IOWA | DOT

2025

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT CENTER

Annual Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Iowa's Statewide Traffic Management Center (TMC) is a 24/7 center located in the Motor Vehicle Division building in Ankeny, Iowa. Iowa DOT uses the TMC to proactively monitor the transportation system in real-time, focusing mainly on the primary roadway system throughout Iowa. The highly-trained professional staff within the TMC coordinates with internal and external partners to detect disturbances to traffic flow and assist with implementing strategies that provide safe, quick clearance on the roadway. TMC staff monitor cameras and support state and local agencies, along with transportation industry stakeholders, to keep travelers informed and help protect on-scene responders. Tools such as 511, social media, and dynamic message signs allow broad and direct notification of incidents to those affected, aiming to reduce both traffic delay and secondary crashes.

The TMC is focused on:

IMPROVING travel time reliability.
ELIMINATING secondary crash conditions.
OPTIMIZING the function of the existing transportation system.
DISSEMINATING accurate, real-time traveler information to customers.
TRACKING winter weather and special events for situational awareness.
MONITORING traffic crashes and roadway activity.
ASSISTING partners with facilitating safe and quick clearance.
COLLECTING critical data for Traffic Incident Management and overall system improvement.

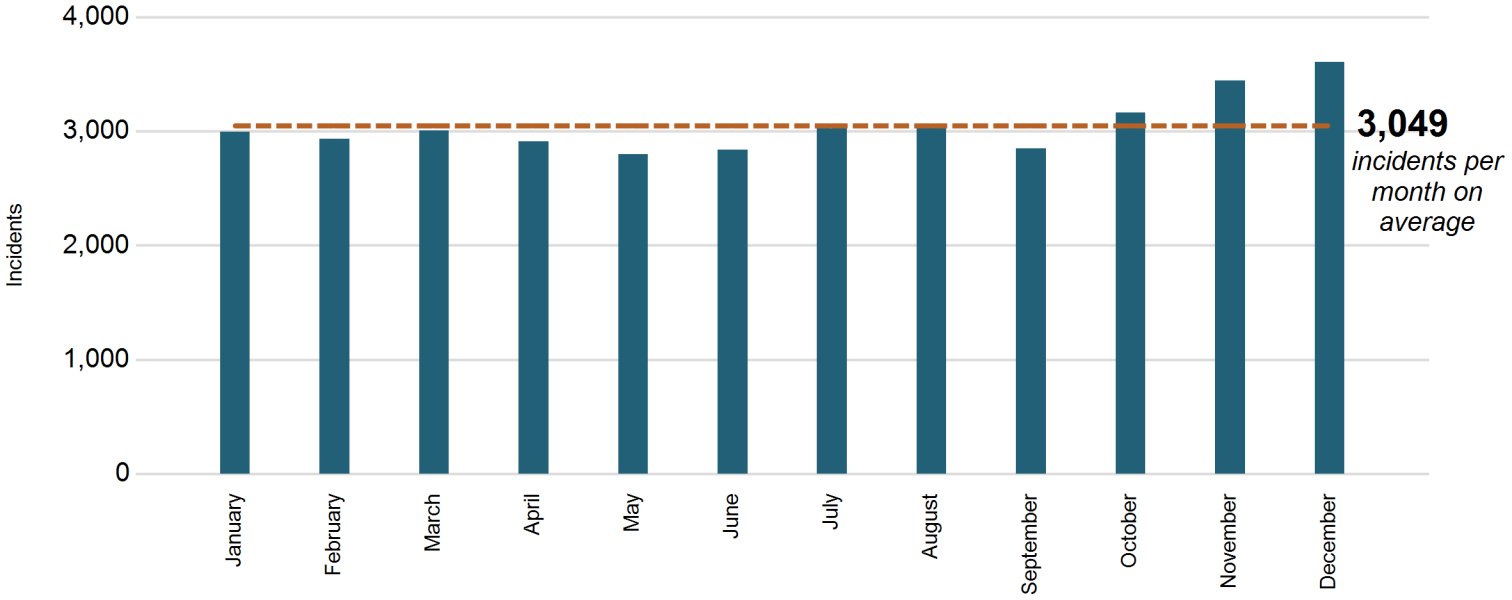
The TMC collects traffic data to support real-time decisions during traffic incidents and archives the information for future use. A monthly report is generated that describes the TMC trends, with the intent of making modifications to policies, practices, and procedures to counter undesirable trends. The 2025 Annual Report presents this collected data from the past year in areas including incidents, crashes, Highway Helper, freight, work zones, weather, and communication. Key performance indicators are presented in the 2025 Snapshot.

2025 SNAPSHOT		
INCIDENTS	Number of incidents monitored by Iowa's Statewide TMC	36,243
CRASHES	Average crash clearance time	1 hr 4 m
HIGHWAY HELPER	Number of responses provided by Highway Helpers	12,206
FREIGHT	Average time to clear a lane blocking incident involving a tractor trailer	1 hr 45 m
WORK ZONES	Total work zone incidents	869
WEATHER	Total flooding events	7
COMMUNICATION	Total Emergency Incident Notification (EIN) email notifications sent	17,494

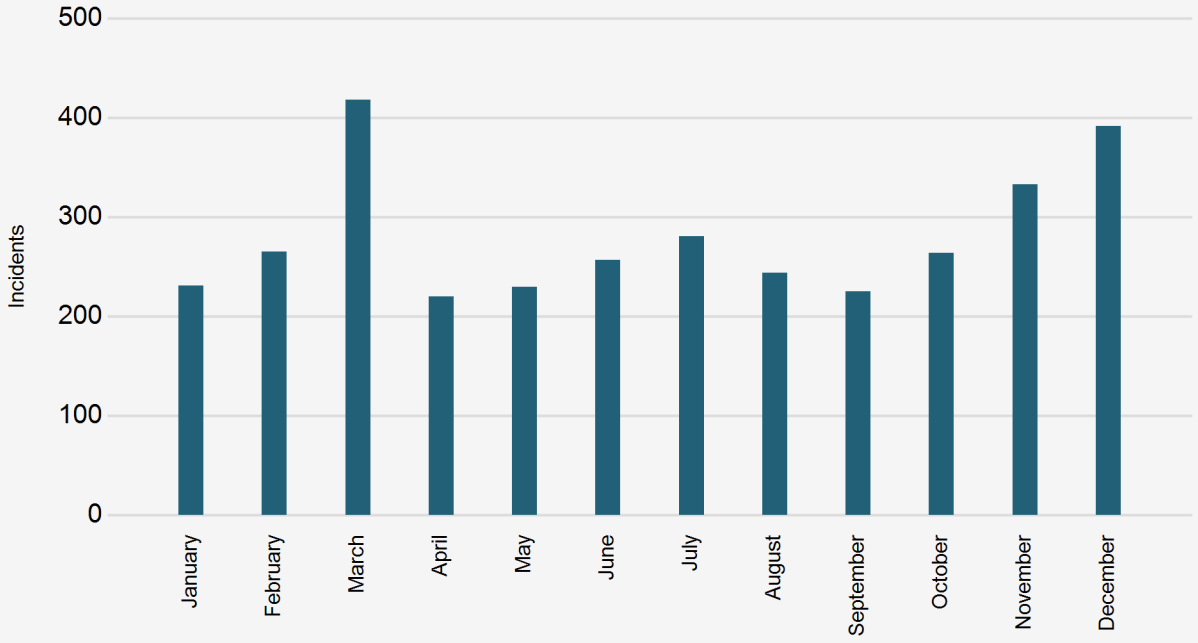
INCIDENTS

Incidents are defined as any event on the roadway that affects or can affect normal traffic flow. The TMC is informed of incidents on the roadway through technology, data sources, and various personnel. These incidents are tracked, reported, and monitored by the TMC.

Incidents monitored by TMC



Incidents with lane blockage



"Incidents with Lane Blockage" refers to the total number of incidents that resulted in at least one blocked lane of travel.

BY THE NUMBERS

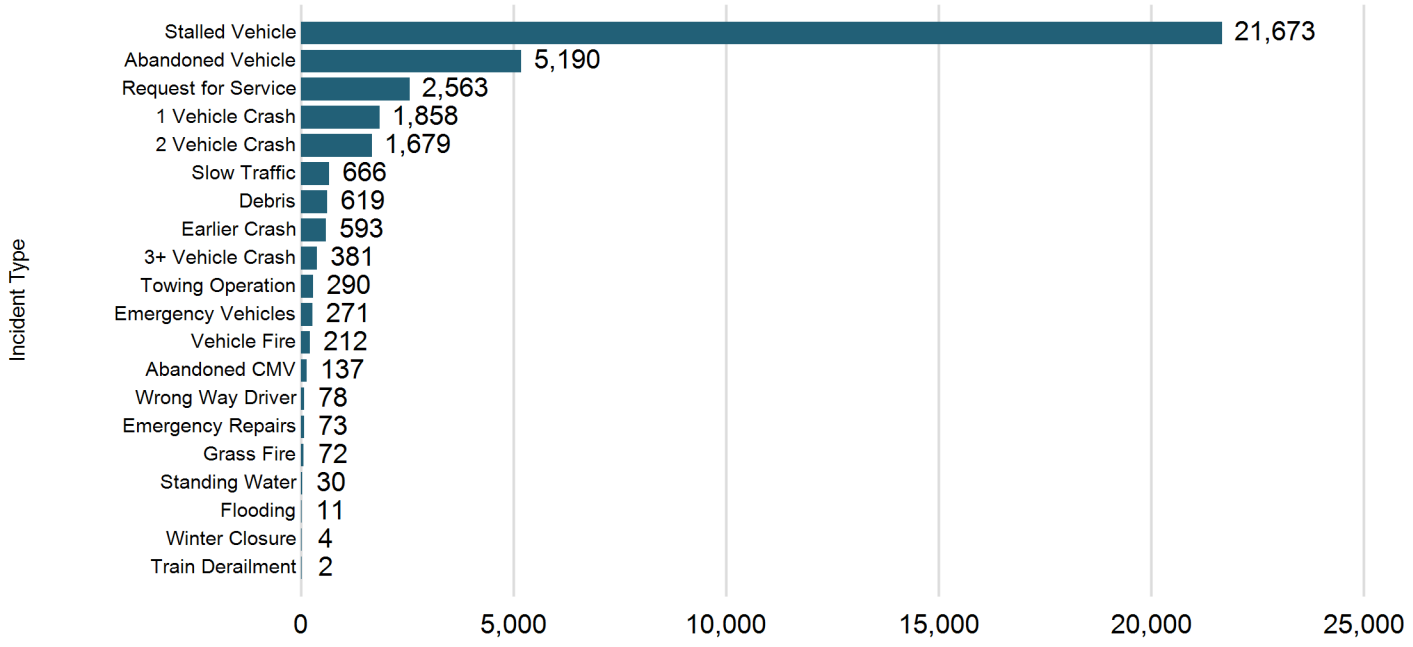
36,243
TOTAL INCIDENTS

22%
INCIDENTS DETECTED BY CAMERA

3,207
LANE BLOCKING INCIDENTS

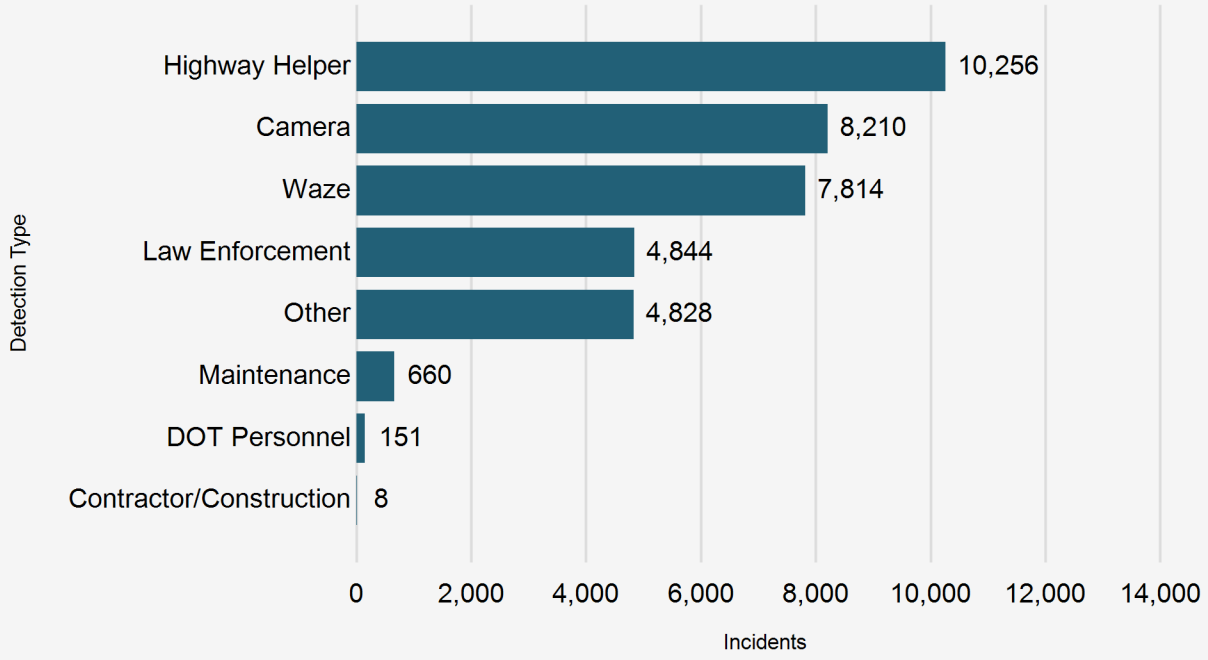
46 SECONDARY INCIDENTS REPORTED TO THE TMC

Incidents by type



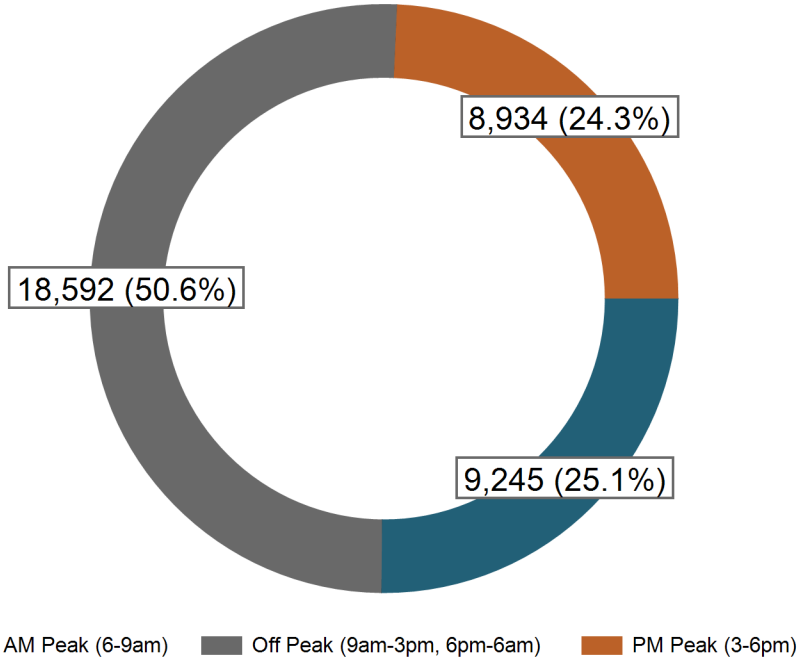
Incidents are detected by TMC operators through cameras, roadway detection, Waze alerts, or reported to the TMC through responders on the roadway.

