



SAFE TRAVELS NC

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Safer Summer

Summer means hot cars – make sure you check that backseat before locking up.

Summer means more freedom for a lot of young drivers – remind them that freedom requires focus.

Plus: The state legislature is chugging along but still has important safety legislation to consider. And our Teen Ambassadors engaged in a letter-writing campaign. See what the next generation says about safety.

Legislative Lifelines



NCAST Executive Director Joe Stewart at a recent press conference on House Bill 1199 as people who've been injured or lost family members to crashes look on.

There are a lot of good safe transportation proposals pending at the North Carolina General Assembly.

Multiple safety groups are pushing for [House Bill 1199](#) – named “The Seatbelt Act.” You might also hear this [called the “Super Speeders” bill](#) because it would require people who lose their drivers license over repeated speeding, reckless driving and other serious offenses to install an “Intelligent Speed Assistance” device that would limit their vehicle’s speed, forcing them to go the speed limit or slower.

In 2024, speed was a factor in 42% of fatal crashes in North Carolina, [according to Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety](#), much higher than the national average of 29%. Virginia recently passed a law requiring ISA devices for people convicted of reckless driving over 100 mph and will begin enforcing it this summer, [according to The News & Observer](#).

But House Bill 1199 is broader than the speeding issue. It would also expand the use of traffic cameras to enforce the law in school zones, and it would strengthen the state's drunk driving laws to require ignition interlocks for all DWI offenders, a change Mothers Against Drunk Driving has called for repeatedly.

[READ MORE](#)

Safe Passage Summer



Look at that bear using one of the new wildlife underpasses along Interstate 40 in the Pigeon River Gorge.

Not a care in the world about vehicles moving 65 mph, which could easily kill him and their passengers if humans hadn't built that path.

That's why Safe Passage advocates for more wildlife crossings, particularly as highways in western North Carolina are reworked anyway following Hurricane Helene. The coalition recently met with NC Department of Transportation officials and felt good about the collaboration.

“We are grateful for NCDOT’s leadership and consistent efforts to support wildlife crossings,” Safe Passage said in a news release.

“This is exactly the kind of collaboration we have been working toward, where we can all come together in even the most challenging set of circumstances to achieve durable solutions alongside our agency partners to steward our natural resources,” Safe Passage facilitator Ben Prater said.

Safe Passage has a lot going on this summer. Check out the coalition’s latest newsletter for more bear pictures, to get details on the four “Bears & Brews” events coming up in Asheville, and to read about a highway ‘bat wall’ inspired by an NCDOT engineer’s daughter.

You can subscribe to that quarterly newsletter [here](#).

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Wildlife Crossing Project

Students Speak Out!

LIFESTYLES

Safe driving is a must!

Hi, I am London Barber, and I am a safe driver.

Since I started driving in 2023 it has been a must that I drive for myself and others. Everytime I prepare to leave our driveway, I am reminded by my parents that responsible driving means being alert, playing music at a reason-

able volume, limiting distractions like eating while driving, and most importantly keeping my hands free of my cell phone.

When I read that the North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA) had a Teen Safe Driving Ambassador program through NC Alliance for

Safe Transportation. I knew that it was something I could be a part of.

As a student-athlete at Gates County High, we are encouraged to find ways to broaden our lives and make an impact in the community. As a Teen Safe Driving Ambassador, I pledged to be responsible in driving and present myself

as a role model for safe driving.

If there was one thing that I would stress moving forward it would be the importance of Senate Bill 797 - the Hands Free NC Act. It would make it illegal to drive with a cell phone in your hand.

London Barber
Class of 2026

Gates County High School

NCAST's Teen Ambassadors are wrapping up their school years, and we appreciate them!

We'll have news next month about who won the **TEN \$1,000 scholarships** we're giving away, but this month we want to highlight some of their work.

We asked them to write letters to the editor to their local newspapers, and quite a few were published. You can see London Barber's contribution to the Gates County Index above.

We've also seen letters published from:
Lamont Vines in the Rocky Mount Telegram
Felton White in the Rocky Mount Telegram

Click! Read! Encourage! Share these young people's thoughts on your social media feeds. It's great to see high school students get involved – especially on an issue that can affect them so seriously.

Stay Cool, Farmers



This newsletter's official position is that farmers are cool, and we want you to stay cool.

Which is why we're making sure you know about this \$250 cost-sharing program for tractor canopies through the NC Farm Bureau. Farm Bureau members can get one grant per year for their choice of sun shade on a piece of equipment they own.

Here's how you become an NC Farm Bureau member (there are lots of other benefits too).

Long-term overexposure to the sun's UV rays of course increases the risk for skin cancer, premature aging and eye damage.

