

America. If we prove nothing more than the fact that more than one-half our accidents happen just outside our cities in these fringe areas infested with business and signs and billboards, it should have proven well worthwhile. Then what is the next step in our forward

march toward preserving and cleaning up our roadsides?

Now, may I present Mr. Wilmer A. Rusch who made the study, and who will now explain how it was set up and how organized, the methods used, as well as explain some of the results. Mr. Rusch.....

HIGHWAY ACCIDENT RATES AS RELATED TO ROADSIDE BUSINESS AND ADVERTISING

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Many persons have expressed the opinion that roadside business and advertising are causes of highway accidents. Proof of these accusations has been wanting. It is difficult to attribute any motor vehicle accident to any one direct cause. Such accidents are more often the result of two or more contributing causes, and individual influences bearing on the accident concerned are difficult to ascertain. This study is an attempt to classify accidents by location and by cause in order to determine whether a relationship exists between the number, location, and character of accidents and the immediate presence of roadside business and advertising. The study covers State and Federal highways only.

LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY

1. Since not all accident reports were complete, a final disposition of all assigned causes could not be made.
2. The assignment of cause to any accident long after it occurred and by one person only must be kept in mind. The accident report was the only data available, and assignment of cause depended on personal interpretation of the facts presented.
3. This study contains information based on accidents occurring over a period of two years only.
4. This study was completed under very similar conditions for each approach. Perhaps studies in other States would

reveal new or different data when reduced to this basis.

THE STUDY SAMPLE

The observed highways for this study were the immediate approaches to certain cities in Iowa. Since time available for the study was limited, it was necessary to choose a sample of cities. Cities with a 1940 population of 5,000 and above were included in the original group--44 cities in all. The State was then divided into four geographical units labelled A, B, C, and D. This division was necessary to enable a fair distribution over the entire State with an equal number of cities in each division.

The cities were classified in four groups according to population. The largest group contained 12 cities in the 5,000 to 10,000 population class, three in each geographical unit. The 10,000 to 25,000, 25,000 to 50,000, and over 50,000 groups were evenly distributed, one of each class in each geographical unit. Where a selection from a group of cities was necessary, cities were chosen by a table of random numbers to prevent personal bias from entering the procedure. The final sample selected for study contained 24 cities of over 5,000 population.

DEFINITION OF APPROACH DISTANCES

It should be kept in mind that this study was limited to the State of Iowa.