



GET IT FIRST!



NEWS

FOX 9 MORNING NEWS

WEATHER

FOX 9 INVESTIGATORS

HOME

NEWS

WEATHER

MORNING

COMMUNITY

ABOUT US

SPORTS

WHAT'S ON

TRAFFIC

EMPLOYMENT

CONTACT US

FOX 9 PHOTO TEAM

CLICK HERE

HOW YOU CAN HELP IN THE HURRICANE KATRINA RELIEF EFFORTS

FOX 9 TIPLINE

CLICK HERE TO EMAIL

FOX 9 INVESTIGATORS

Cable CrossOver

It's a frightening scenario. One that's becoming more common on divided highways here in the metro. We're talking about cars jumping across the median and colliding head-on with oncoming traffic. The FOX 9 Investigators were first to explain why it's happening more and more.

This is a matter of life or death. There are basically two ways to deal with it. One is six times more expensive for taxpayers than the other. The state of Minnesota opted for the lower cost option. Its saving money, but is it saving lives?

When it happens, it happens fast.

"Oh my gosh. He just went into on-coming traffic.

So fast, you don't stand a chance.

"Oh my gosh. Okay, that guy, um he totally broad-sided someone."

Catastrophic crashes, often deadly, and the metro are seeing more of them.

This is an issue that we believe we need to face."

We first told you about this problem a year ago. The FOX 9 Investigators reviewed eight years of crash reports. We discovered a deadly pattern emerging on sections of some metro freeways.

"You've got high speed traffic, that's often hitting at head on and that's doubling the impact."

From Sky FOX 9 the problem is plain to see. We've got hundreds of miles of freeway, with only a narrow strip of grass separating the opposing lanes of traffic.

There's no barrier to stop an out of control car... Nothing to prevent it from crossing over the median and into oncoming traffic.

Statistics show that with more congestion and higher speeds on metro freeways, more cars are crossing over and crashing head on.

MNDOT researchers discovered crossovers are more likely to happen at interchanges, where distractions or an unexpected move by another driver can trigger a chain reaction that sends you out of control.

But you're looking at what's turning out to be a relatively low cost solution to this deadly problem a crash barrier that uses high-tension steel cables. It grabs a runaway vehicle almost like a spider web. The cables are six-times cheaper to install than concrete barriers.

Last fall MNDOT installed the first ones in Minnesota along a portion of I-94 notorious for crossover crashes.

"God, what it did for me. I am an absolute believer."



UNDERDECK



Ben Frank was on 94 in Maple Grove when a semi bumped another car into his lane.

"I T-boned him and I just ricocheted off of that guy."

In an instant Ben's SUV shot into the median.

"All I could see was the oncoming traffic coming at me."

A terrifying moment until Ben felt his truck hit something....

"When I hit the fence, I felt this other jolt like God was reaching out his hand and pointing me in the right direction."

It happened just like you see in this test video. The cable barrier grabbed hold of Ben's vehicle and cradled it to a stop.

"Had that fence not been there, I'd probably not be here."

His new Durango took a beating. But Ben Frank walked away from the incident without a scratch.

"It was raining pretty good and traffic was real heavy."

Gordy Perhson is also a fan of the new cable barrier.

"Noticed brake lights coming on ahead of us."

His family was heading west on 94 when all of a sudden a car going eastbound hit a slick spot and spun out.

"There's no way that car would've been able to stop and miss the oncoming traffic."

But the cable stopped it from crossing over and Pehrson is convinced it probably saved some lives.

Since last September twenty-four vehicles have run into the cables on 94 in the northwest metro.

"I believe we have prevented several tragic crashes, some of which may have involved the loss of life."

This MNDOT photo shows the barrier doing its job during a January snowstorm.

"You can just see that those tracks were going right into the other lane, there was no way that vehicle was going to stop."

MNDOT crews aren't used to getting compliments but some drivers have personally thanked them for installing the cables.

"The cable saved their lives. They saw oncoming traffic. They saw they were going that direction and the cable stopped them."

Because the cables have worked so well MNDOT is making it a priority to install them at other trouble spots: I-94 in Brooklyn Center, 35W in Burnsville, 169 in Plymouth and 494 in Plymouth.

These are currently the worst locations in the metro for cross over crashes. The cable barriers should be up within a year.

"I kind of thought it was a joke to tell you the truth."

When Ben Frank saw the cables installed in Maple Grove last fall he never imagined they

could save his life but now he's a believer, who says the state should make it a priority to line all those miles of unprotected median with cable.

"They got to put more of these in. They've got to."

Because of budget constraints MNDOT's plan is to hook up the cables along the most accident-prone highways first. By 2008 the cables will stretch along interstate 94 all the way to St. Cloud.

FOX 9 ABOUT US

- [FOX 9 Bios](#)
- [Contests](#)
- [FOX 9 Community Calendar](#)
- [Employment](#)
- [Contact Us](#)
- [Site Index](#)
- [Help](#)

FOX 9 MORE NEWS

- [NWA Plane Collision Tapes](#) 8/23/2005
- [Family Rip-Off Artist](#) 7/27/2005
- [Police Brutality](#) 7/25/2005
- [Nighttime Boating](#) 7/20/2005
- [UFO's in MN?](#) 7/17/2005
- [Cable CrossOver](#) 7/13/2005
- [Family Deported](#) 7/13/2005
- [Bus Safety on Route 5](#) 7/11/2005
- [Water Hazards](#) 7/7/2005
- [Tubing Danger](#) 7/5/2005
- [Driving in the Rain](#) 6/16/2005
- [Dumped Library Books Update](#) 6/1/2005
- [Million Dollar Trish](#) 5/26/2005
- [Library Throwing Away Books](#) 5/26/2005
- [Capitol Drinking '05](#) 5/24/2005

For the latest news and updates, watch FOX 9 News tonight at 9.

TM & © 2005 Fox/UTV Holdings, Inc.

Many pages in the KMSP FOX 9 Web site feature links to other sites, some of which are operated by companies unrelated to KMSP FOX 9. KMSP FOX 9 has no control over the content or availability of any linked site.

TM and © 2005 KMSP FOX 9., and its related entities. All rights reserved. Any reproduction, duplication, or distribution in any form is expressly prohibited. [Legal Notices.](#)

KMSP FOX 9., "KMSP" recognizes the privacy interests of visitors to this site on the Internet. For a full description of KMSP's privacy policy for this site, [click here.](#)