited visibility.

Rumble strips are being installed on roadways across the U.S. in a manner that balances the needs of all roadway users, including bicyclists and motorcyclists.



Photo of a rumble strip

Remember the three R’s of safety when it comes to rumble strips:


- **RECOGNIZE** rumble strips when you see them on the roadway.
- **REACT** in a calm manner if you veer out of your lane and encounter these safety devices. Stay off the gas and off the brake.
- **RECOVER** by allowing the rumble strip to help you regain control safely.

RECOGNIZE • REACT • RECOVER

The number one cause of ROR crashes is **DRIVING TOO FAST** for conditions

**SLOW
DOWN!**

WHAT CAUSES ROR CRASHES?



Speed: The number one cause of ROR crashes is driving too fast for conditions. Slow down! The faster your speed, the more severe the crash will be. Slow down especially on rural roads, where there is no room for error.

Distracted driving: Distracted driving also contributes to one out of every three crashes. When you eat, change the radio, use a cell phone, send a text message or put on make-up while driving, you're distracted. Across the nation, crashes with multiple fatalities started when a driver who was text messaging or using a hand-held cell phone ran off the road. So don't be tempted to do something else while you're driving. Keep your mind – and your eyes – on the road.

Driver Fatigue and Alcohol-Impaired Driving: Late night is a peak time for ROR crashes. There's limited visibility and other factors. Drivers may be fatigued, fall asleep and run off the road. Some drivers may have been drinking. When driving anytime, and especially at night, be alert, awake, and alcohol and drug free. And always be certain that you and everyone in your vehicle are buckled up before you drive.

Tire Blow-outs and Hydroplaning: Tire blow-outs and hydroplaning can also send your car off the road if you don't react properly. Keep tires in good shape and inflated to the right pressure. To determine the correct tire pressure, check the information on your vehicle's door jamb or in the owner's manual. If you should have a blow-out, remember that the blow-out itself will not cause the vehicle to crash – it's the driver's reaction that matters.

RECOVER

Tips to Avoid Running-off the Road from a Tire Blow-Out:

- Avoid jerking the steering wheel or hitting the brakes.
- Instead, accelerate slightly to keep the vehicle under control — because the flat tire will tend to pull the car to one side and slow it down. This all happens in a split second, so again the key is to stay calm.
- Once you have the vehicle under control, slow down, brake lightly, and carefully guide your vehicle out of traffic and to a stop.

Driving on under-inflated tires is a tremendous hazard on water-logged roads. Keeping your tires properly inflated is an easy fix that keeps you safe.

To reduce the risk of hydroplaning, slow down in rainy conditions. Turn off the cruise control. Steer and brake gently. If you do start to skid or hydroplane, do NOT hit the brakes or turn suddenly. If you have anti-lock brakes, brake normally. The car will automatically pump the brake much more effectively than you can.

ROR crashes are completely preventable. Practice safe, defensive driving. Pay attention. Slow down. Wear a seat belt everytime. Your safety on the road matters to everyone!

PHOTO OF PRESLEY MELTON, RUN-OFF-ROAD CRASH VICTIM, WHILE IN TRAUMA UNIT.



HOW DO I SAFELY RECOVER IF I DO RUN-OFF-THE ROAD?

Top tips from America's best drivers:

- Don't overreact. Remain calm.
- Stay off the gas and off the brake.
- Keep a firm grip on the steering wheel.
- Quickly check traffic in the front and rear.



As you try to re-gain control:

- If possible, reduce your speed by coasting down to 20 or 30 miles per hour.
- Align your off-road tires with the road, about 12 to 18 inches off the edge, so that both off-road tires are free of the pavement. This will keep the tires from scrubbing the pavement and give you more control.
- Steer back onto the road.
- As soon as your front tire strikes the road's edge, steer back to the right, to keep your vehicle from crossing into oncoming traffic.

If you can't get back onto the road:

- Drive as far off the road as you can safely.
- Gradually come to a stop and call for help.

IN CONCLUSION. . .

Highway departments across the U.S. are working hard to improve safety on our state and county highways. Additional funding will bring more safety improvements like rumble strips that save lives. As drivers, we need to do our part – for our own safety and because others are counting on us. The painful losses that result from ROR crashes can last a lifetime for you and the ones you love. These are losses you can prevent.

Always remember the three R's of rumble strip safety.

- **Recognize** the rumble strip is there for your safety.
- **React** calmly if you leave the travel lane and encounter a rumble strip. Stay off the gas and off the brake.
- **Recover** safely using the techniques presented in this brochure.

The Roadway Safety Foundation, and their safety partners build safety into your drive. Share this brochure with your family and friends and talk to them about safety. For additional information, including how to order a video on preventing ROR crashes, visit www.roadwaysafety.org.

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