Three Steps to Safer Roads

Perhaps you’ve received citizen complaints about some roads in your jurisdiction being unsafe. Or, your maintenance crews repeatedly go to the same locations to fix knocked-down signs or broken guardrails. A high-profile crash on your roads may have riled your community into demanding that your agency take action and make changes to the crash location.

Your agency may want, very much, to address all these issues. Are you holding back only because of a limited budget, or fears that fixing these unsafe locations will be more expensive than your agency can afford?

If you are dealing with any of the situations above, or if there are roads in your jurisdiction you know could be made safer, there are three easy—and inexpensive—steps to getting help.

Step 1: Complete the Form

Think about the problem roads in your jurisdiction where you want to reduce crashes and improve safety. For each of your problems roads, fill out and submit to HELPERS the Three Steps to Safer Roads form (see pages 3 and 4 of this document).

HELPERS is the Hazard Elimination Program for Existing Roads and Streets; a program run through the Indiana Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP).

The goal of HELPERS is to facilitate making your roads safer, and to do so without your agency spending a lot of money. The HELPERS Engineer is a traffic safety expert specializing in low-cost solutions beneficial to your agency and to the public. Expertise and services provided by HELPERS are available at no cost to local agencies.
Step 2: HELPERS Site Visit and Recommendations

The HELPERS Engineer will visit the problem road(s) identified in the worksheet and determine possible low-cost solutions. Some examples of low-cost solutions include removing vegetation, changing a sign type or location, clearing debris from drainage structures, etc. Simple and low cost solutions can have a significant impact on the safety of the travelling public on your roadways.

In addition to low-cost solutions, the HELPERS Engineer can offer long-term, higher cost safety improvements and assist you in applying for possible funding to implement them. These higher cost projects could be funded through the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP). The HELPERS Engineer can determine if a safety improvement project is eligible for HSIP and also assist with application process.

Step 3: Implement Safety Improvements

After the HELPERS Engineer’s review of your road(s), you’ll be provided with a list of possible safety improvements to consider for implementation. Simply select which solutions will work for your local agency and schedule implementation.

It may be that the problem road just needs special attention from your maintenance crews or perhaps the installation of a few more traffic control devices, like signs. Or, if you’ve been battling this road for years and nothing seems to work, perhaps it’s time to try an innovative solution. Regardless of what improvement(s) you decide to implement, rest assured you’re doing your part to make your roads safer for your community.

For More Information

Contact the HELPERS Engineer at Ltaphelpers@ecn.purdue.edu

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Three Steps to Safer Roads

**Step 1:** Identify your trouble area(s) by completing the following Road Problem Checklist. Please use separate checklists for each road.

**Step 2:** Send this checklist to the HELPERS Engineer who will visit the road(s) identified and then provide a list of low-cost solutions to your road problem. HELPERS contact information is at the end of the checklist.

**Step 3:** Determine which low-cost solutions will work for your community and plan their implementation.

**Step 1: Road Problem Checklist**

Date: ____________________________________________

Name: __________________________________________________________________________

Phone Number: ____________________ Email: ___________________________________________

Title/Position: ____________________________________________________________________

Organization: ____________________________________________________________________

**Describe Location** (Include nearby city/town, street name(s), names of intersecting streets). Or, include map with location highlighted.

_______________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________

**Is the Trouble Area . . .**

A common condition present throughout the community?    Yes    No

Confined to a specific location?

*If confined to a specific location, is it . . .*  
A stretch of road?    ☐  ☐  
A curve?    ☐  ☐  
An intersection?    ☐  ☐

**Is the Trouble Area Located on a Road that Serves . . .** *(circle all that apply)*

- high-speed traffic
- schools
- golf carts
- other (explain)
- pedestrians
- farm vehicles
- high truck traffic
- bicyclists
- buggies
Is the Trouble Area a Particular Problem . . .

- At night? [ ] Yes [ ] No
- In rain? [ ] Yes [ ] No
- In snow? [ ] Yes [ ] No
- During certain times of day? (list below) [ ] Yes [ ] No

Other (explain)

Does your concern involve a roadway construction work zone? [ ] Yes [ ] No

Have there been citizen complaints about the location? [ ] Yes [ ] No

If yes, briefly summarize complaints:

_______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________

Has local law enforcement been contacted about the location? [ ] Yes [ ] No

If yes, briefly describe any action taken:

_______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________

Step 2: Submit Completed Form to the HELPERS Engineer

- Email: Ltaphelpers@ecn.purdue.edu
- Fax: (765) 496-1176
- Postal Mail: Indiana LTAP/HELPERS
  3000 Kent Ave., Suite C2-118
  West Lafayette, IN 47906

Questions? Call (765) 494-7038 or email Ltaphelpers@ecn.purdue.edu