

Recognize, React, Recover. . . Using Rumble Strips to Prevent Run-off-Road Crashes

Talking Points for News Conference and Campaign Launch

Wednesday, August 26, 2009

10:30 a.m.

Columbia, South Carolina

Greg Cohen speaks:

- Good morning, everyone. My name is Greg Cohen, and I am the Executive Director of the Roadway Safety Foundation. It is my pleasure to be here in South Carolina this morning to announce the launch of a new statewide campaign titled “Recognize, React, Recover . . . Using Rumble Strips to Prevent Run-off-Road Crashes”.
- I am joined here today by the many partners who have played a key role in the development of this campaign by providing additional funding or resources to the project. These include a representative of the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, Steve Phillips; Billy Crank from Michelin North America; Bob Walker from Michelin’s Laurens Proving Grounds; Bill Wade, national driving expert from Street Survival; the Managing Director of the Roadway Safety Foundation, Cathy Gillen; and numerous representatives of the South Carolina Highway Patrol of the South Carolina Department of Public Safety.
- I am especially grateful to Faith Turner, Coordinator of Families of Highway Fatalities, who assisted the project team with the identification of victim families who would be willing to work with us on the project.
- We are very honored to have with us Cindy and Mike Sease; Cindy’s daughter Kelsey was killed in a ROR crash. Also with us are Presley, Peggy and Bruce Melton. Presley was severely injured in a ROR crash. Also with us is Alan Moffett, who was driving fatigued, fell asleep at the wheel, and ran-off-the road and crashed. They will all be available at the end of the news conference for individual interviews.
- There are numerous other individuals and agencies that supported the development of this campaign. Their names and organizations are included in your press packets. We are indeed grateful to them, and I hope that you will take note of their involvement.
- You’re probably wondering, “Who is the Roadway Safety Foundation?” The Roadway Safety Foundation is a non-profit, charitable and educational organization solely dedicated to reducing the frequency and severity of motor vehicle crashes by improving the safety of America’s roadways. We work to build safety into your drive.
- The RSF has received a three year grant from the Federal Highway Administration to develop and execute a safer roads public service campaign.

- In order to do this, we issued a nationwide solicitation for applications from community groups and government agencies to carry out public information and education campaigns about road safety.
- SCDOT's application ranked the highest of any that we received. They were awarded a technical assistance grant of \$75,000, the highest amount available through this program.
- Today, we are here to launch the statewide public information and education campaign that we have worked with SCDOT and its many safety partners to develop. The ultimate goal of the campaign is to reduce run-off-road crashes, injuries, and fatalities.
- The goal will be achieved by: (1) educating the public about the safety benefits of rumble strips; (2) educating drivers on how to prevent ROR crashes and how to safely recover if they run-off-the road; and (3) installing rumble strips on rural roads across the state.
- Today, you'll learn more about the campaign. SC Division Administrator Bob Lee, representing FHWA, will talk about why their agency is funding efforts such as this. Transportation Secretary Limehouse will give us more specific information about rumble strips. We will hear from Cindy Sease about why she is in support of this project. Finally, we will release a new television public service announcement and radio public service announcement. We will share some information with you about other products soon to be released through this project, including a major educational DVD.

Secretary H. B. “Buck” Limehouse Jr. speaks:

- Many thanks to Greg and the Roadway Safety Foundation, as well as to the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety and FHWA for the funds that they have given the agency for this project. This funding is indeed appreciated during lean economic times.
- I also wish to thank everyone else here today who supports SCDOT and the RSF through the installation of rumble strips.
- SCDOT’s research has found that one of the most cost effective traffic control devices to reduce run-off-road crashes is rumble strips.
- Rumble strips are raised or grooved patterns in the pavement. We also using profile thermoplastic pavement markings as edgeline markings and centerline markings. Drive over either one of these types of rumble strips and your car will vibrate and the tires will get really noisy.
- The reason for that is that rumble strips act as alarms for drivers before it’s too late. These devices provide a warning that may prevent an inattentive or drowsy driver from traveling out of their lane, and possibly striking another vehicle, a bicyclist, or a pedestrian. Rumble strips may also help drivers locate the edge of the travel lane during periods of heavy rain, in fog or at night.
- SCDOT has already installed or has awarded projects to install rumble strips on four lane divided highways and on secondary and primary highways across the state. Specifically, 600 miles of rumbles strips on interstates have been let; we have received bids to install 1,000 miles of rumble stripes on primary routes; and 822 miles of profile thermoplastic edge line markings have been let. Our Engineering Division has set annual goals for the continued installation of rumble strips.
- Rumble strips are now included as standard operating practice on all resurfacing projects that meet the criteria for shoulder type and width. That’s important as SCDOT is using our highway stimulus funds for resurfacing projects in every county of the state.
- When you see rumble strips on the highways:
 - **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 that you will find on our web site, www.scdot.org.
- And now it is my honor to introduce to you Mrs. Cindy Sease, whose daughter Kelsey was killed in a ROR crash. Mrs. Sease. . .

Cindy Sease speaks.

She will tell her story in her own words.

Greg Cohen speaks:

- Cindy, thank you so very much for sharing your story with us. We are all indeed profoundly sorry for Kelsey's death. Thank you for your courage and your support of this project.
- It's because of Kelsey Schumpert, and other run-off-road crash victims like Presley Melton and Alan Moffett . . . regular South Carolinians from families just like yours . . . that the RSF, SCDOT and their partners are introducing this life-saving campaign today.
- Rumble strips save lives. They can prevent run-off-road crashes and fatalities. Recognize them for the life-saving devices that they are and support SCDOT in its continued installation of them.
- And now, it's my pleasure to play for you the television ad that will begin appearing on stations across the state, beginning September 1, 2009, through the assistance of the South Carolina Broadcasters' Association. We will play the ad twice so that you can get a good look at it. Then, we will play the radio ad, which will also begin airing on September 1st.

Play television ad twice.

Play radio ad twice.

Applause.

- Many thanks to all the ROR Project Team members and our other partners who helped to create these ads and to Program Manager Terecia Wilson and SCDOT's videographer/producer Peter Tarpley for their work on these excellent products.
- While these ads will help to educate the public about the safety benefits of rumble strips over the next three months, we will also be educating drivers on how to prevent ROR crashes and how to safely recover if they do run off the road through an educational DVD. The DVD features national driving expert Bill Wade. The DVD also shares the stories of the families that are here today. We want to give you just a taste of what the DVD is like today – it will be publicly released later this fall for use by law enforcement, EMS, and driver education teachers. Let's see a short module of the DVD.

Show short portion of DVD.

- Thank you all for coming today and for helping SCDOT, the Roadway Safety Foundation and their safety partners build safety into your drive.
- Cindy and Mike Sease; Presley, Peggy, and Bruce Melton; and Alan Moffett will all be available for individual interviews following the conclusion of this news conference. Our other speakers will also be available.
- National driving expert Bill Wade is available to demonstrate run-off-road recovery techniques for those media interested. And SCDOT has Traffic Engineering personnel available who can answer any technical questions that you have about rumble strips.
- You are all invited to join the Roadway Safety Foundation for an appreciation luncheon at Seawells of Columbia, located at 1125 Rosewood Drive, across from the State Fairgrounds. We will reconvene there for lunch at approximately 11:45 a.m.
- Remember: Recognize, React, and Recover . . . Rumble strips can and will help prevent run-off-road crashes.
- We are adjourned.