Incidents by detection source

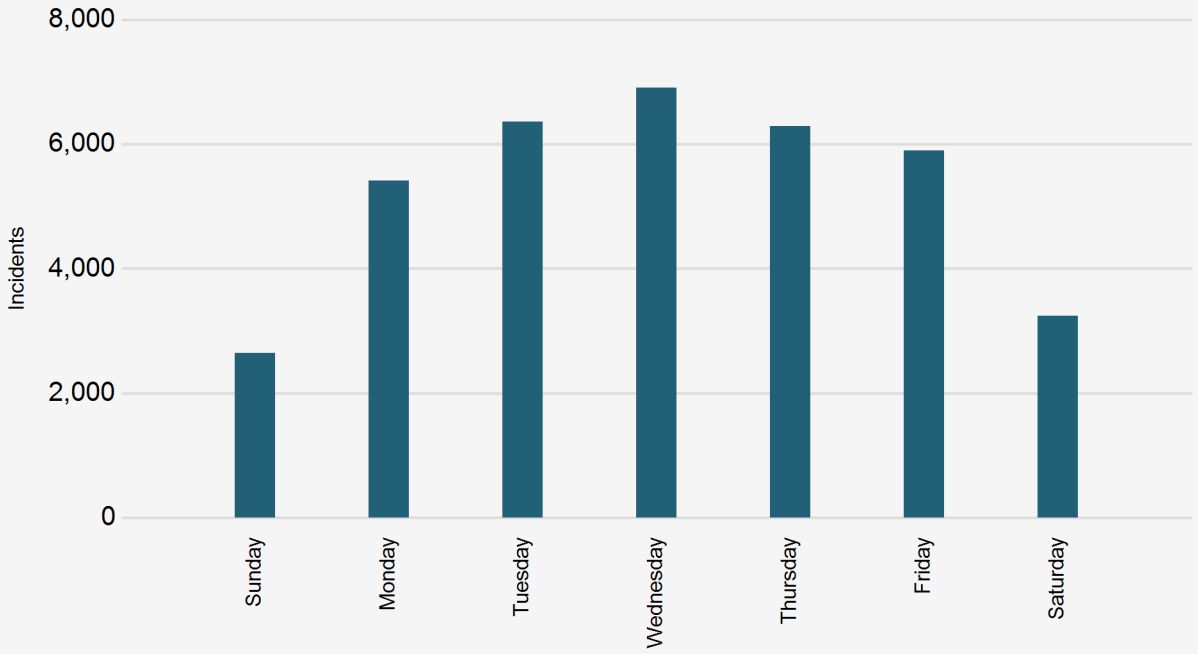


INCIDENTS

Incidents monitored during peak hours



Incidents by day of the week



Incidents more frequently occur on weekdays versus weekends due to the volume of traffic on the roadway.

BY THE NUMBERS

5,882
INCIDENTS OCCURRED ON WEEKENDS

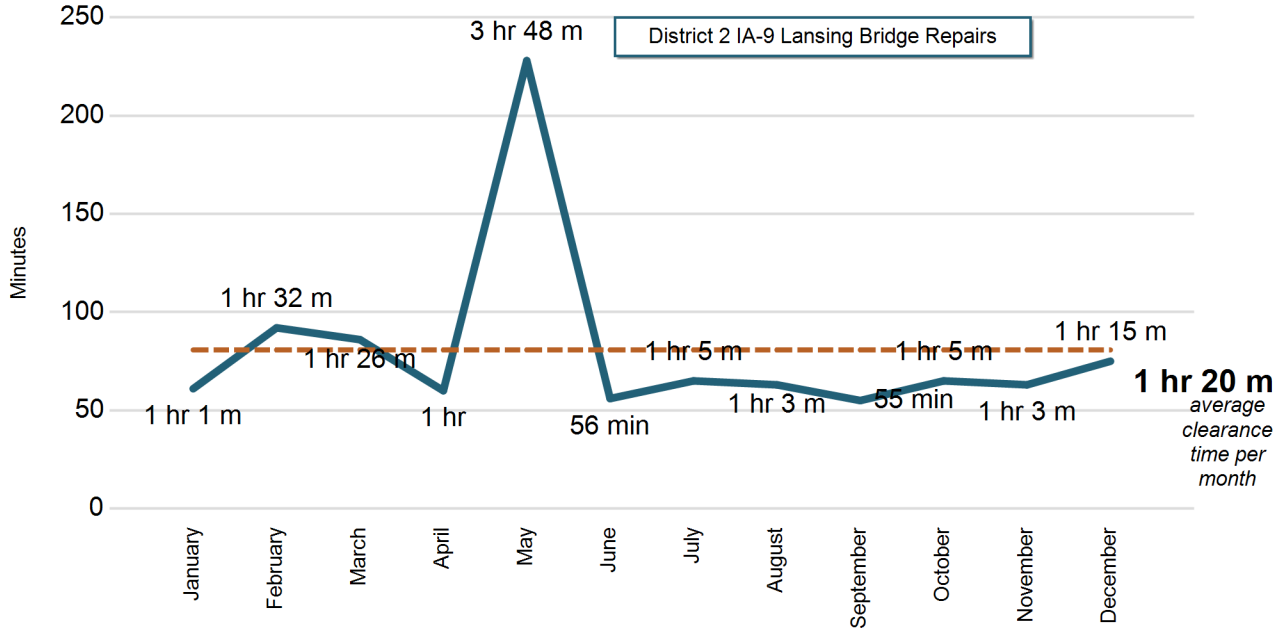
1 hr 20 m
AVERAGE INCIDENT CLEARANCE TIME

318
INCIDENTS EXCEEDING THE CLEARANCE TIME STANDARD DEVIATION

18,592 OFF PEAK INCIDENTS

The incident clearance time begins at the first notification of the incident and ends when the last responder has left the scene. This includes all traffic incident types such as stalled vehicles, crashes, etc. Weather events such as flooding are excluded from this data.

Average clearance times for incidents



Average incident clearance times are calculated by type each month. This table shows the number of incidents which exceed the average clearance time for that type by one standard deviation.

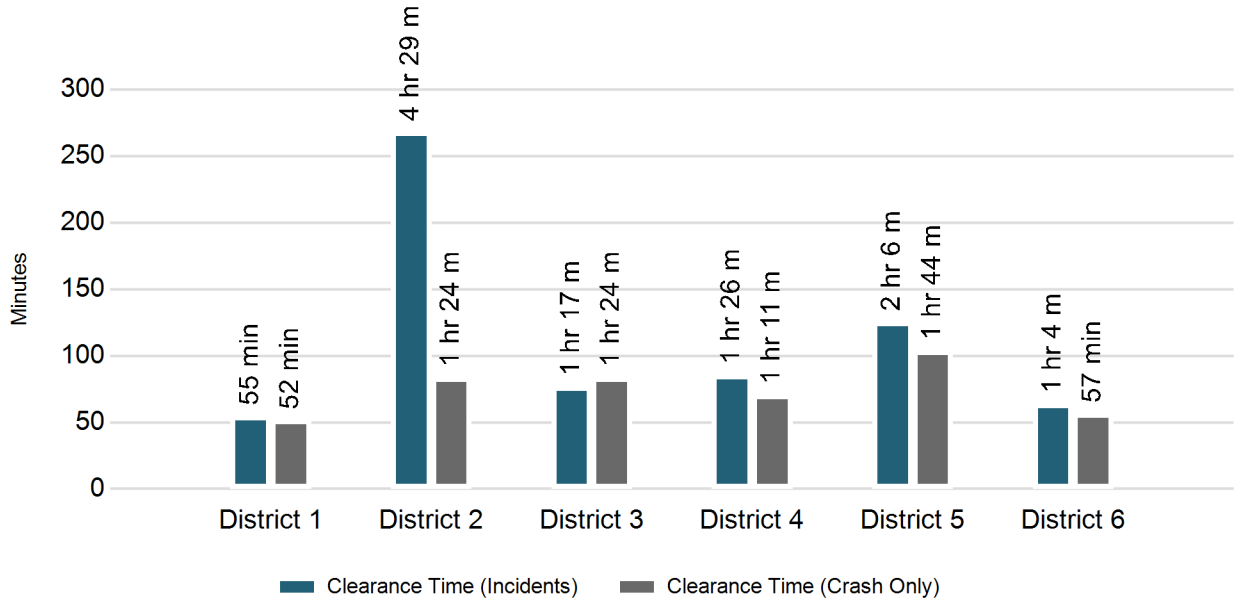
Incidents with excessive clearance times

TYPE	# EVENTS	AVERAGE DURATION	# SEMI	# FATALITY
2 Vehicle Crash	90	56 min	52	29
Standing Water	1	1 hr 23 m	0	0
3+ Vehicle Crash	20	1 hr 20 m	13	4
Request for Service	2	8 min	0	0
Towing Operation	28	3 hr 5 m	11	0
Abandoned CMV	1	25 min	0	0
1 Vehicle Crash	81	1 hr 5 m	52	10
Emergency Vehicles	14	1 hr 27 m	0	2
Grass Fire	3	22 min	0	0
Abandoned Vehicle	1	1 hr 15 m	0	0
Vehicle Fire	13	1 hr 5 m	13	1
Debris	10	33 min	1	0
Emergency Repairs	2	18 hr 2 m	0	0
Stalled Vehicle	51	35 min	44	0

CRASHES

Crashes are one specific type of incident reported in the "Incident" section. Clearance times are tracked and reported for all incidents as well as crashes separately. Some incident types may have long clearance time durations and therefore crash clearance time is a more appropriate indicator of the impacts of quick clearance initiatives.

Average incident and crash clearance time by district



The average clearance time for incidents in District 2 is higher than usual due to IA-9 Lansing Bridge repairs occurring from May-June.

Article

Incident type by district

TYPE	DISTRICT 1	DISTRICT 2	DISTRICT 3	DISTRICT 4	DISTRICT 5	DISTRICT 6
1 Vehicle Crash	655	87	127	354	126	509
2 Vehicle Crash	844	80	117	179	65	394
3+ Vehicle Crash	222	17	17	31	12	82
Abandoned CMV	49	3	1	39	4	41
Abandoned Vehicle	2,363	44	182	661	69	1,871
Debris	266	27	54	63	19	190
Earlier Crash	160	42	62	104	58	167
Emergency Repairs	20	7	11	6	4	25
Emergency Vehicles	101	14	18	41	22	75
Flooding	1	3	0	1	0	6
Grass Fire	15	6	5	21	3	22
Request for Service	732	330	345	240	261	655
Slow Traffic	377	8	4	61	1	215
Stalled Vehicle	8,361	294	667	5,388	365	6,598
Standing Water	8	3	1	6	4	8
Towing Operation	74	13	4	91	20	88
Train Derailment	0	1	1	0	0	0
Vehicle Fire	69	7	6	41	15	74
Winter Closure	0	2	0	1	0	1
Wrong Way Driver	4	0	0	1	10	63
Total	**14,321**	**988**	**1,622**	**7,329**	**1,058**	**11,084**
% of all Incidents	**39%**	**3%**	**4%**	**20%**	**3%**	**30%**

The total number of incidents reported in Districts 1, 4, and 6 are greater than the other Districts due to additional incident tracking by the Highway Helper program as well as higher traffic volumes in those Districts.

BY THE NUMBERS

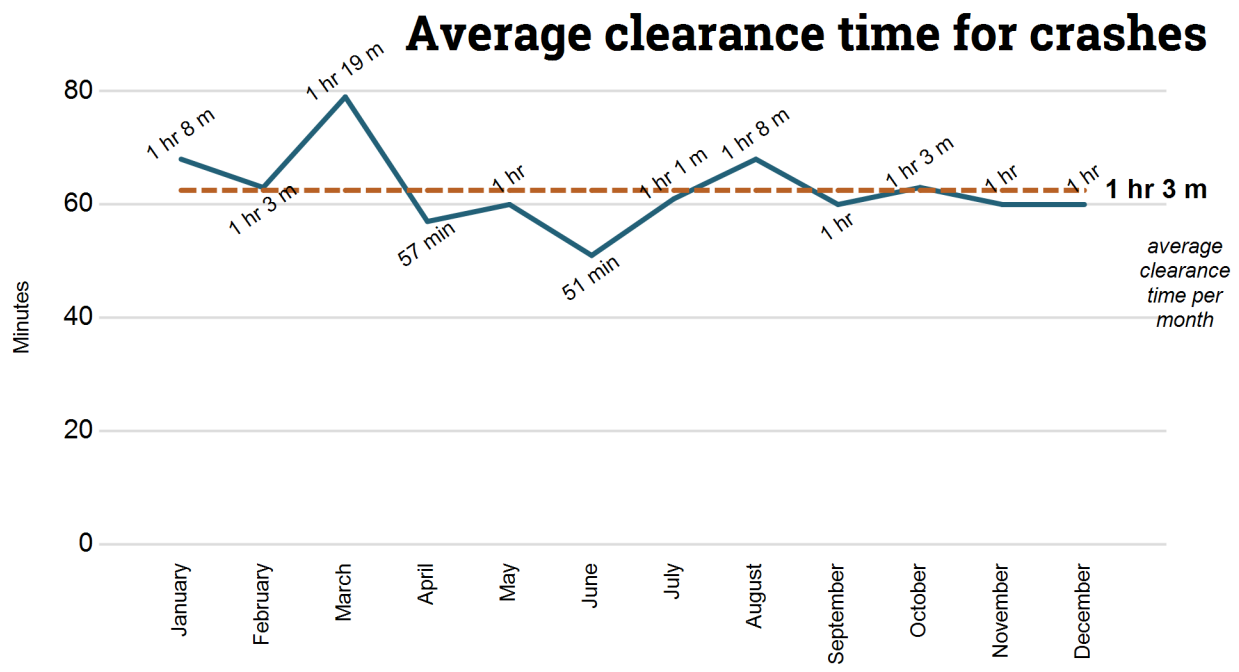
183
RURAL CRASHES OVER 120 MINUTES

1 hr 3 m
AVERAGE CRASH CLEARANCE TIME

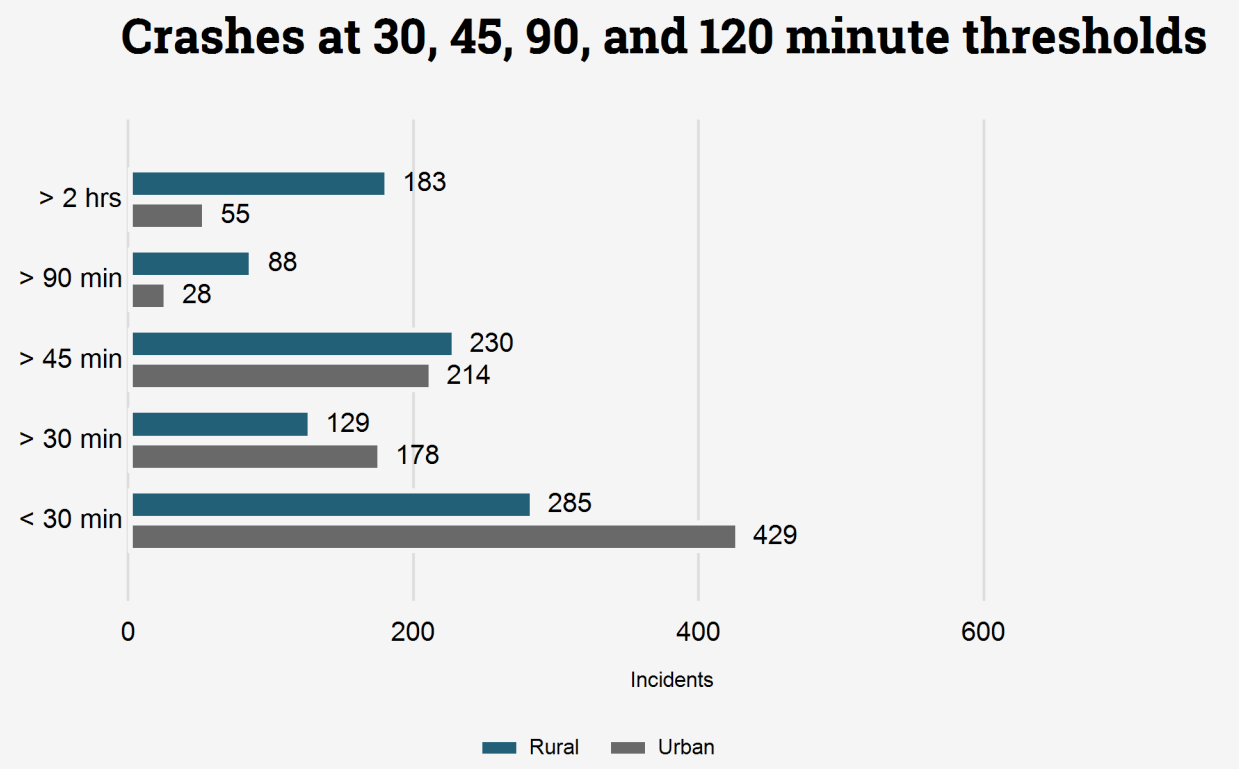
78 WRONG WAY DRIVER INCIDENTS

3,918
CRASHES MONITORED

The crash clearance time begins at the first notification of the crash and ends when the last responder has left the VFHQH b 7KLV includes only crashes and not other incident types.



