

# One A Day

Crashes that end police pursuits and response calls kill more than one person a day. More than 1/3 of the people killed are innocent bystanders.

Every person killed leaves behind devastated families, loved ones and friends.

PursuitSAFETY's Professional Speakers: Two career officers and three survivors work with law enforcement to save lives.



Chief Rich Schardan, Ret., Maryville, IL, and Candy Priano, PursuitSAFETY founder & victim services director, team up for a presentation in St. Louis.



David Ehrensperger (right) with his late son, Steven. From Alabama, David, a board member, speaks to officers about response calls.



Esther Seoanes, PursuitSAFETY executive director, engages an audience in Dallas, TX.



Capt. Tom Gleason  
Trainer [honorthebadge.net](http://honorthebadge.net)  
Ret. Sgt., Lakeland FL Police Dept.; Ret. Capt., State of Florida Fraud Division.

When these bystanders were killed, police were pursuing suspects who posed no immediate threat to the public.



In addition, these crashes kill one officer every six to eight weeks.

See Other Side

## About Us

A national 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, **PursuitSAFETY®** exists to prevent the tragedy of pursuit and, ultimately, save the lives of innocent bystanders and police officers.

**PursuitSAFETY** is working for safer ways to reduce deaths and injuries as a result of police pursuits and response call crashes. We unite bereaved families of innocent bystanders and injured victims. We provide public awareness through our website and educational programs. Learn more at [www.pursuitsafety.org](http://www.pursuitsafety.org).

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## **PursuitSAFETY's Safer Way Award®**

Our annual *Safer Way Award®* recognizes officers and law enforcement agencies who reduce reliance on vehicular police pursuits by finding safer ways to apprehend suspects. Visit: [pursuitsafety.org/saferway.html](http://pursuitsafety.org/saferway.html)

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We thank our advisory board for assisting with this "Fact Sheet": Ret. Chief Timothy Dolan, Minneapolis; Ret. Capt. Tom Gleason, State of Florida Fraud Division; Ret. Chief Rich Schardan, Sr., Maryville, IL; Ret. Chief D.P. Van Blaricom, Bellevue, WA.



## Reducing Police Pursuits

PursuitSAFETY works to reduce avoidable police pursuits through consistently applied and restrictive pursuit policies and legislation. Existing and experimental pursuit reduction technologies, which significantly reduce pursuit-related deaths and injuries, are available today. Congress can promote the testing and adoption of these devices by authorizing the Department of Justice to extend Byrne Grant and COPS technology funding for police.

## Pursuits Kill the Innocent

Pursuits are the most dangerous police tactic to the average citizen, killing more innocent bystanders than bullets from officers' firearms.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration [NHTSA] and the International Association of Chiefs of Police keep records of pursuit-related collisions. Their statistics show that on average, **crashes as a result of drivers fleeing from police kill:**

- One person a day. More than 1/3 are innocent bystanders.
- One officer every six to eight weeks.

Pursuit fatalities are reported at the discretion of law enforcement, so the number of civilian deaths is likely higher. NHTSA's reporting system counts fleeing drivers' passengers as "occupants of fleeing vehicle" even though these deaths include innocent minors and adults who did not know the driver would flee. Also, innocent bystanders who die later at the hospital are sometimes not reported as a pursuit fatality.

PursuitSAFETY's governing and professional advisory board members estimate that the actual number of fatalities is "two or three times higher" than NHTSA's data indicates.

"The lack of a mandatory reporting system hampers attempts by NHTSA to track pursuit fatalities and results in the collection of as little as one-half of the actual data."

— John Hill, *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, July 1, 2002

## Many More are Injured

Death is not the only outcome. Police officers and innocent bystanders have become paralyzed and/or brain damaged, while others have suffered life-altering injuries. No government agency tracks injuries as a result of pursuit crashes.

## Collision Factors

Researchers from academia and law enforcement widely accept that 35-40 percent of all vehicular police pursuits end in a collision.

## Why Police Pursue

Source: International Association of Chiefs of Police 2008 Database:

- 91.4% of all chases are for non-violent crimes.

PursuitSAFETY advocates limiting pursuits to violent felons when there is no other way to apprehend the suspect. Pursuing only violent felons eliminates 9 out of 10 chases. Departments that have made this change report fewer crash-related deaths and injuries, and officers use other methods to apprehend suspects.

## Siren Factors

Only 24% of drivers can hear and determine from which direction a police car and its siren are traveling (*ALERT International*).

"Drivers who do hear the siren have no time to react."

—Ret. Police Chief D.P. Van Blaricom, Bellevue, WA

**See Other Side**