

# SEMCOG REGIONAL UPDATE

A BIWEEKLY PUBLICATION OF SEMCOG, THE SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

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## **SEMCOG releases traffic crash facts for 2006; downward trend continues**

Southeast Michigan experienced more than 19,000 fewer traffic crashes in 2006 than in 2005, and nearly 27,000 fewer than in 2004, according to *Southeast Michigan Traffic Crash Facts 2006*, a report recently released by SEMCOG.

The main objective of this report is to provide useful data to aid local communities in their efforts to improve traffic safety.

In 2006, there were a total of 138,165 crashes (resulting in 39,840 injuries and 391 fatalities) in Southeast Michigan, down from 157,284 crashes in 2005 and 164,900 in 2004. The seven-county regional totals represent 44 percent of the total crashes in the State of Michigan. The state total was 315,322 for 2006, down from 2005's total of 350,838.

The report contains important statistical information about all traffic crashes reported in Southeast Michigan in 2006, and also focuses on injury traffic crashes, fatal traffic crashes, alcohol-involved traffic crashes, vehicle-deer crashes, young-driver traffic crashes, elderly driver traffic crashes, and truck/bus traffic crashes. Highlights include:

- Over 87 percent of belted drivers escaped injury altogether when involved in a crash; only 60 percent of non-belted drivers suffered no injuries at all. Drivers in the 16-24 and 25-34 age groups were least likely to use restraints; more than twice as many males as females were not wearing their safety belts at the time of a crash.
- Compared with 2005, traffic crashes decreased over 10 percent, injuries decreased 8.8 percent, and the number of fatalities remained the same.
- Crashes involving alcohol totalled 5,079 in 2006. In Southeast Michigan, 3.7 percent of all traffic crashes involved alcohol, but nearly 31 percent of fatal traffic crashes involved alcohol consumption.
- There were 362 fatal traffic crashes (resulting in 391 fatalities) in Southeast Michigan in 2006.
- Young drivers (16-24) were involved in over 35 percent of all traffic crashes in 2006.
- Crashes involving elderly drivers (those age 65 and older) in Southeast Michigan have decreased every year since 1996. In 2006, there were 16,597 crashes involving elderly drivers — 12 percent of all crashes involved an elderly driver.

*Southeast Michigan Traffic Crash Facts 2006* is available from the SEMCOG Information Center, or [www.semco.org](http://www.semco.org)

downloaded in PDF from SEMCOG's Web site — [www.semco.org](http://www.semco.org). Contact: SEMCOG Information Center.

## **Blue Water Area Transportation Commission announces grant for expanded evening service**

The Blue Water Area Transportation Commission (BWATC) received a \$353,000 grant to expand its evening transit service hours to 10 p.m., Monday thru Friday. The competitively awarded grant is part of a Federal job access program designed to help low-income persons obtain employment. The grant funds are 50 percent federal and 50 percent state dollars.

The expanded evening service began on Monday, October 15, 2007, and covers Port Huron and Marysville, as well as Burtchville, Port Huron, and Fort Gratiot Townships. For more information about how to use public transit in the Blue Water area, call (810) 987-7373.

## **View highlights of General Assembly on SEMCOG's Web site**

Highlights of SEMCOG's October 25 General Assembly can be viewed on [www.semco.org](http://www.semco.org). From the home page, link to News & Notices in the upper bar, then look for the link in the right column. Highlights include featured keynote speaker Governor Jennifer Granholm and an interactive discussion on the future of local government in Southeast Michigan. Contact: Sue Stetler, SEMCOG Communications Director.

## **Visit the new YourMichigan Web site**

Visit the *YourMichigan* Web site at [www.yourmichigan.org](http://www.yourmichigan.org) to learn and promote the services — from road and recreational programs to education and public safety — that local governments provide to families across the state. This campaign emphasizes the return on the dollar for taxpayers. Also view the new video and public service announcements on your tax dollars at work. We encourage members to provide a link to this site on your community Web site. Contact: Sue Stetler, SEMCOG Communications Director.

## **Water and Wastewater Construction Permits Workshop on December 5**

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is hosting a one-day seminar showing communities, developers, and consulting firms how to ensure the quickest view and permitting of projects for obtaining Act 399 Water

System Construction Permits (Michigan Safe Drinking Water Act) and Part 41, Wastewater System Construction Permits, of Act 451 (Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act). Along with reviewing checklists and common problems that hold up processing of applications, the DEQ will review its new expedited process along with the existing streamline process for water main and sewer main construction. The seminar will take place on Wednesday, December 5, 2007 at Lansing Community College, West Campus. Anyone involved in water and sewer construction permitting is encouraged to attend. For updated information visit, [www.michigan.gov](http://www.michigan.gov)  
*Contact: Chuck Hersey, SEMCOG Environment Manager.*

**SEMCOG to host grant writing workshop**

SEMCOG and Grant Writing USA will present a two-day grant writing workshop on December 3-4, 2007, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in SEMCOG's Buhl Building office in downtown Detroit. Watch for additional information in upcoming issues of *Regional Update*. For more information or to register, visit [www.grantwritingusa.com](http://www.grantwritingusa.com). *Contact: Cathy Rittenhouse, (800) 814-8191 or [cathy@grantwritingusa.com](mailto:cathy@grantwritingusa.com).*

**MCDDA Foreclosure Conference December 5**

This year's Michigan Community Development Directors Association (MCDDA) winter technical assistance conference will address the issue of foreclosures across Michigan. The state currently ranks fourth nationally in foreclosures and community development stakeholders must work diligently to defend homeownership. The conference, Foreclosures 202, will be held on Wednesday, December 5, 2007 at the Lansing Center. Please join us at this important event to learn about the *Michigan Foreclosure Task Force*, current federal and state legislation, and case studies on how communities are addressing these issues, and learn about proactive measures that can be taken by communities to ensure Michigan's viability. *Contact: Ken Bishop, SEMCOG Community and Economic Administrative Assistant.*

**SEMPeople**

**Richard Henningsen**, Northville Township Treasurer, was named Northville Citizen of the Year by the Northville Community Chamber of Commerce.

**Vicki Barnett**, Farmington Hills Mayor, was named one of the region's most influential women by *Crain's Detroit Business*.

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Our deepest condolences to the family, friends, and business associates of **Ted Starbuck**, a 15-year veteran of SEMCOG, who died of cancer on October 17, 2007, at age 55. Ted was a Senior Planner in SEMCOG's Environment Department. He will be greatly missed by all of his co-workers as well as those who worked with in our member governments, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, and numerous water and public works officials. A memorial service will be held on November 10 beginning at noon. *Contact: Amy Mangus, SEMCOG Coordinator of Environmental Programs, for information on the memorial service.*

SEMCOG is a regional planning partnership of governmental units serving 4.9 million people in the seven-county region of Southeast Michigan striving to enhance the region's quality of life. *Regional Update* is a publication of SEMCOG, financed through funds from state and federal grants and dues from member communities.

**William T. Roberts**, Chairperson  
Mayor, Walled Lake  
**Paul E. Tait**, Executive Director  
**Susan L. Stetler**, Editor

**SEMCOG Contact Information:**  
Southeast Michigan Council of Governments  
535 Griswold Street, Suite 300, Detroit, MI 48226  
313-961-4266 • Fax: 313-961-4869  
Staff e-mail: [lastname@semcog.org](mailto:lastname@semcog.org)  
[www.semcog.org](http://www.semcog.org)



Ann Arbor MI 48107-8647

PO Box 8647

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Jacqueline Beaudry, City Clerk

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