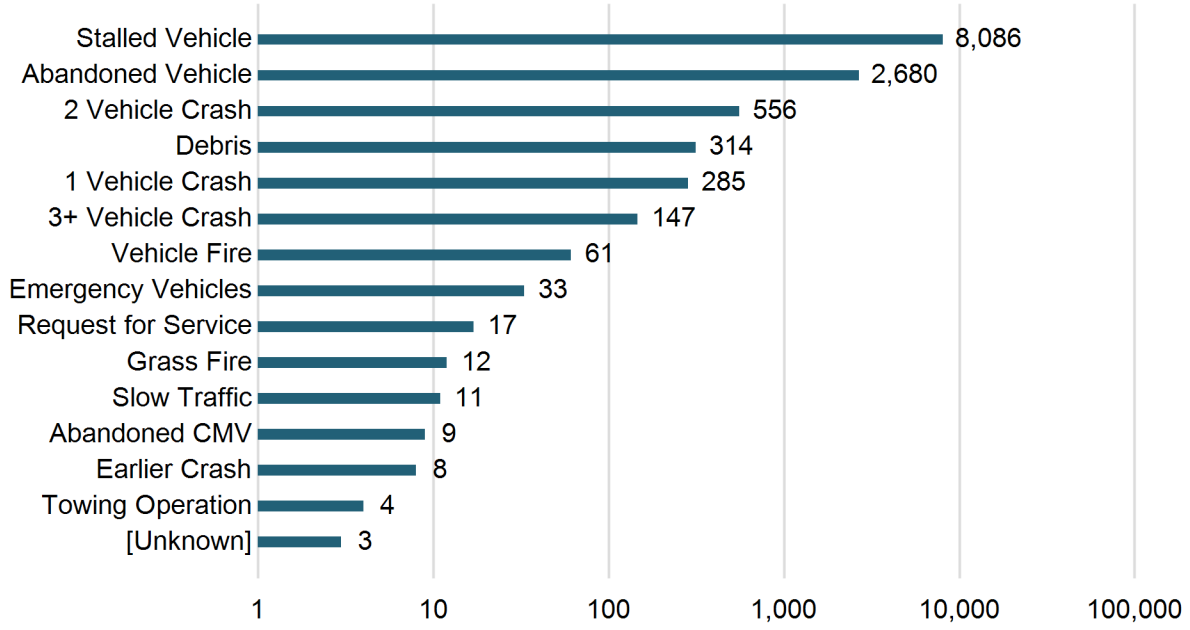
These performance measure thresholds were developed through the Joint Operations Policy Statement (JOPS), a collaboration between DOT & DPS.



HIGHWAY HELPER

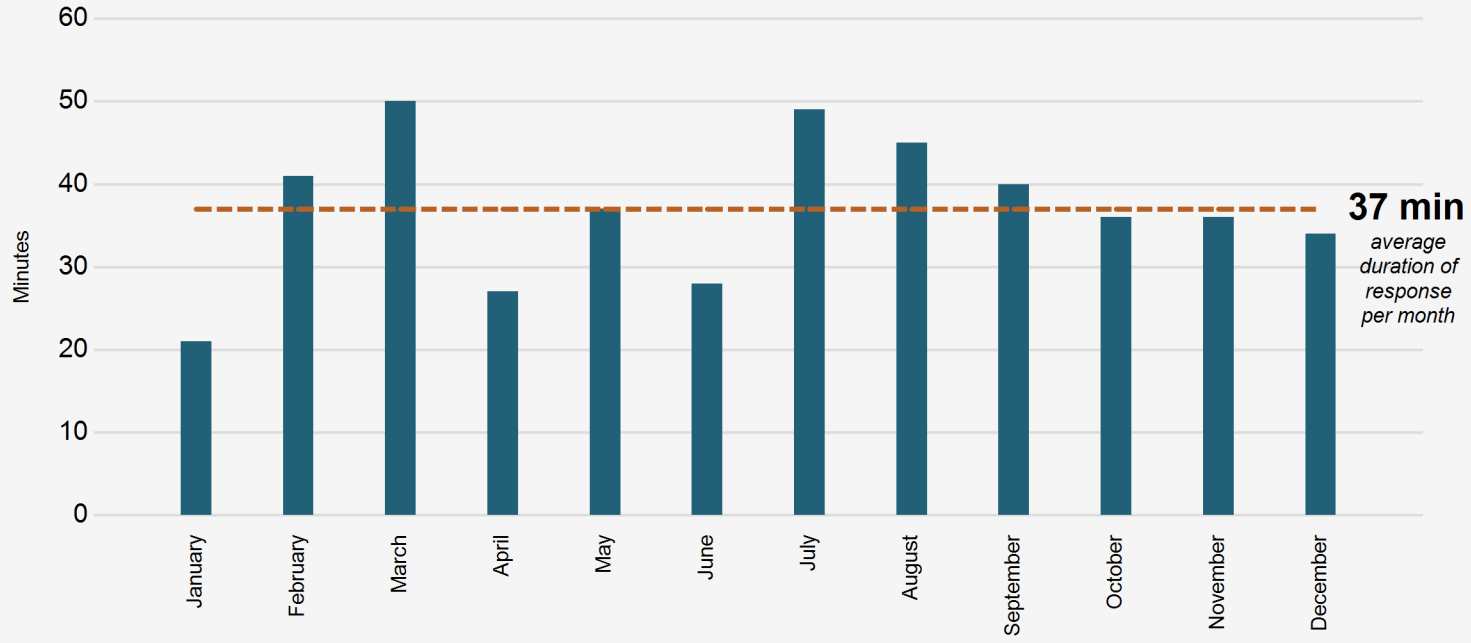
The TMC dispatches and tracks all Highway Helper activity. This section contains statistical and operational data of Highway Helper activities.

Types of incidents responses



This chart provides an overview of the number and types of Highway Helper responses.

Average duration of response



BY THE NUMBERS

12,226
HIGHWAY HELPER RESPONSES

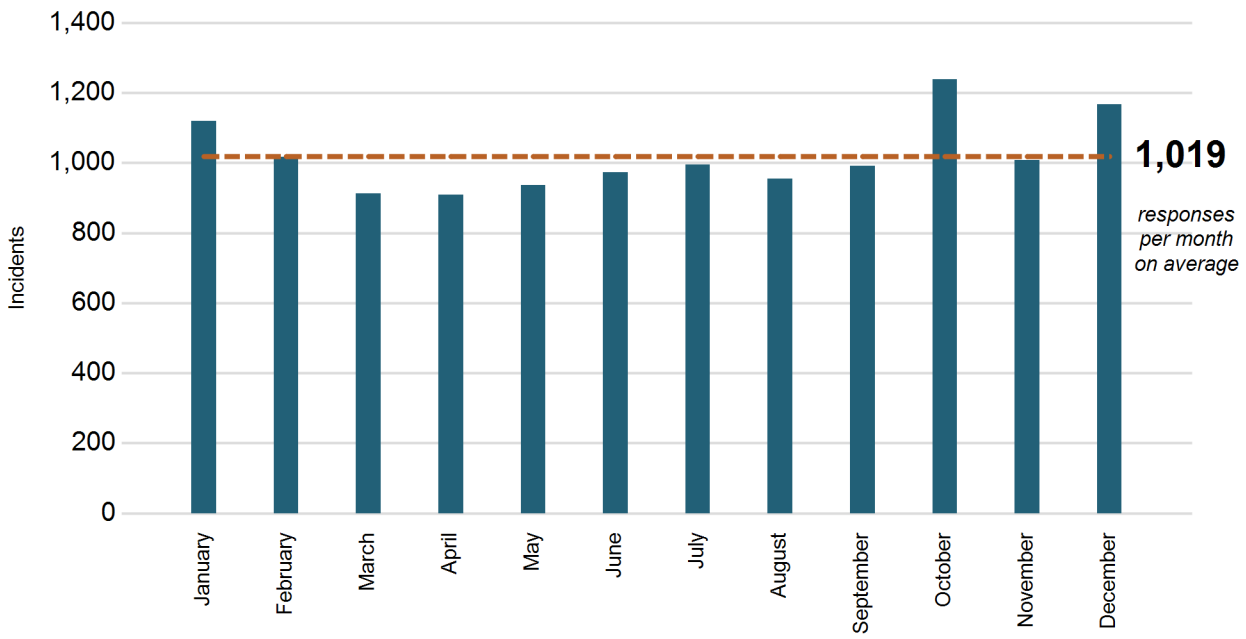
13,769
DEBRIS REMOVAL RESPONSES

967
SERVICES PERFORMED FOR THE MOTORIST (FUEL, FLAT TIRE, JUMP START, DIRECTIONS ETC)

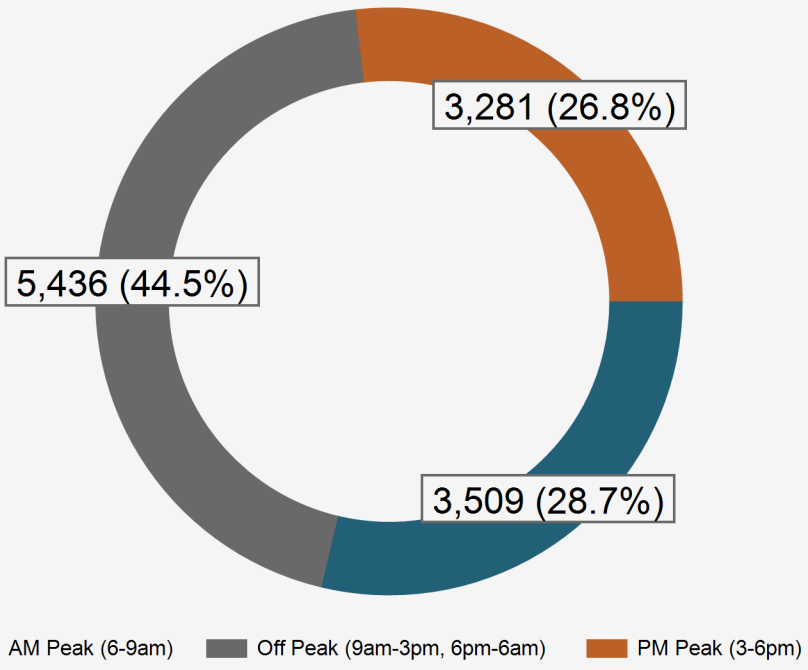
44% RESPONSES OCCURRED DURING OFF PEAK HOURS

The most Highway Helper responses during 2025 occurred in October.