In our mind shade counts as safer transportation. And, if you're not a farmer, do us all a favor: Watch out for them on North Carolina's roads. Farm equipment often moves 25 mph – or slower. Slow down and be good.

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Heat Stroke



Even on a relatively cool sunny day, the temperature inside a parked car can hit dangerous levels quickly.

And we probably won't have a lot of cool days this summer.

The NC Governor's Highway Safety Program and Safe Kids North Carolina, which is part of the N.C. Office of the State Fire Marshal, came together last month for an event in Greensboro.

They laid out 50 pairs of children's shoes in tribute to the 50 North Carolina children lost to hot car heatstroke since 1998.

Safe Kids has a lot of information online — not just about hot cars, but also car seats, bicycles, ATVs and other potential childhood dangers.

But this summer, remember: On a hot day the inside of a car can hit 125° in 30 minutes.

Stop. Look. Lock.

Ask A Trooper

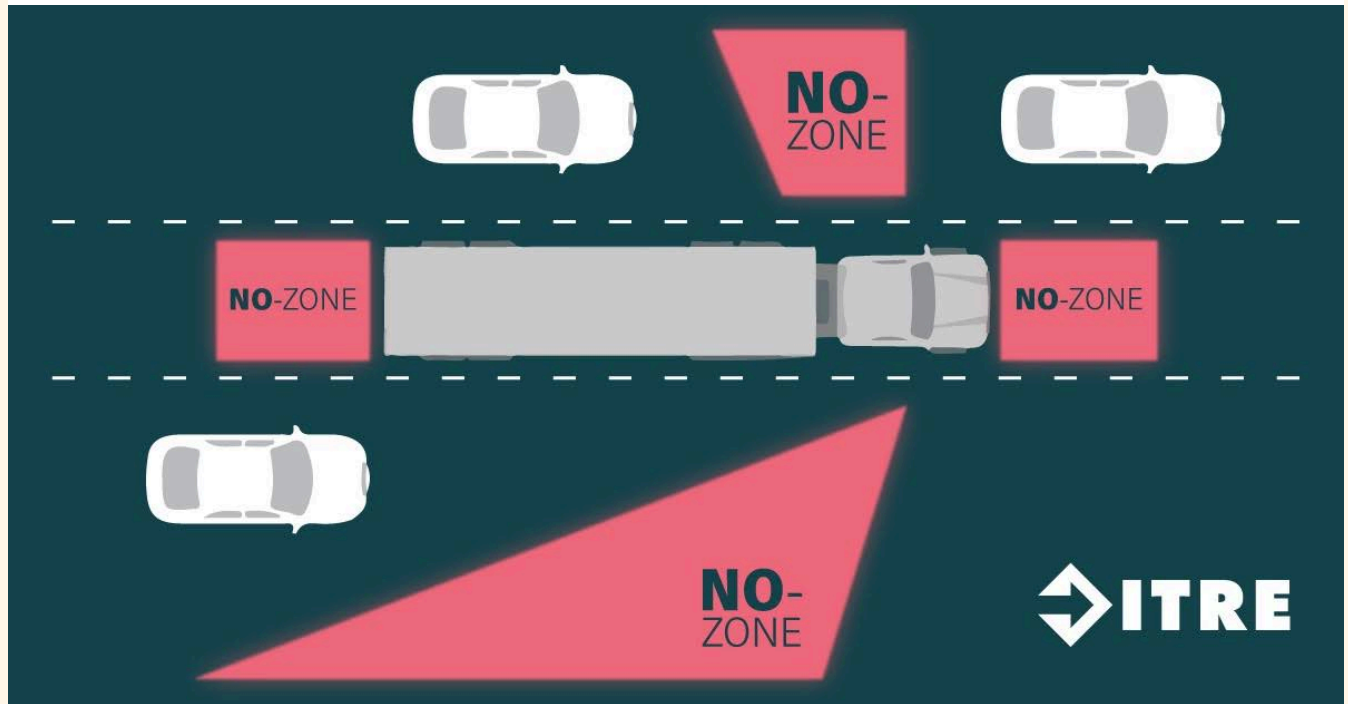


“What are the 100 deadliest days?”

Summer is the most dangerous time for young drivers, in part because they have more time and more freedom. North Carolina’s graduated license restrictions for 16 and 17 year olds exist for a reason.

[SEE VIDEO](#)

Create Space



Be. Especially. Careful. Around. Large. Trucks.

A loaded tractor trailer can weigh up to 80,000 pounds in North Carolina, and at 65 mph that takes more than 500 feet to stop.

These trucks have blind spots, too, so mind the “No-Zone” illustrated in the Institute for Transportation Research and Education graphic above.

Give these big trucks space, on the highway and at intersections – they make wide turns. And remember: If you can’t see the driver in their mirror, they may not see you.

For more safety tips, visit the NC Vision Zero site.

