

Analysis of Wrong-Way Incidents on Michigan Freeways

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ABRIDGMENT

•THIS study covers a cooperative data-gathering program between the Michigan Department of State Highways and the Michigan State Police to record and analyze wrong-way incidents and accidents on Michigan's rural freeways in the southern portion of the state. The report provides an analysis of 200 wrong-way incidents and 44 wrong-way accidents that occurred in 1966.

A summary of the results is as follows: 50 percent of the wrong-way accidents were caused by drinking drivers; non-drinking drivers appeared to drive wrong-way equally both day and night, and at times of higher volume periods; drinking drivers appeared to drive the wrong-way during the dark hours and at the lower volume periods; high nighttime and weekend incidents were related to the drinking driver incidents; 42 of 100 traceable wrong-way incidents occurred at a diamond-type interchange—this is too small a sample to make a definite statement as to interchange type vs wrong-way incidents; during weekdays, the age group 55 and over experienced significantly more difficulty in daylight hours, and the age group under 25 appeared to be less capable during dark hours; no definite pattern has been set by accidents; 80 percent of the wrong-way accidents reported occurred in dark hours; and 50 percent of the accidents were caused by drivers with 10 or more driver violation points at the time of the accident.

The data collected and analyzed here are additional proof that, although wrong-way accidents are a small percentage of the total accident picture, they are severe and dangerous. It is also apparent that a large number of wrong-way incidents occur that escape detection and accident involvements. All efforts should be made to eliminate these potential wrong-way incidents and/or accidents.