Responses by month

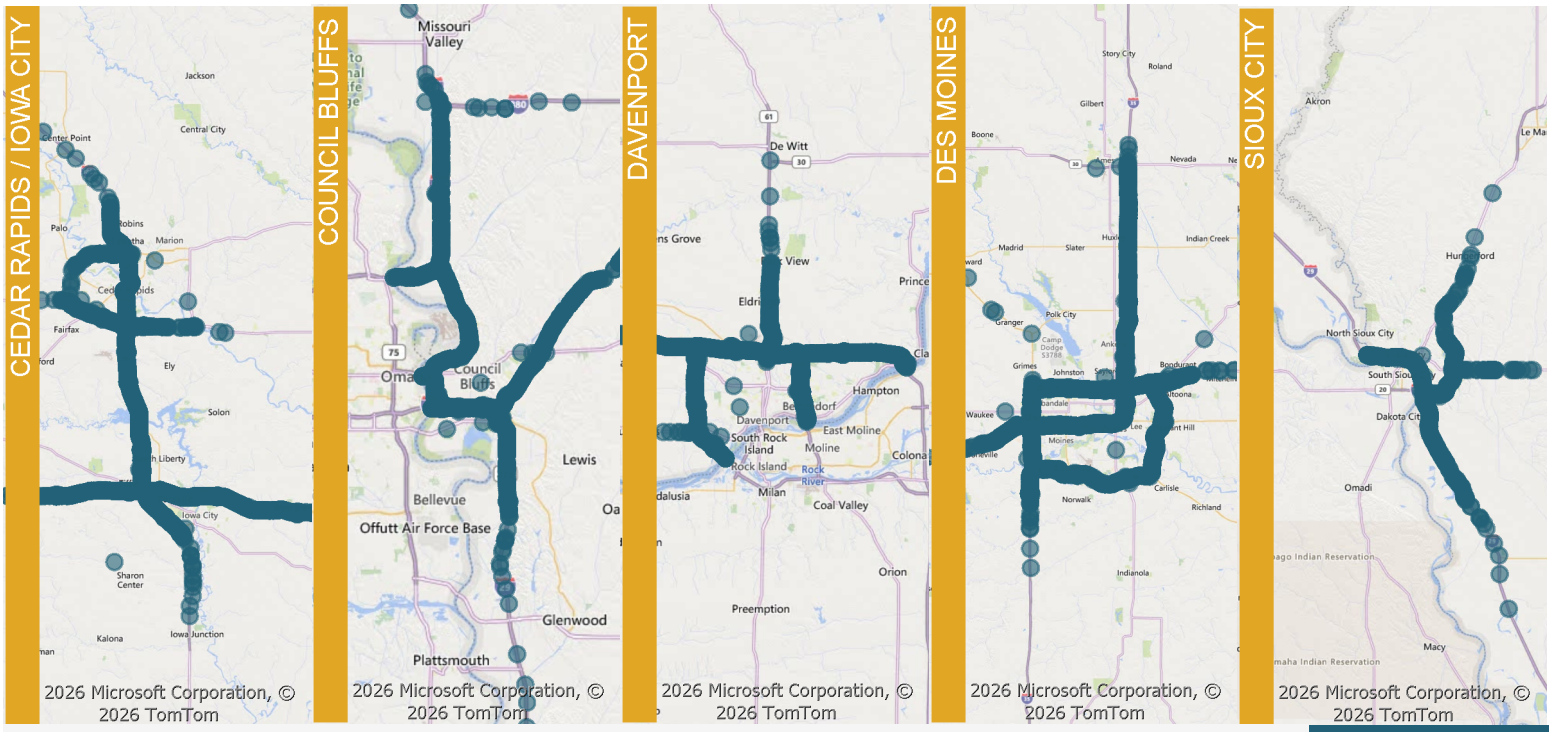


Responses by time of day

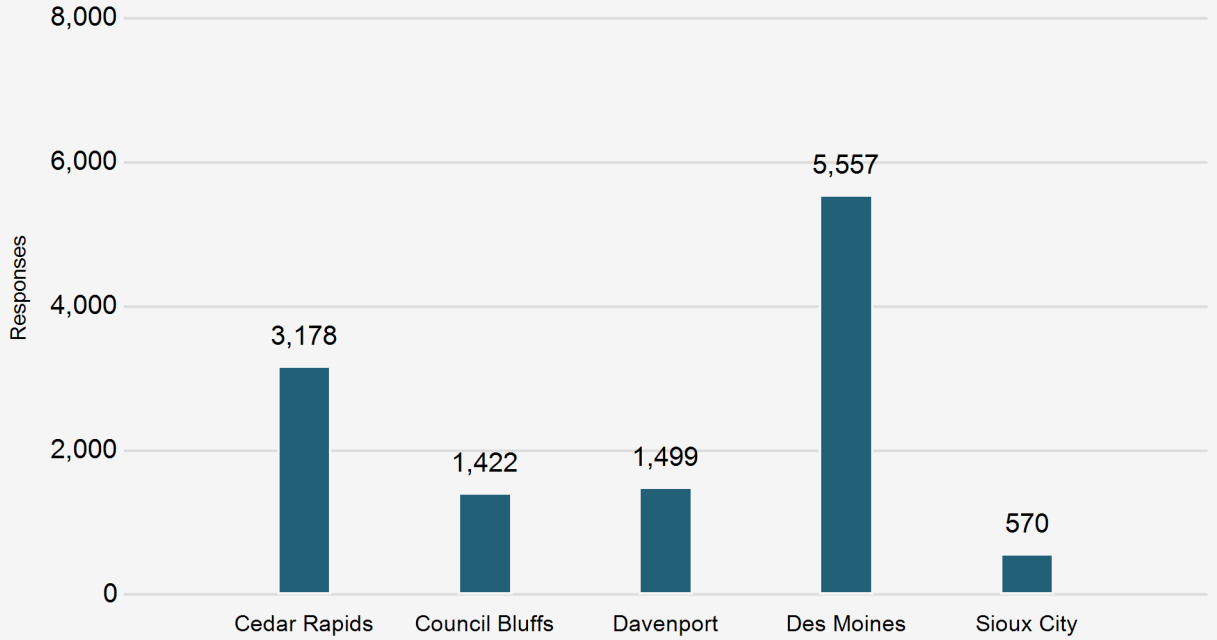


HIGHWAY HELPER

All responses by operational area



All responses by operational area



Highway Helper trucks are dispatched in five (5) operational areas from 5am to 9pm Monday through Friday and 10am to 6pm Saturday in Des Moines, including some holidays and special events.

BY THE NUMBERS

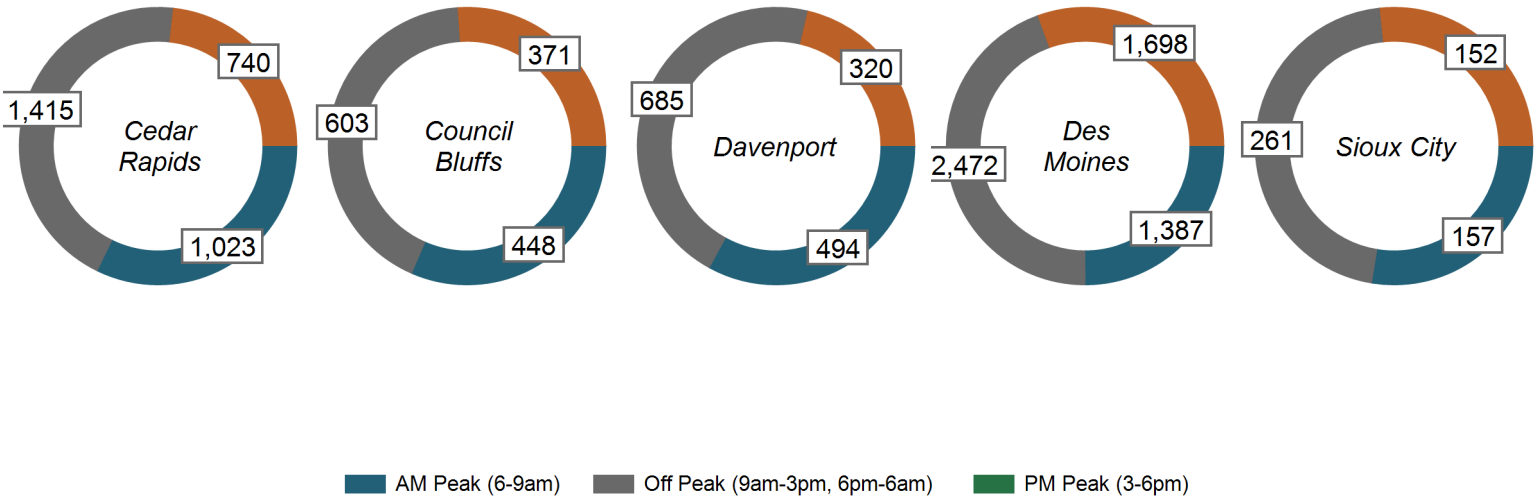
935
RESPONSES TO LANE BLOCKING INCIDENTS

28 min
AVERAGE RESPONSE DURATION

66%

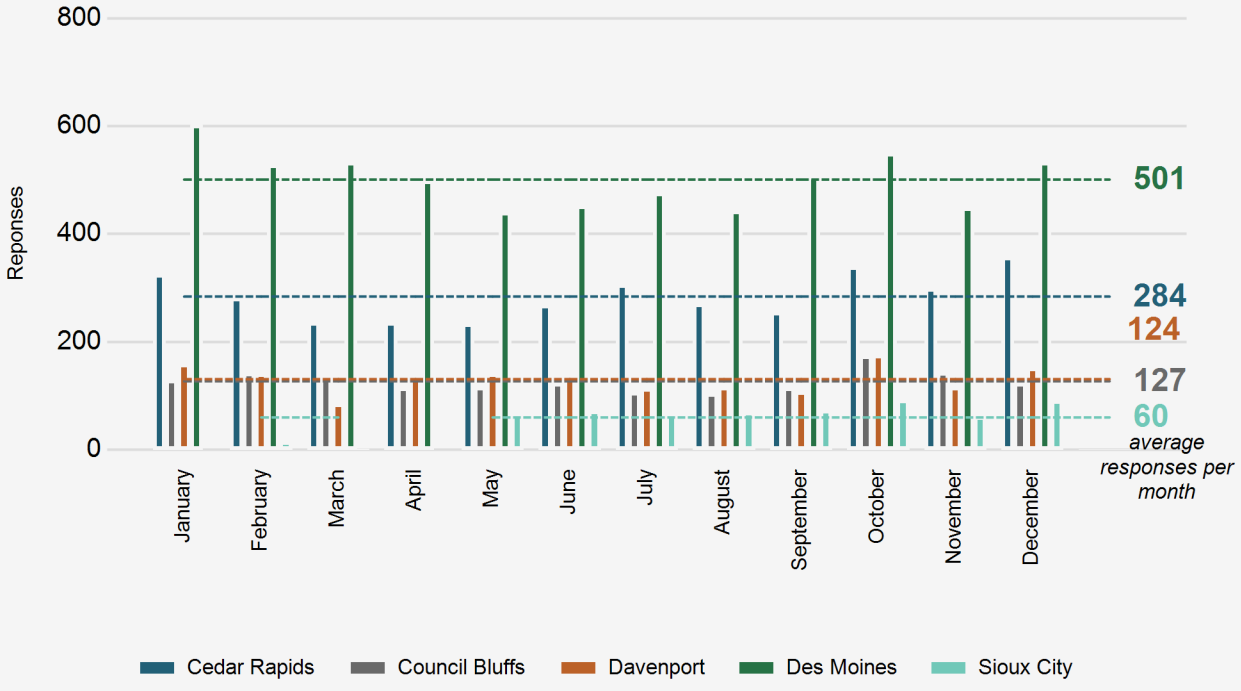
988 RESPONSES TO CRASHES

All responses by time of day by operational area



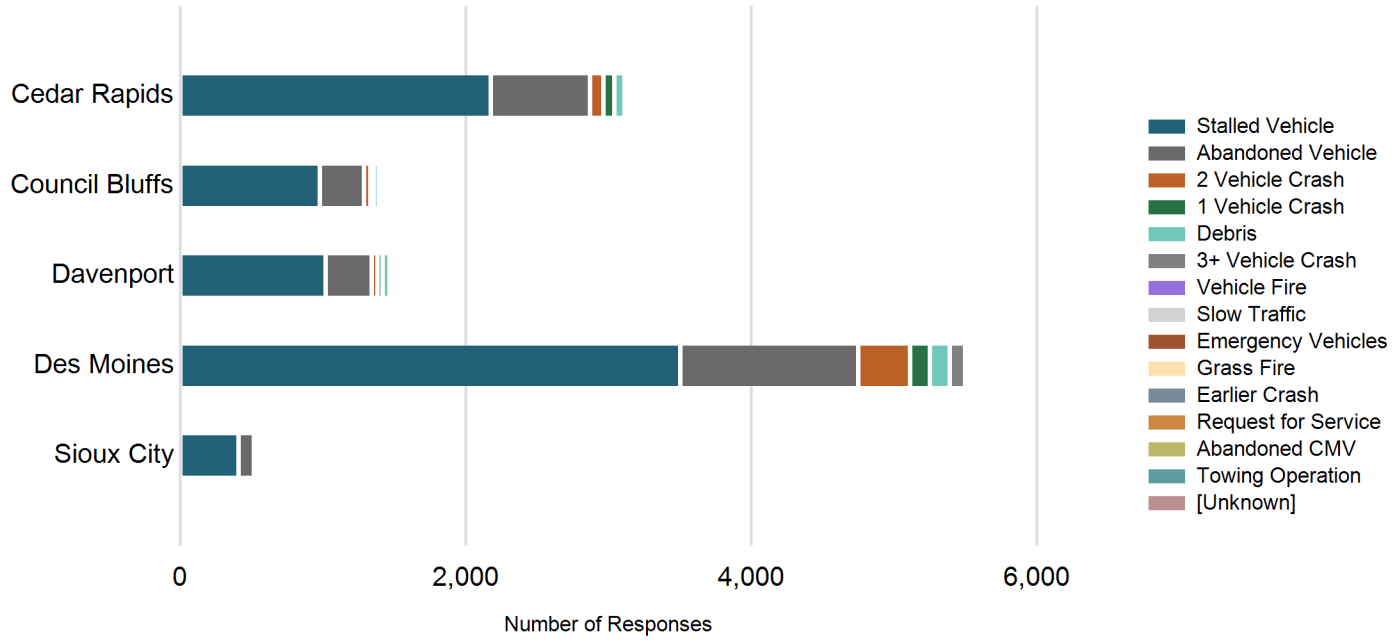
The Highway Helper service operates twelve months a year with higher responses during winter months. Additional service is provided for special events, such as the Iowa State Fair.