And: The NC Trucking Association has its annual truck driving competition June 4-6 in Raleigh. It's open to the public if you want to watch drivers compete. No tickets needed, just show up, here's the schedule. There's also a new-this-year contest for truck inspectors to test their ability "to identify complex safety violations, apply current regulations, and demonstrate technical expertise under competition standards."



In the News

[Op-ed: I was injured by a 'super speeder.' But North Carolina can protect others.](#)

- The Carolina Journal

[NC Department of Transportation launches upgraded DriveNC website, new mobile app](#)

- ABC 11

[New tech could stop dangerous drivers from speeding — if NC lawmakers allow it](#)

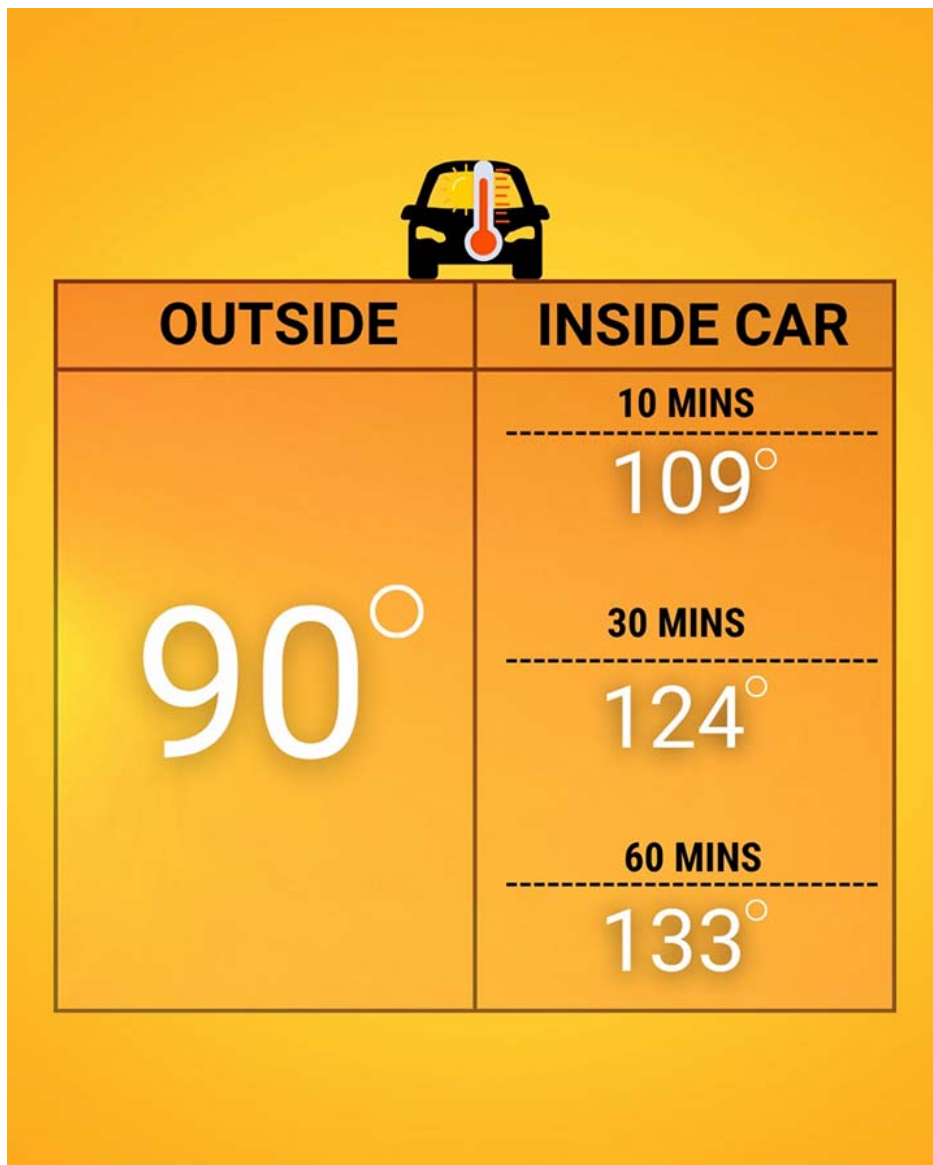
- WRAL

One Last Thing...

SAFER SOCIAL SHARE



Please copy, post & discuss the following infographic!



Don't leave a child or a pet inside your car this summer. Not even for a few minutes.

This Instagram post from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration explains why. Share it and tag the NCAST Instagram account. And if you're not on Instagram, it's easy to copy the image above and paste that into your own social media post.

[NCAST](#) | [Safe Travels NC](#)

Questions– including those relating to privacy and the protection of your personal information– should be sent to info@safetravelsonc.org

Forwarded this newsletter? [Subscribe here](#)

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