

Northern Brain Injury Association



2015 Road Safety Survey

Welcome to the Northern Brain Injury Association's 2015 Road Safety Survey. This year you will notice that we did fewer communities than usual. This was due to the amount of fires that were occurring in northern BC, and many of the communities being under threat of being consumed. The surveys conducted were done twice a day (morning and evening) on two weekdays, and one weekend day (for a total of six hours over three days). Observers watched motorists, cyclists and pedestrians, looking for unsafe behaviors, lack of attention, and violations of existing vehicle and pedestrian laws.



Very special thanks go out to all the amazing volunteers and participants who conducted the 2015 safety survey, sometimes doing so even though there was heavy smoke and considerable risk present in the area. Unfortunately, fires raging in the northeast region (Fort St. John/Dawson Creek area) made it unsafe for employees and volunteers to conduct the survey in those regions. Fires in the Burns Lake area presented serious challenges, and staffing issues prevented the Terrace from being done this year. So, during 2015 we were only able to conduct surveys in Burns Lake, Quesnel and Prince George.

We extend special thanks to Ruby Matsko and the wonderful folks from the Burns Lake Citizen On Patrol Society (COPS), who despite ever present danger from raging forest fires took the lead role for conducting and supervising the survey in the Burns Lake region, and assisting the NBIA.

And, we especially want to acknowledge the amazing help from members of the Facebook page "Hell Yeah Prince George!", who supplied incredibly enthusiastic volunteers to help with the Prince George Brain Injured Group's part of the survey in northern BC's largest metropolis!

For the purposes of understanding the criteria of this survey, here are few definitions explained:

“Driving While Distracted”:



“Driving while distracted” included such things as operating a vehicle while also using cell phones and electronic tablets, or other distractions, such as eating, putting on makeup, etc. that distracted attention from the safe operation of a motor vehicle.

“Not following Rules Of The Road”:



“Rules of the road” violations included such things as failing to indicate turns or use turn signals, failing to use seat belts and car seats, failing to come to a complete stop at stop signs, failing to yield to pedestrians, and/or failing to give other vehicles their legal right of way.

“Unsafe Use”:



“Unsafe use” pertained to equipment use and behaviors. This may include such things as failing to stop, cyclists riding against traffic flow and/or on sidewalks, distracted pedestrians, improper use of crosswalks, jaywalking, and failing to look before crossing, etc.

“Distracted Pedestrians”:



Distracted Pedestrians” included such things as using the phone while not paying attention to obstacles, entering crosswalks or roadways without looking, running into stationary objects (such as sign poles and lamp posts), falling into open holes, etc.



2015 Prince George Road Safety Statistics

The Prince George road safety survey was conducted by staff of the Prince George Brain Injured Group and fantastic volunteers from the 'Hell Yeah Prince George!' Facebook page.

Total Number Of Motor Vehicles Observed: 6,488

Total Drivers Operating Vehicles While Distracted: **125** (1.92% of 6,488)

Total Persons Not following Rules Of The Road: **137** (2.11% of 6,488)

Total Number Of Cyclists Observed: 81

Without helmet: **27** (33.3% of 81)

On sidewalk: **20** (24.7% of 81)

Riding against traffic: **7** (8.6% of 81)

Failing to Stop: **12** (14.8% of 81)

Total Number Of Pedestrians Observed: 256

Improper use of crosswalk: **40** (15.6% of 256)

Jaywalking: **22** (8.6% of 256)

Distracted: **27** (10.7% of 256)



2015 Burns Lake Road Safety Statistics

The 2015 Burns Lake road safety survey was organized by the amazing Ruby Matsko, and conducted by fantastic volunteers from the Burns Lake Citizens On Patrol Society, and the Royal Bank.

Total Number Of Motor Vehicles Observed: 3,504

Total Drivers Operating Vehicles While Distracted: **29** (0.8%)

Total Persons Not following Rules Of The Road: **190** (5.4%)

Total Number Of Cyclists Observed: 97

Without helmet: **10** (10.3%)

Unsafe use: **14** (14.4%)

Total Number Of Pedestrians Observed: 195

Improper use of crosswalk: **11** (5.6%)

Jaywalking: **107** (54.9%)

Distracted: **24** (12.3%)



2015 Quesnel Road Safety Statistics

The 2015 Quesnel road safety survey was organized by our awesome staff and a friend, who were amazed and shocked at the unsafe behaviors they witnessed.

Total Number Of Motor Vehicles Observed: 9,247

Total Drivers Operating Vehicles While Distracted: **264** (2.85%)

Total Persons Not following Rules Of The Road: **224** (2.4%)

Total Number Of Cyclists Observed: 68

Without helmet: **10** (75%)

Unsafe use: **33** (48.5%)

Total Number Of Pedestrians Observed: 259

Improper use of crosswalk: **76** (29.3%)

Jaywalking: **92** (35.5%)

Distracted: **7** (2.7%)

2015 Road Safety Summary

2015's Community Safety Prize for Vehicles goes to the city of Burns Lake! Congratulations on having the lowest number of distracted drivers in the north.

2015's Community Safety Prize for Cyclists goes to the community of Terrace! Congratulations on having the best cycling safety statistics in Northern BC.

2015's Community Safety Prize for Pedestrians also goes to the community of Terrace. Congratulations. Whatever you're doing seems to be working, but there is still a lot of room for improvement.

Here Are Few Things Observers Spotted While Conducting The 2015 Survey

- Improperly secured loads.
 - Children unrestrained in moving vehicles.
 - People walking out into traffic without looking.
 - Infrequent use of turn signals.
 - Eating while driving.
 - Unsecured pets in vehicles.
 - Driving without wearing a seatbelt.
 - Texting and driving.
 - Pulling out from a parking lot without looking.
 - Cyclists not following the rules of the road.
 - Distracted pedestrians (looking down at mobile devices) crossing without looking up.
 - Failing to come to a complete stop.
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Canadian Road Safety Statistics

Child and infant car seats can decrease the number of children dying in road accidents by 54 to 80%.

Making child restraint mandatory in vehicles can decrease child deaths by 35% (6).

The chances of death by accident can be decreased by 51% with the proper use of seat belt.

For every 1km/h that you reduce your speed by, you mitigate the risk of accident by 2%.

Nearly 23% of motor vehicle fatalities were 15 to 24 year olds, even though this age group makes up only 13% of the Canadian population.

Transport Canada reports that while 93% of Canadians buckle up, the 7% who don't account for almost 40% of fatalities in vehicle collisions. Seatbelts save about 1,000 lives a year in Canada.

Texting while driving increase the chances of being in a collision by 23 times. Hands-free texting has not been documented to reduce this risk.

Each year in Canada, about 2,000 people are killed, and 165,000 are injured (10,000 seriously), while using our road transportation system, for a cost of \$37 billion annually (2.2% of Canadian GDP).

According to the Traffic Injury Research Foundation, Canadians frequently engage in many distracting activities while driving. Here are the most common distractions according to percentage: 85.7% read road signs or sight see, 67% talk or interact with passengers, 54.8% think about something else, 45.8% change the radio station or CD, 32% eat or drink, 19.9% talk on a hands-free phone; 17.4% use a GPS, 8% talk on a hand-held or hands free phone, 5.2% text message, and 3% read a paper, put on make-up, or shave.