All responses by month by operational area

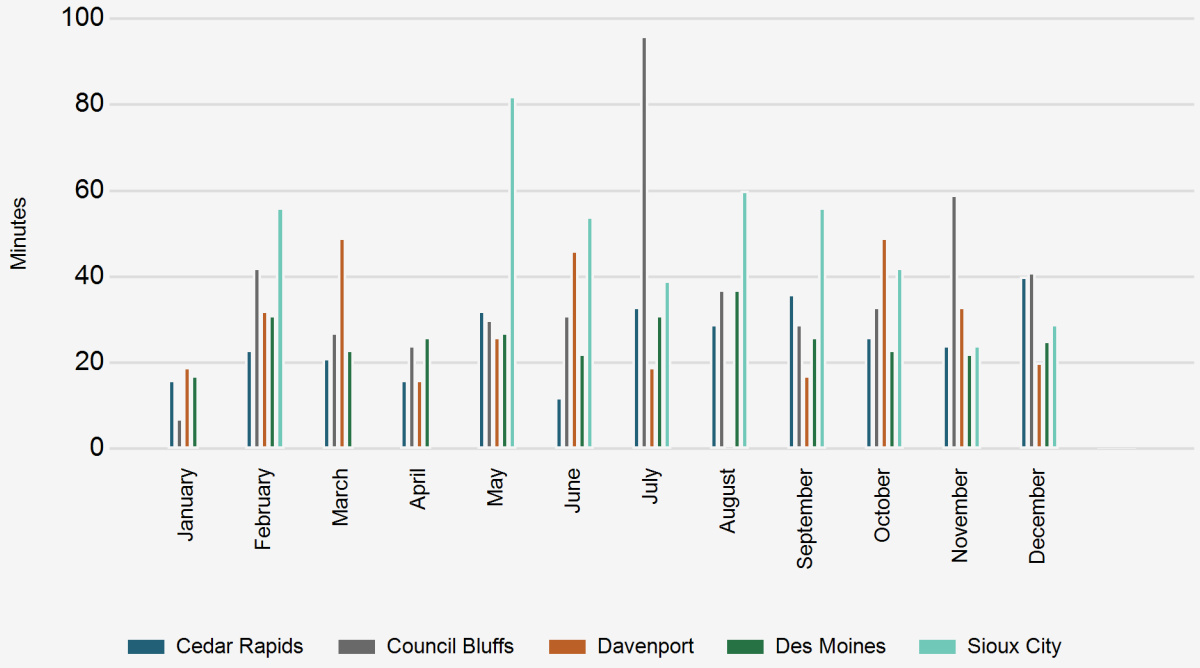


HIGHWAY HELPER

Types of incident response by operational area



Average duration of response by operational area

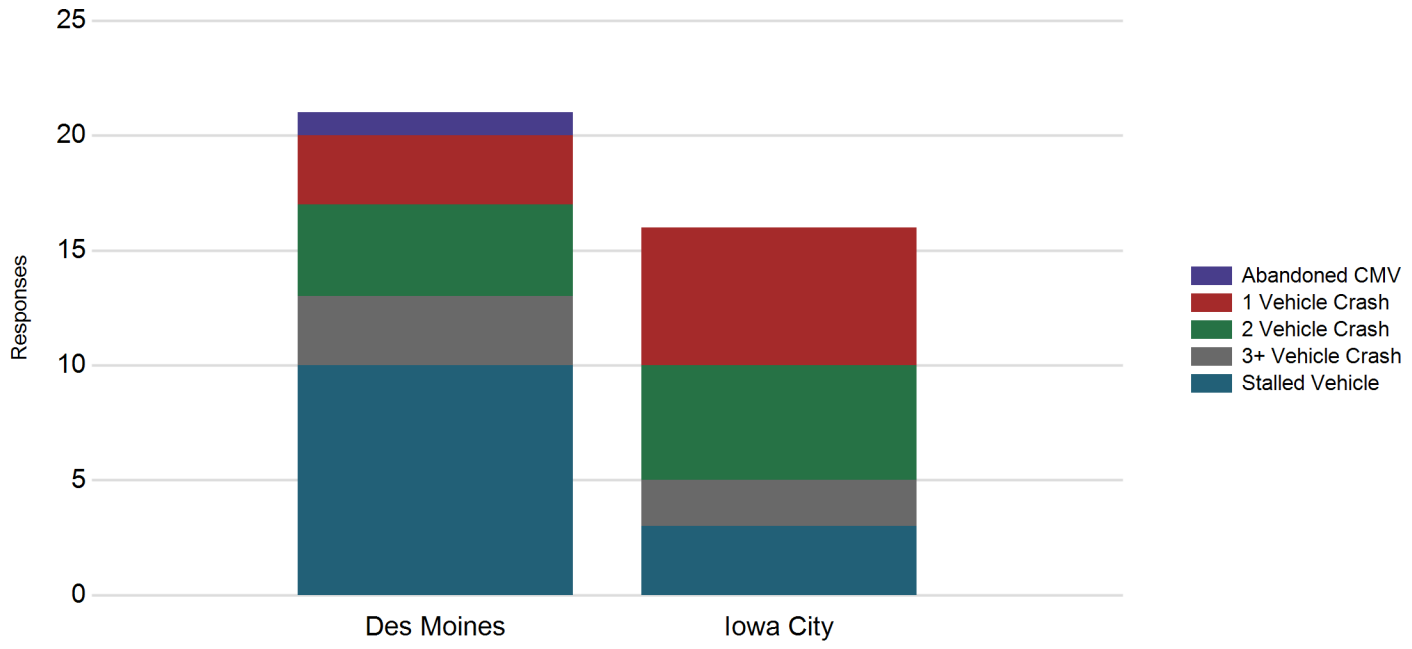


The duration of the Highway Helper response is determined by tracking the time between when the Highway Helper truck arrived on scene to the time departed.

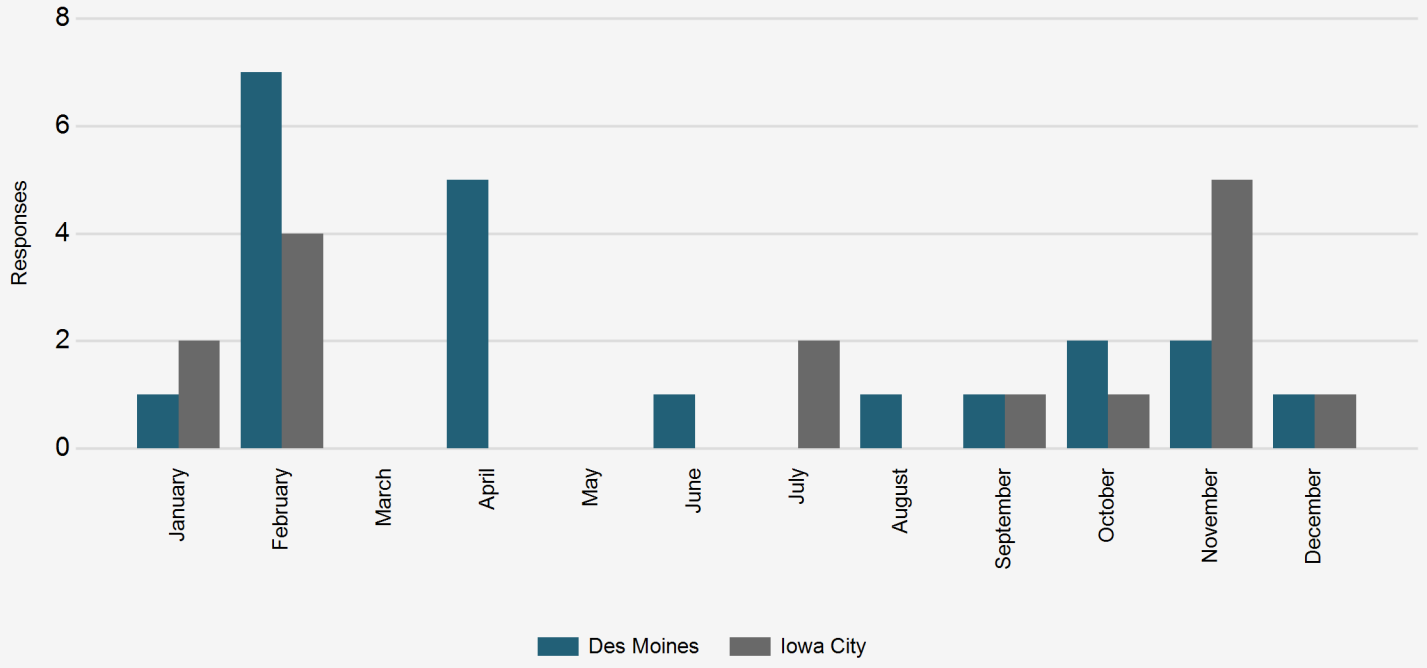
TRIP

Towing and Recovery Incentive Program (TRIP)
TRIP is a new program in the Iowa City and Des Moines areas that helps clear crashes more quickly, offering incentives to towing companies to have specialized equipment ready to respond to commercial vehicle crashes.

Responses by incident type



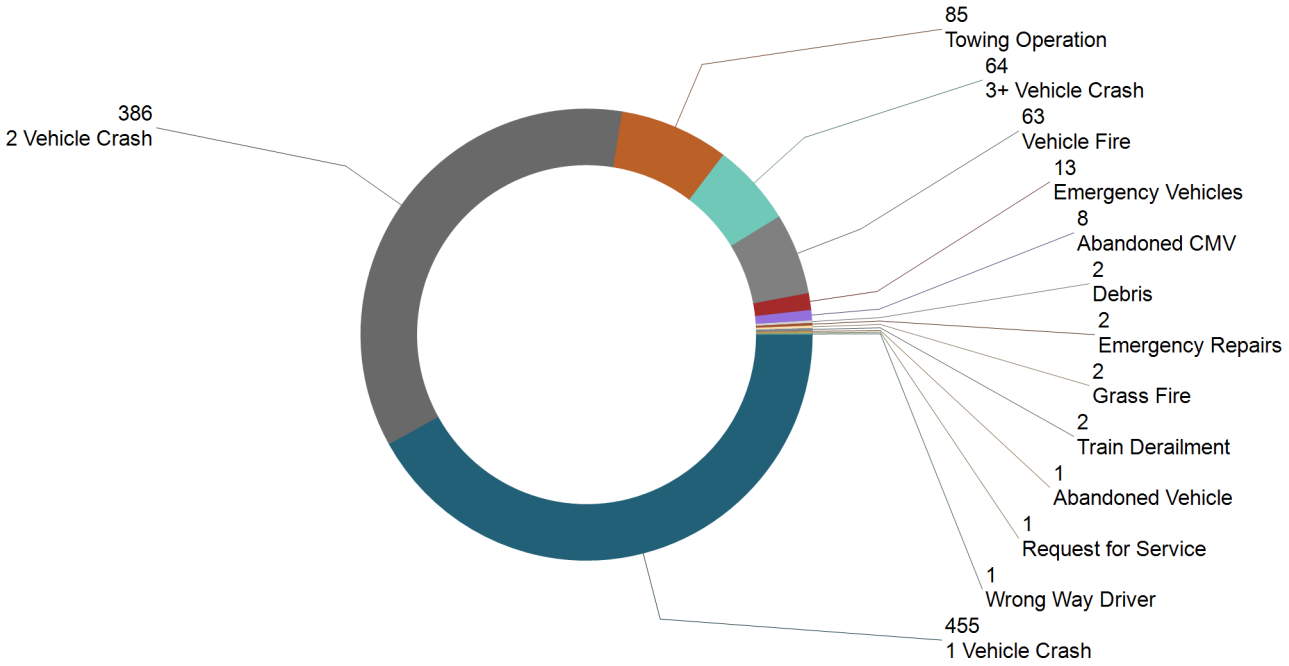
Responses by month



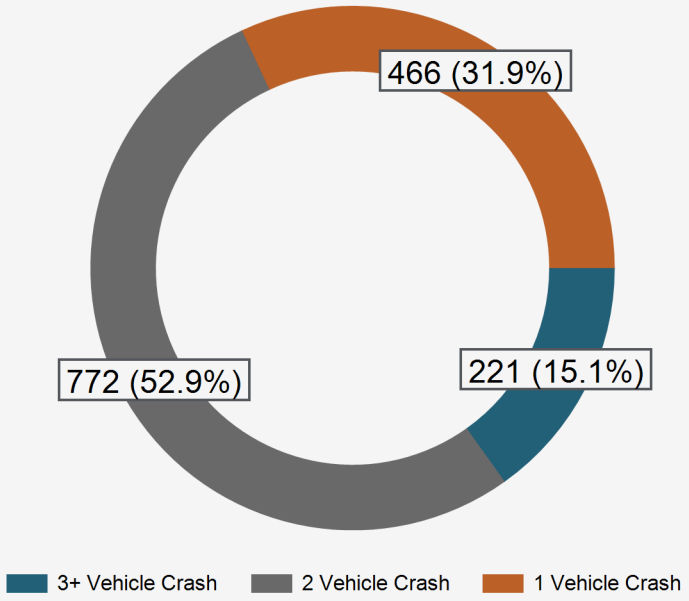
FREIGHT

Incidents involving freight transportation are specifically tracked as they are reported to the TMC. This section contains statistical and operational data regarding freight.

Types of incidents involving a semi



Number of vehicles involved in semi related crashes

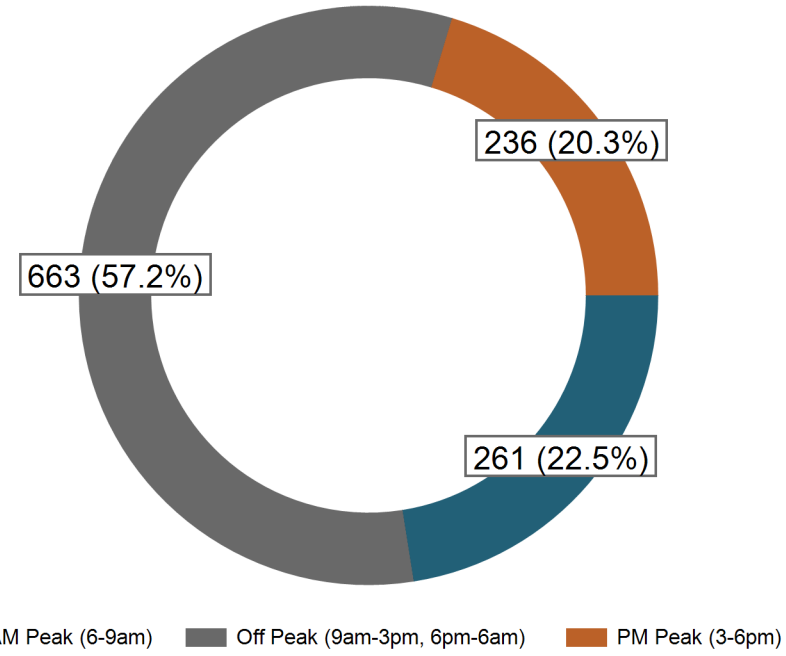


Incidents involving a semi have the potential to be more impactful on traffic since they are a larger vehicle which may take additional time to clear. The TMC specifically tracks when an incident or crash involves a semi to better understand these traffic impacts.

BY THE NUMBERS

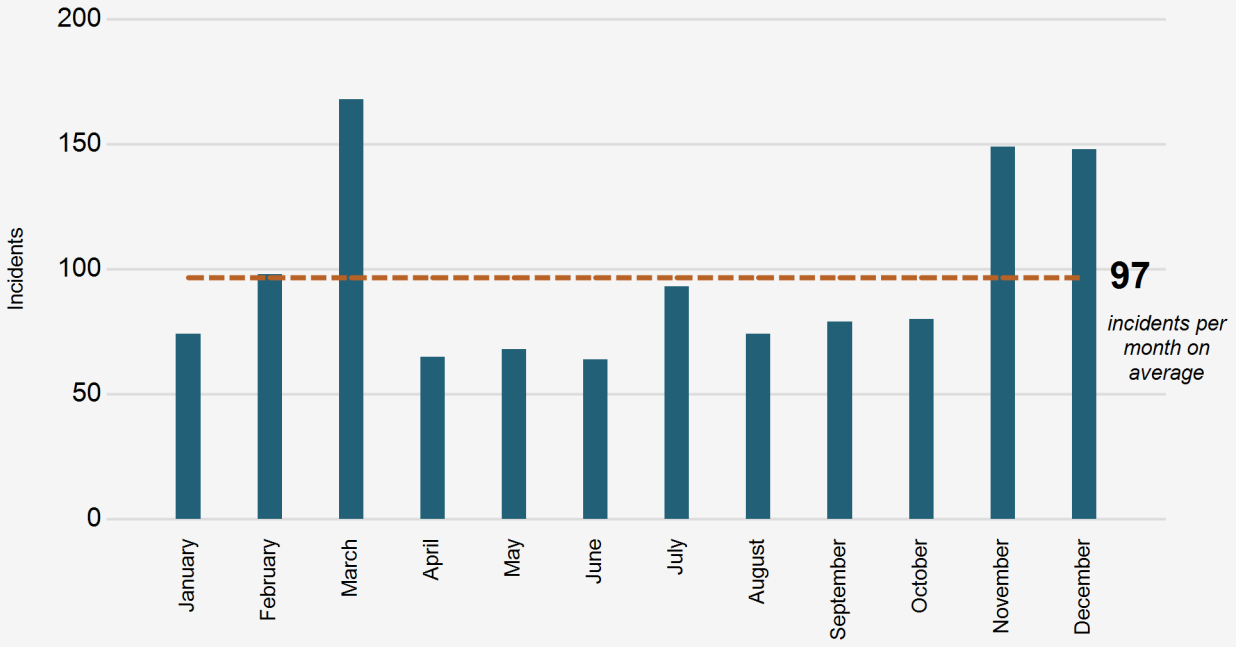
206	70	1 hr 34 m
RAIL INCIDENTS	TRAIN DERAILMENTS	AVERAGE CLEARANCE TIME FOR LANE BLOCKING INCIDENTS INVOLVING A TRACTOR TRAILER
4 HAZMAT SPILLS		

Freight incidents by time of day



Freight incidents are incidents involving semis or railroads.

