

SEMCOG News Release

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Freeway Courtesy Patrol helped more than 28,000 stranded motorists in 2005 according to report released by SEMCOG

Southeast Michigan roads were a little safer in 2005, thanks to the Michigan Department of Transportation's Freeway Courtesy Patrol. With 34 vehicles patrolling 12 Metro Detroit freeways, Freeway Courtesy Patrol drivers helped 28,359 stranded motorists in 2005, according to *MDOT Freeway Courtesy Patrol in Southeast Michigan: 2005 Evaluation Report*, released by SEMCOG, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments.

Seventy percent of the Freeway Courtesy Patrol's 40,830 stops on metro Detroit freeways were to assist stranded motorists. Of the 28,359 stops to assist stranded motorists, 8,489 were to change flat tires; 8,180 were to assist in mechanical failure; 4,038 were for no gas; and 2,424 were to assist in accidents. In addition, 10,700 stops were made to attend to unoccupied vehicles and 1,771 were to move debris off the roadway. On average, it took Freeway Courtesy Patrol drivers less than 15 minutes to clear an incident.

The Freeway Courtesy Patrol began in 1994 as a means of enhancing motorist safety and security while reducing traffic congestion that is so often associated with vehicle breakdowns and crashes on Detroit area freeways. The three main objectives for Freeway Courtesy Patrol drivers are to assist stranded motorists; detect, mark, and report unoccupied vehicles; and move or assist in moving debris off the roadways. Since its inception, the Freeway Courtesy Patrol has assisted 132,385 stranded motorists, made 68,649 unoccupied vehicle stops, and stopped to clear debris 7,058 times.

In 2005, the Freeway Courtesy Patrol saved an estimated 9.2 million hours of delay on freeways in the coverage area. Based on the hours of delay, there were also significant reductions in air pollution, benefiting everyone in Southeast Michigan.

Based on travel-time savings for motorists, a cost-benefit analysis of the Freeway Courtesy Patrol in 2005 indicated that for every dollar spent on the program, a \$15 benefit was realized. Benefits are based on improving operations of the freeway that help reduce congestion caused by non-recurring incidents.

"Helping stranded motorists eases freeway congestion and, as a result, the freeways operate more efficiently," said Paul Tait, Executive Director of SEMCOG. "The Freeway Courtesy Patrol is a win-win situation."

Copies of *MDOT Freeway Courtesy Patrol in Southeast Michigan: 2005 Evaluation Report* are available for \$20 from SEMCOG Information Services, 313-961-4266, or can be downloaded in PDF on SEMCOG's Web site — www.semco.org.

[View the report in PDF](#)

SEMCOG is a regional planning partnership of local governmental units serving 4.9 million people in the seven-county region of Southeast Michigan striving to enhance the region's quality of life.

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