Reducing Head-on Crashes

Centerline Rumble Strips

Nationwide, 75 percent of opposite direction fatal crashes occur on undivided two-lane roads. In Connecticut, approximately 30 deaths and 1,000 injuries occur each year from drivers inadvertently crossing the centerline of a roadway, resulting in potentially devastating head-on and sideswipe crashes.

WHAT ARE CENTERLINE RUMBLE STRIPS?

Centerline rumble strips (CLRS) are grooves embedded into the centerline of the roadway, which are then painted over with standard yellow centerline markings. When the tires of a vehicle come into contact with the grooves, they produce noise and vibration.

HOW DO CLRS MAKE CONNECTICUT’S ROADS SAFER?

The noise and vibration generated when a vehicle drives over a CLRS alert drivers that they are in danger of crossing into the opposing lane of traffic. In addition, because of the shape of the groove, the reflective yellow centerline markings can be more visible during dark and wet weather conditions. This helps clarify to drivers where the center of the roadway is when visibility is limited.

A proven safety countermeasure, CLRS are being installed across Connecticut as part of the state’s plan for significantly reducing fatalities and serious injuries by 2021.

By the numbers...

Studies show installing centerline rumble strips on two-lane roads reduces crashes by up to:

Rural Roads

30% TOTAL
44% FATAL INJURY

Urban Roads

40% TOTAL
60% FATAL INJURY

Based on crash data from 2006-2008, New York State Department of Transportation determined that installation of CLRS on the 7,040 miles of roadway that meet the state’s installation criteria would save:

$85 million each year

$1.7 billion over 20 years

The resulting benefit to cost ratio is more than 75:1

**Connecticut is one of at least 36 other States using CLRS to reduce crashes.**

CLRS are being used across the country to improve safety, and the results have been highly positive. For example, where CLRS were installed along a 2.9 mile section of US 310 in Delaware, crash data showed the average number of head-on crashes declined by 95 percent annually.\(^1\)

In Michigan, a before-and-after crash study of 5,400 miles of CLRS installations found significant reductions across all crash severities and lane departure crash types, including:

**Reductions up to:**

- **50%** head-on crashes
- **46%** run-off-road crashes
- **51%** fatal crashes
- **41%** serious injury crashes\(^2\)

As of November 2017, Connecticut has installed 275 miles of CLRS on the state system and 95 miles on local roads. Although formal before-and-after studies have not been conducted to assess the effectiveness of these installations, preliminary findings are positive and show the potential for significant crash reductions—possibly as much as 30 percent.

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\(^2\) Michigan Department of Transportation, “Rumble Strips Are Busy Saving Lives” web page. Available at: [http://www.michigan.gov/mdot/0,1607,7-151--191394--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mdot/0,1607,7-151--191394--,00.html)