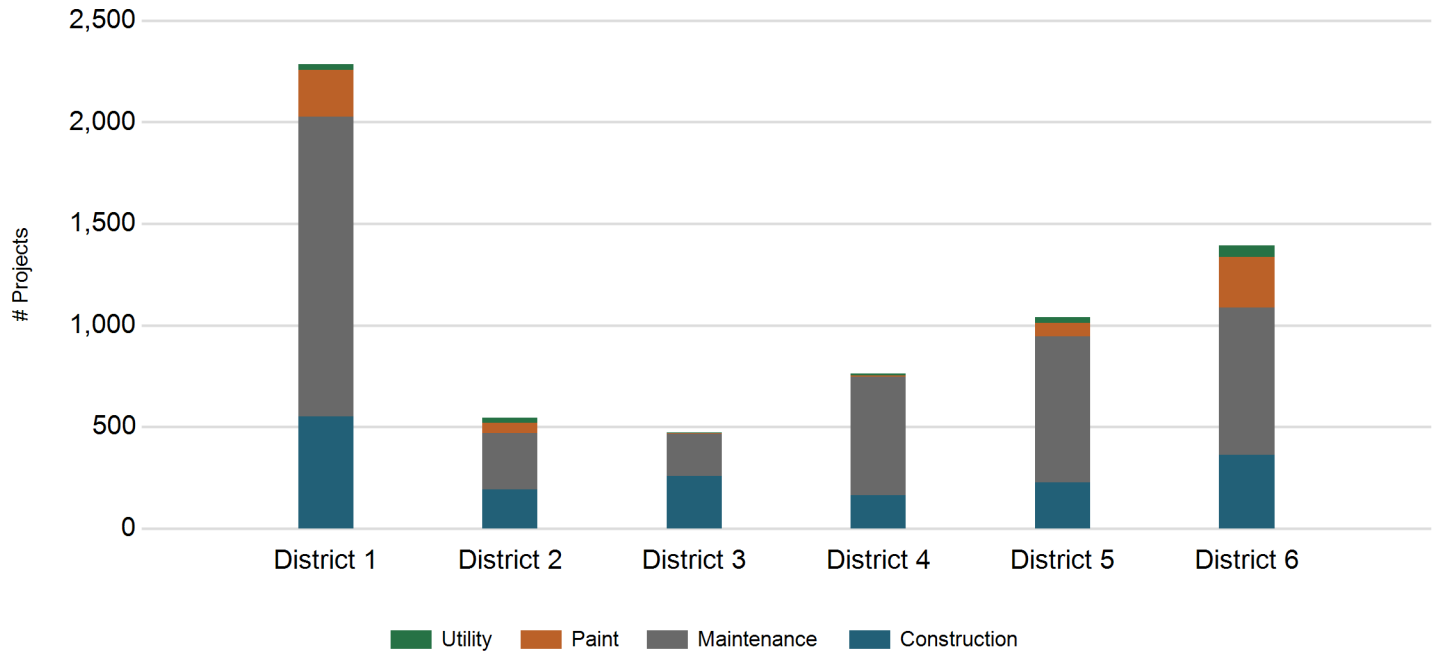
Freight incidents by month



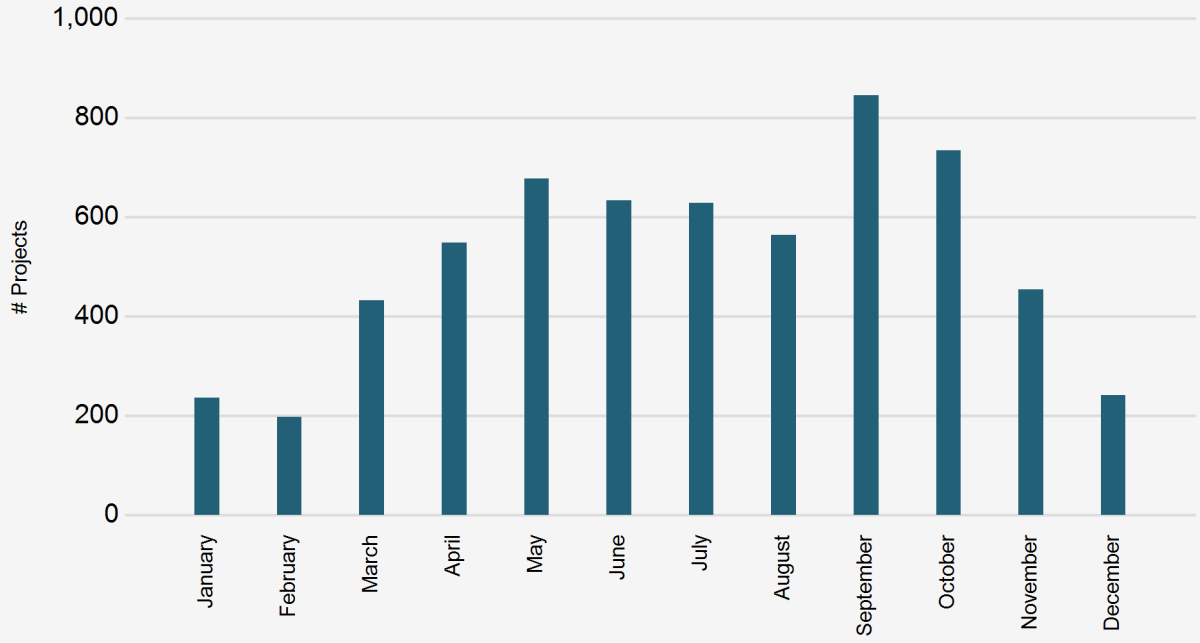
WORK ZONES

Work zone activity is tracked by the TMC for each change in a work zone, not a project as a whole. An event is logged into the system for each work zone configuration change or lane closure on a project.

Work zone events by district



Number of work zone events by month



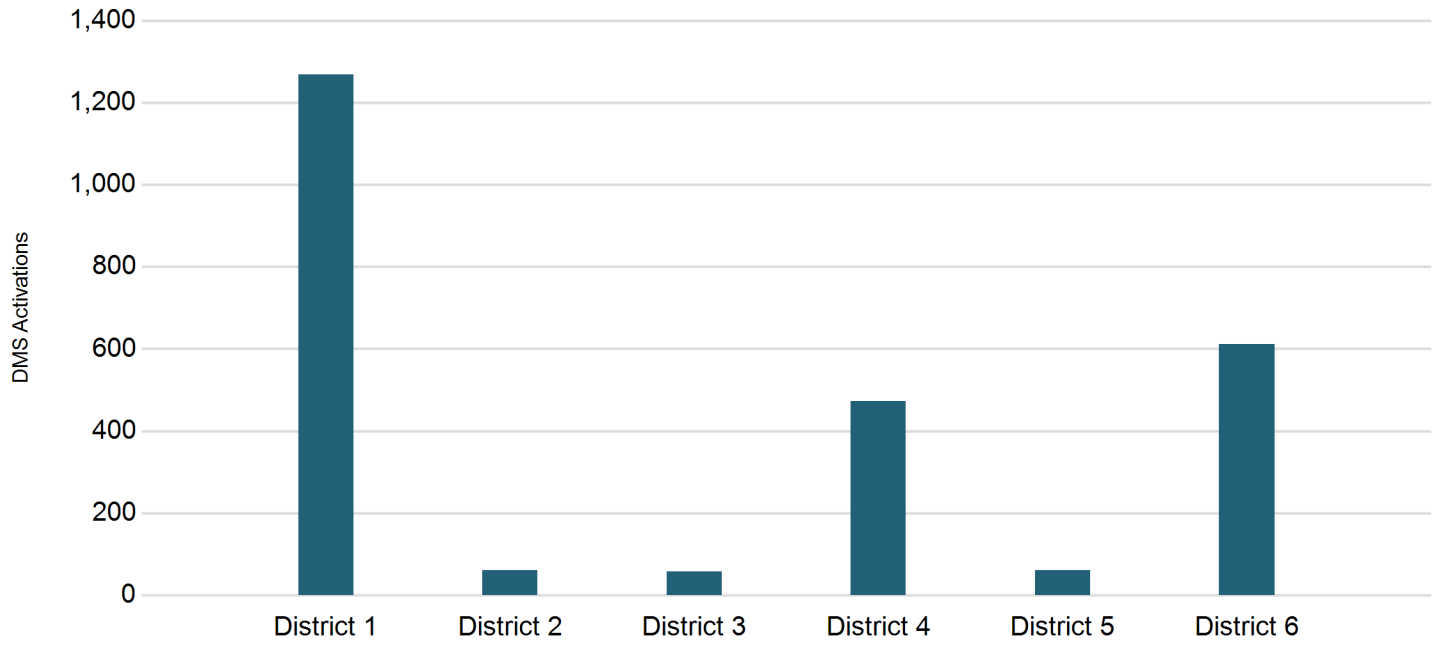
The data is used by the TMC to provide messages on the DMS, manage work zone contact information, and situational awareness.

BY THE NUMBERS

869	2,532	6,498
WORK ZONE INCIDENTS	WORK ZONE DMS ACTIVATIONS	TOTAL ROADWORK EVENTS

45 INTELLIGENT WORK ZONES

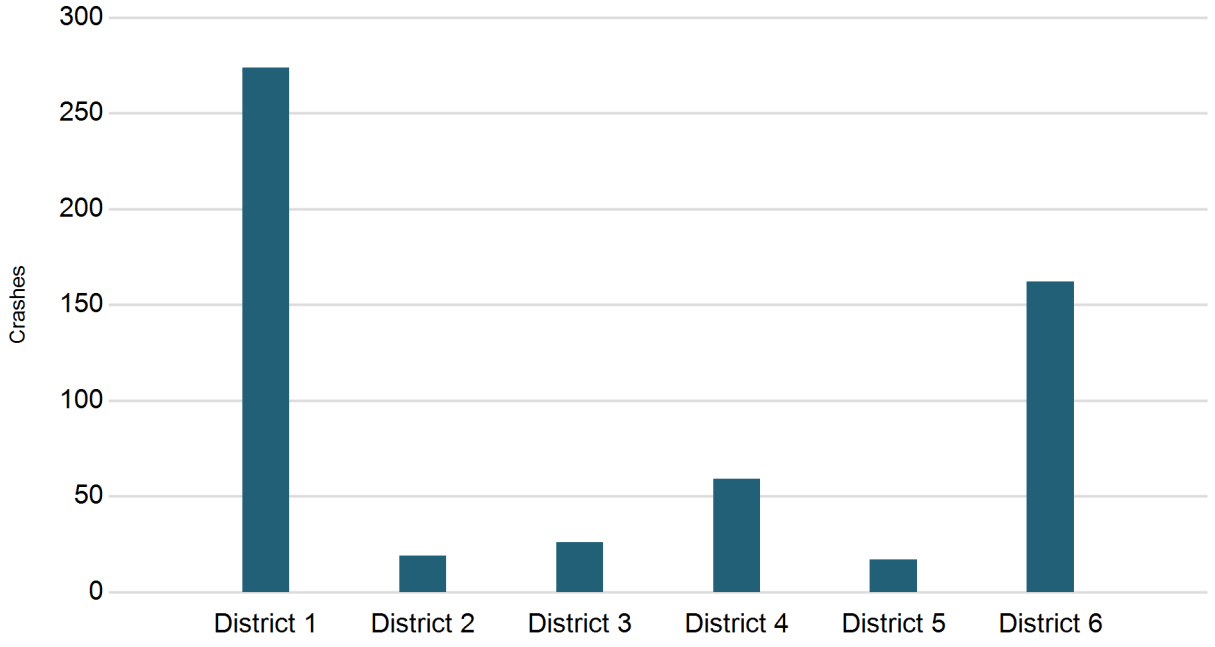
Work zone DMS activations by district



The reported values are based on events that require action by TMC operators and not reflecting all work zone related crashes. Changes in the number of TMC reported work zone incidents between years may be due to work zones located in highly monitored areas by the TMC.

Work zone crashes by district

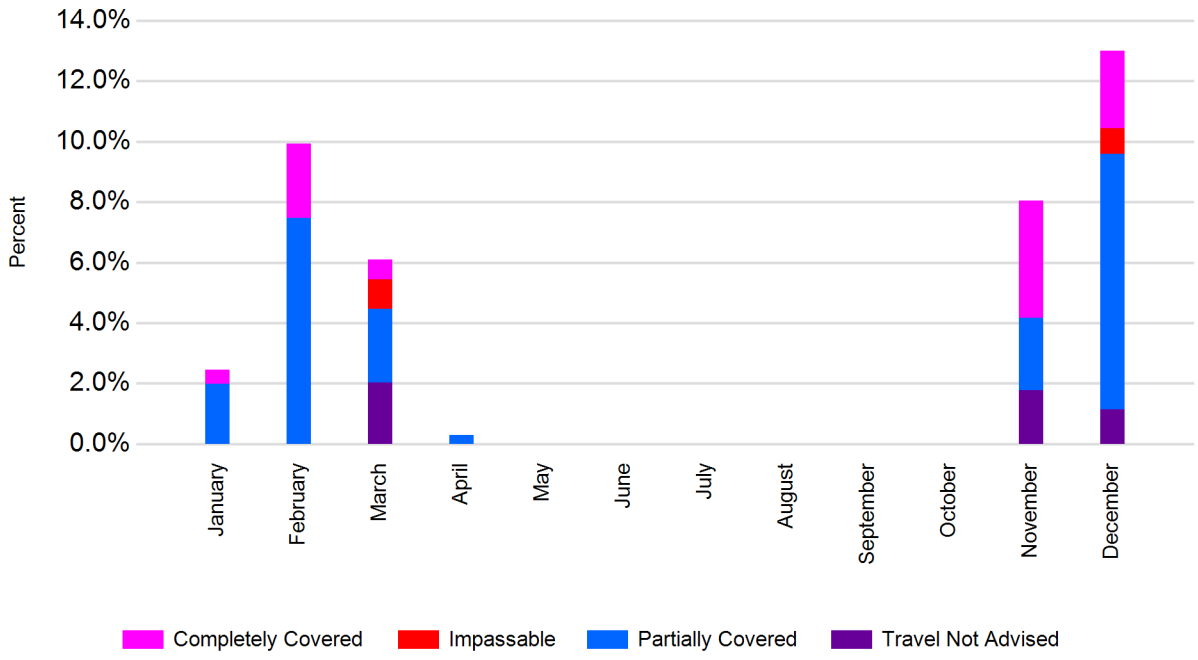
** As reported to the TMC*



WEATHER

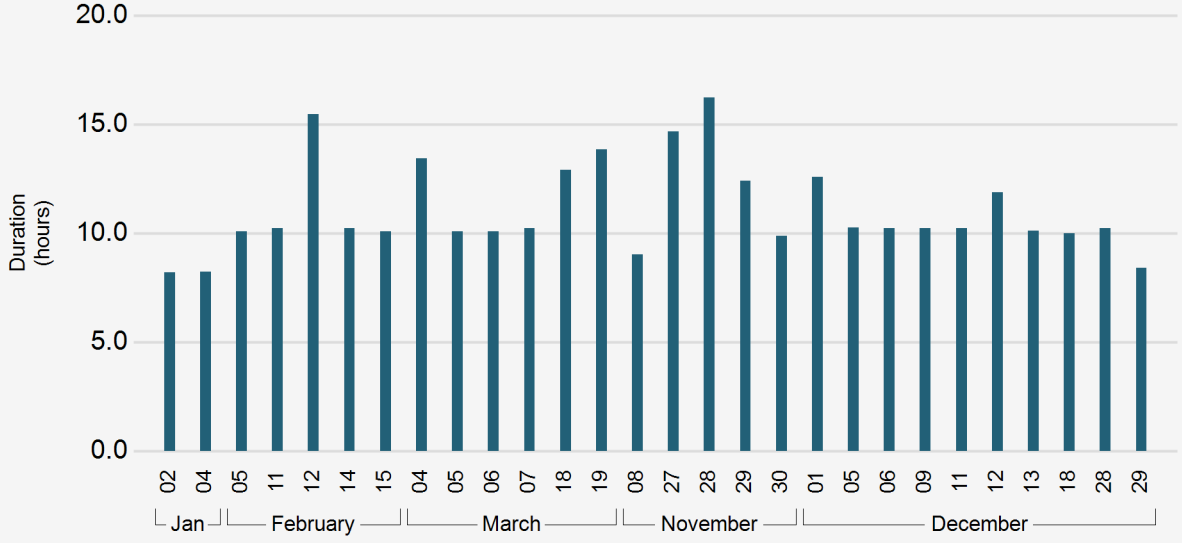
Weather can have a serious impact on the safety and mobility of roadway users. The TMC responds to dynamic conditions by using technology and communication tools to assist partners in restoring the transportation system to normal conditions.

Road conditions by type



This chart displays the percentage of time during the month over all segments where adverse winter weather conditions were reported.

Winter events



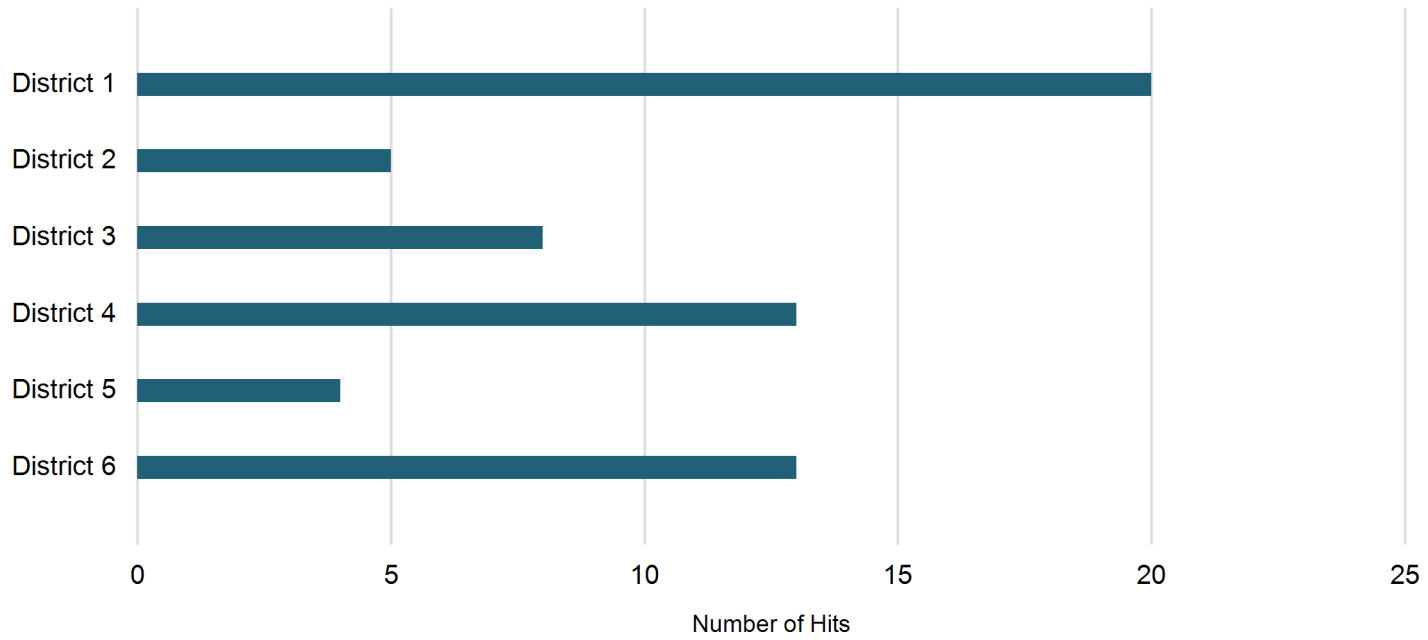
These winter events were determined based on a Winter Warning or Advisory where at least one crash has been reported to the TMC within the affected counties.

BY THE NUMBERS

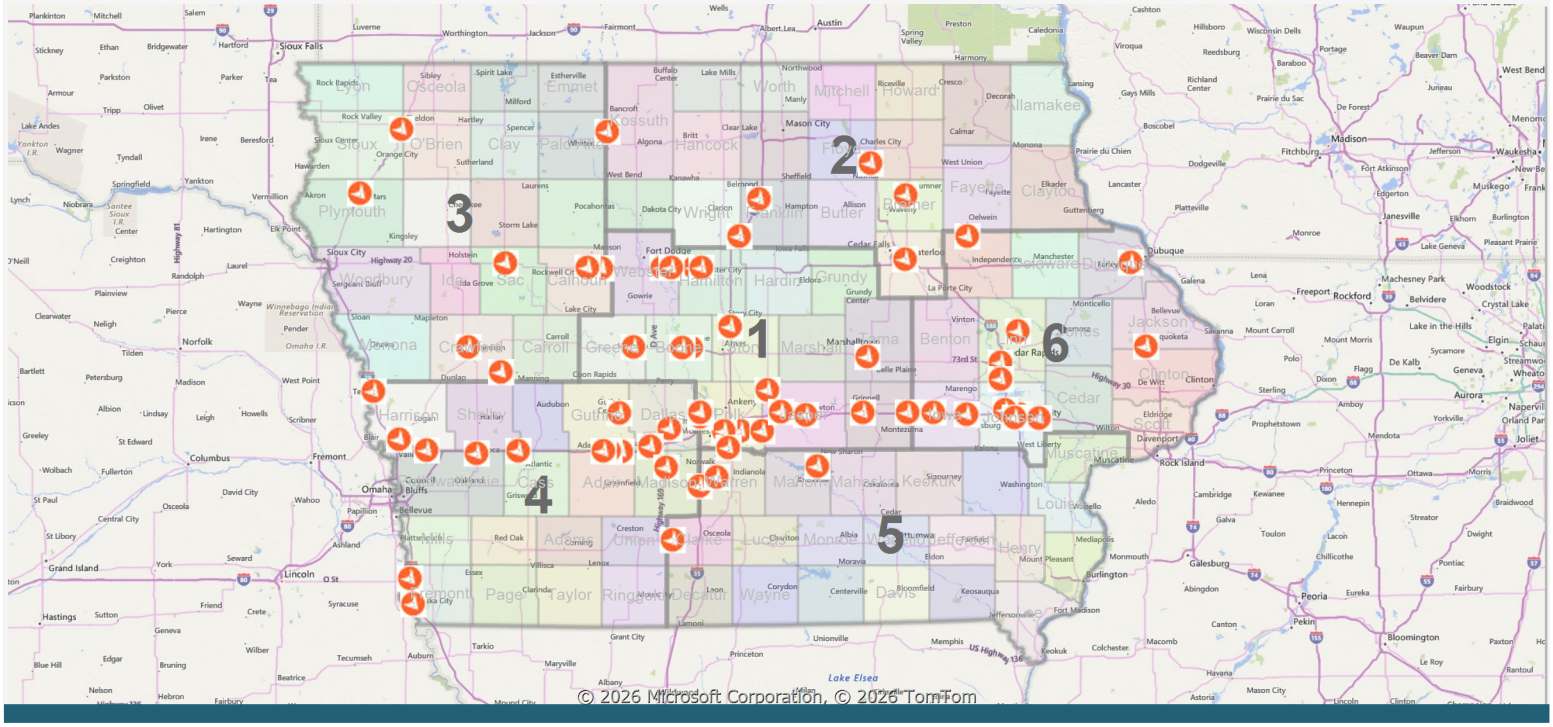
28	7	64
WINTER EVENTS	FLOODING EVENTS	SNOW PLOW HITS

506 INCIDENTS DURING WINTER EVENTS

Snow plow hits per district



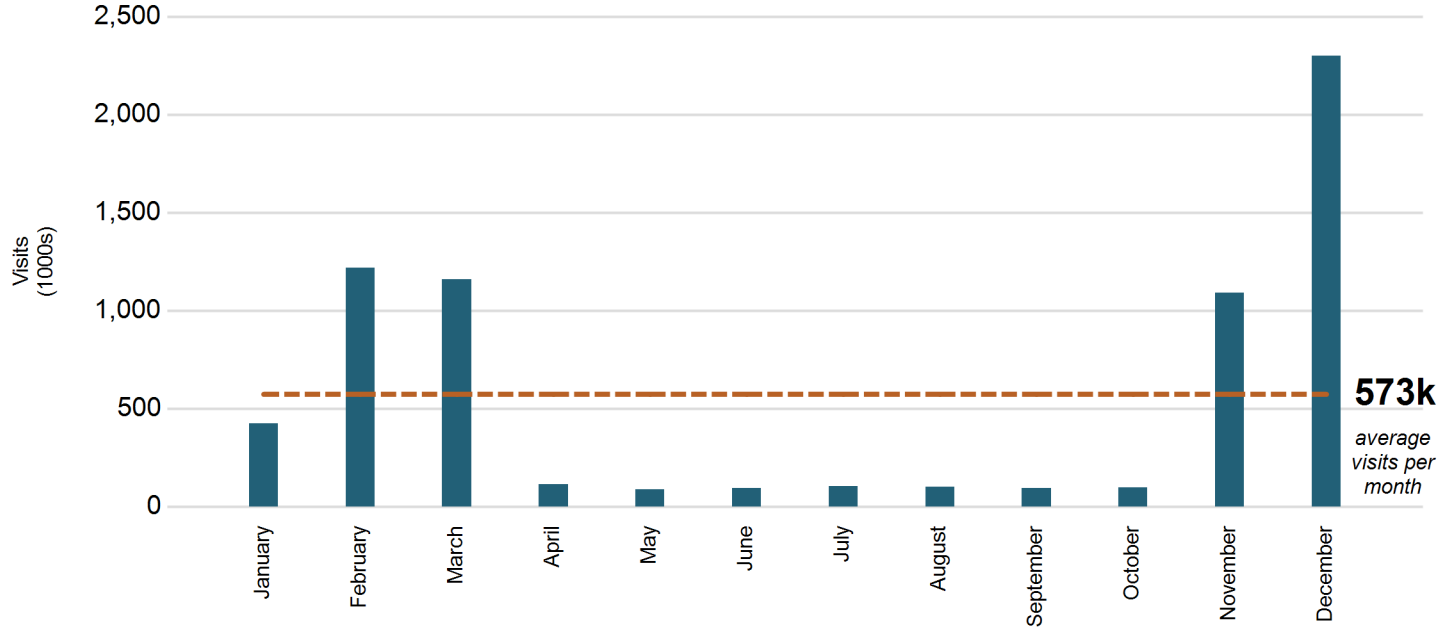
Snow plow hits



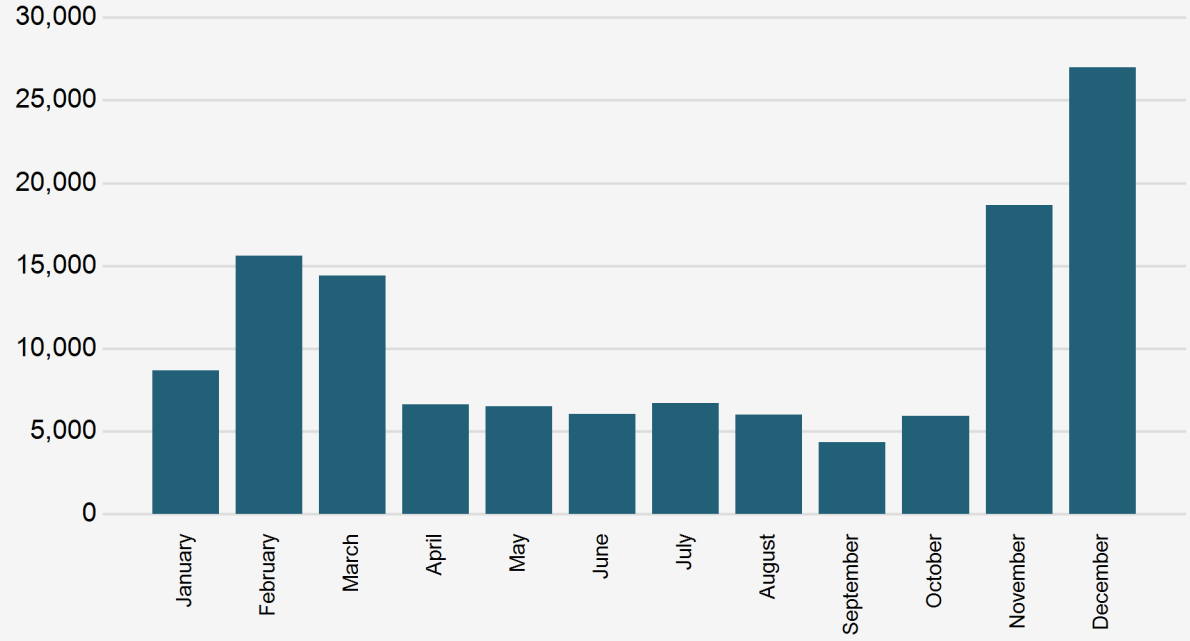
COMMUNICATION

Communication technologies play a crucial role in traffic operations. Effective traffic management, largely stemming from the TMC, relies on efficient communications and information systems to provide accessible guidance to the traveling public.

Visits to 511 website



511 mobile application downloads



The Iowa 511 mobile app offers real-time traffic information, including traffic events, speeds, cameras, and winter road conditions. It also features a Trucker Mode with resources specific to commercial vehicle operators, such as weigh station locations and restrictions.

BY THE NUMBERS

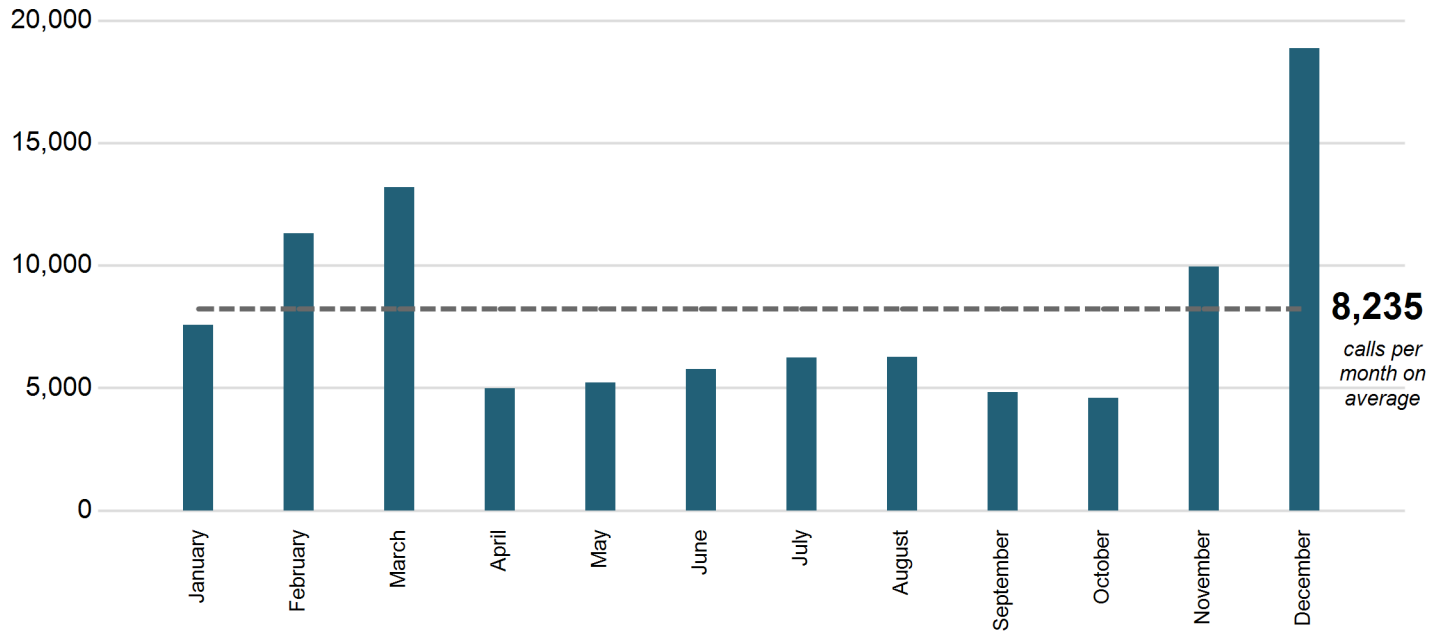
126,562
511 APP DOWNLOADS

98,821
PHONE CALLS TO 511

6,877,753
VISITS TO 511 TRAVELER INFORMATION WEBSITE

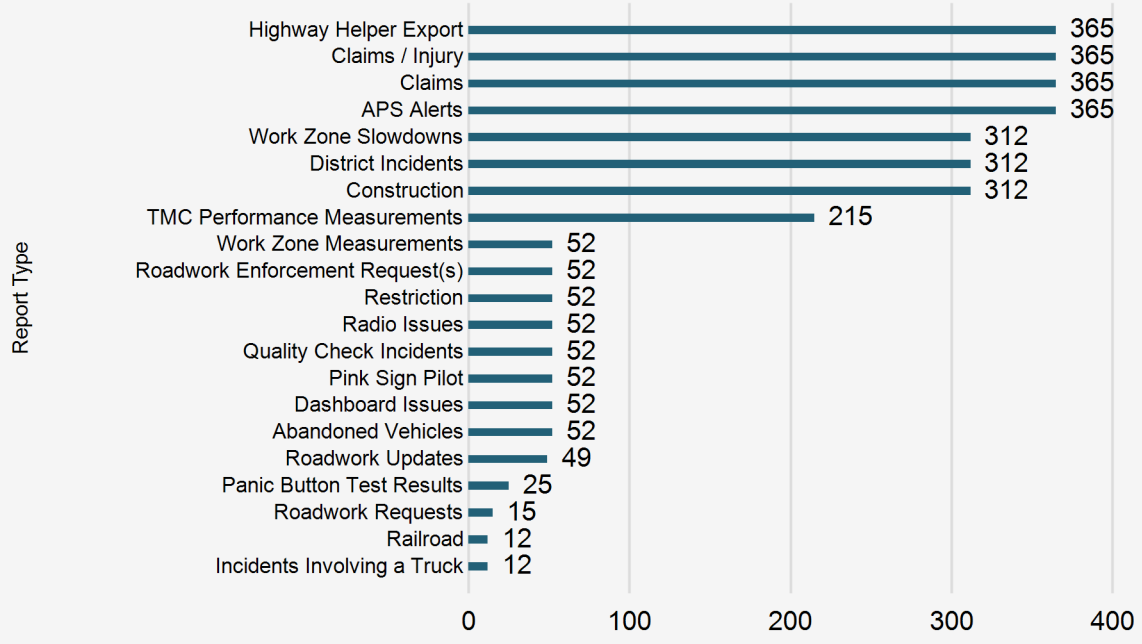
3,140 TMC DATA REPORTS GENERATED

511 phone calls by month



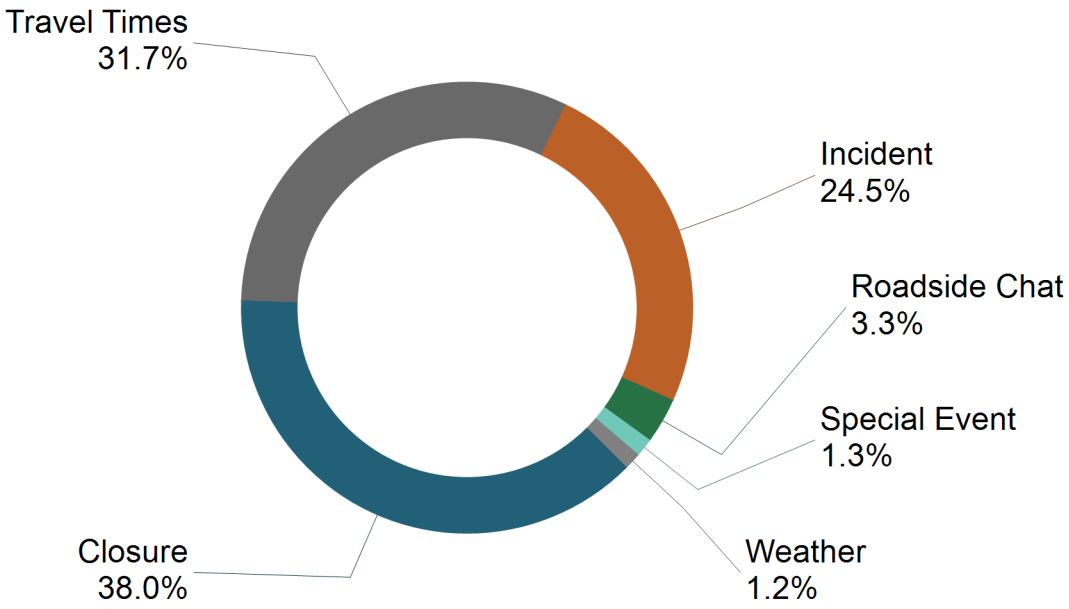
The information tracked by the TMC is shared through multiple reports with internal and external stakeholders.

TMC data reports generated by type



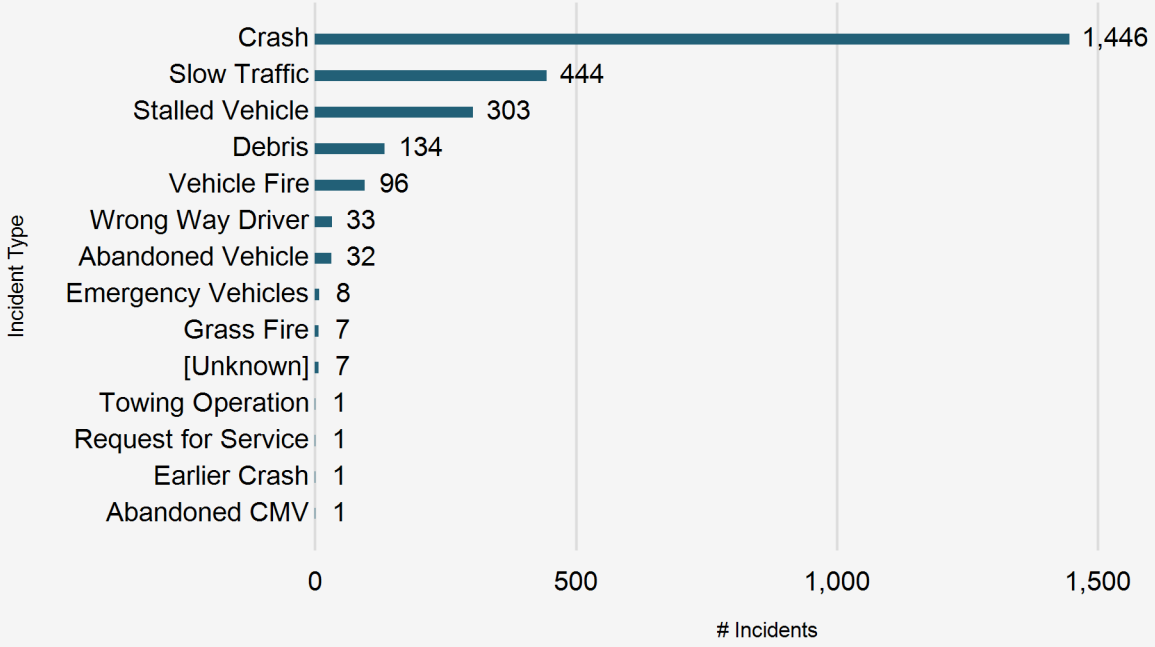
COMMUNICATION

DMS messages by type



Dynamic Message Signs (DMS) are operated by the TMC and the message content, duration and types are tracked.

DMS messages by incident type



This chart provides an overview of the number of unique DMS messages posted for different incident types utilized by the TMC.

BY THE NUMBERS

2,514
INCIDENTS UTILIZING DMS MESSAGES

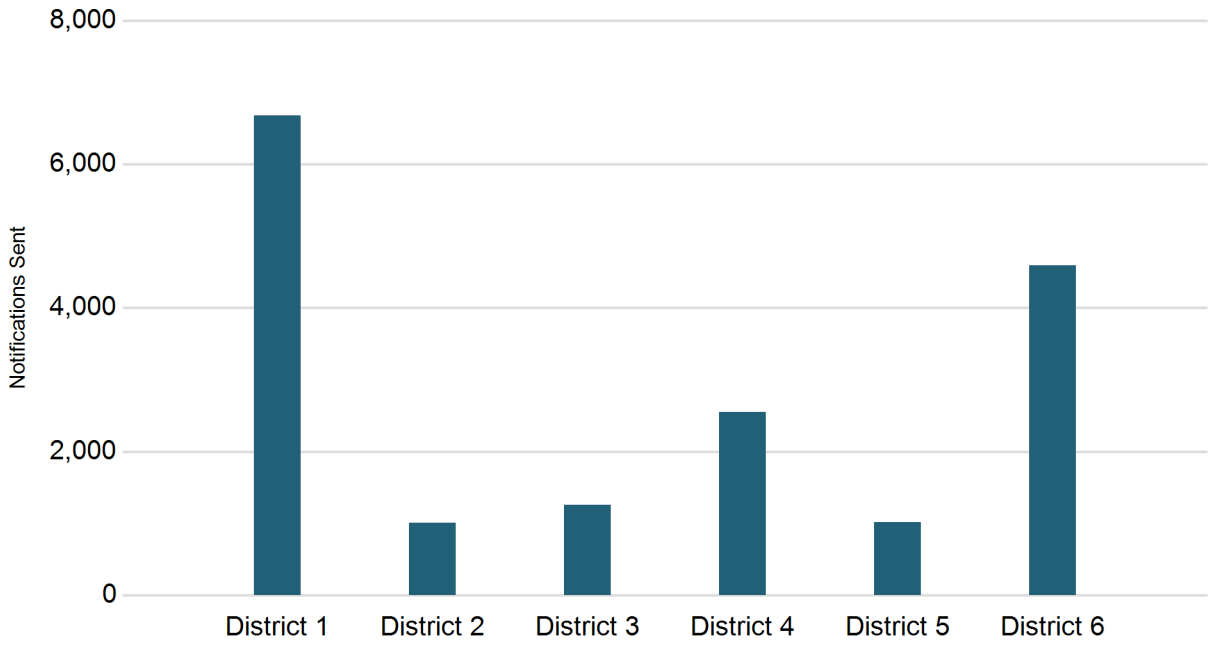
17,494
EMAIL NOTIFICATIONS SENT

25%
UNIQUE DMS MESSAGES RELATED TO INCIDENTS

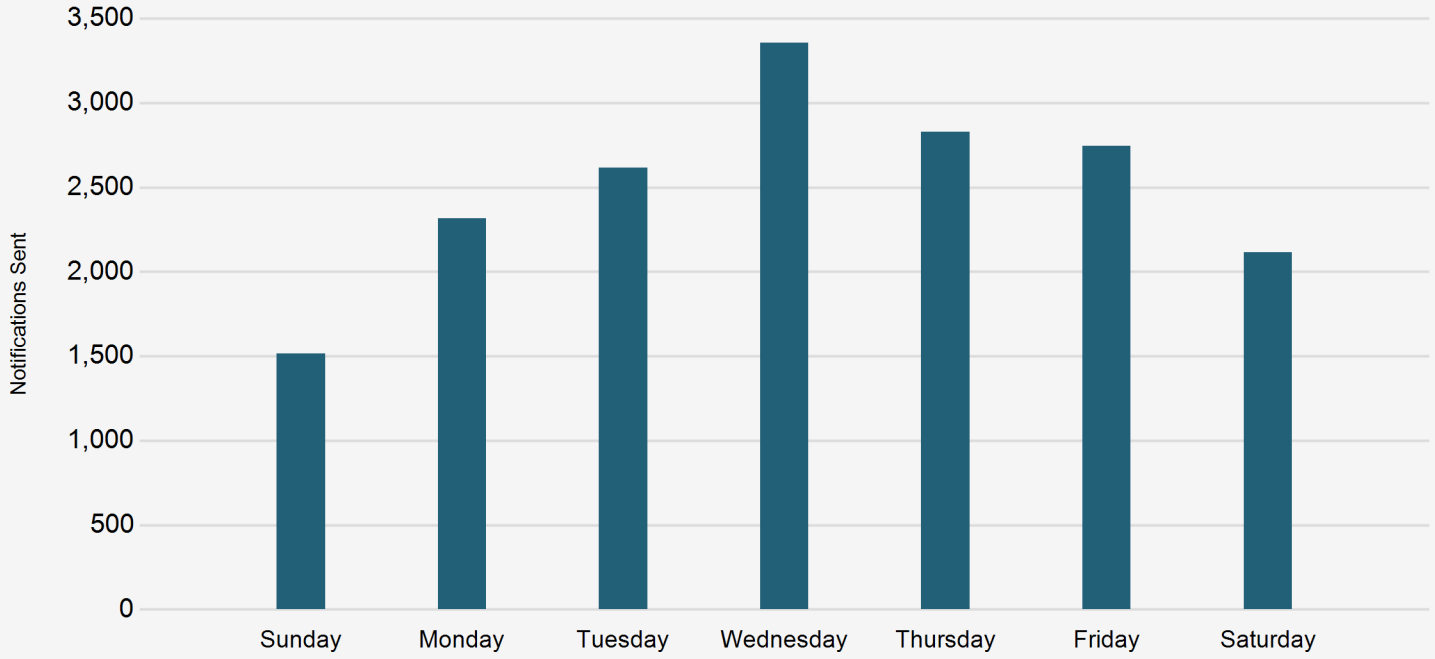
80% EMAIL NOTIFICATIONS SENT ON WEEKDAYS

Emergency Incident Notifications (EINS) are e-mail alerts sent by the TMC for more impactful events on the transportation system.

Email notifications sent by district



Email notifications sent by weekday



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