NIJ has partnered with police departments and other first responder agencies to increase officer safety on the nation’s streets and highways. Below are recommendations based on the research.

Warning Light Visibility
- Use higher intensity lights during the day – the higher intensity increases visibility in daylight but has no effect at night.
- Use blue lights – it is the easiest light color for the driving public to see, day or night.
- Use different colors to distinguish between vehicles parked in the normal traffic path and vehicles near the path but not obstructing it.

Emergency Vehicle Visibility
- Place retroreflective material lower on emergency vehicles to take advantage of headlights from approaching vehicles.
- Use retroreflective material to outline an emergency vehicle with “contour” or “edge” markings.
- Use fluorescent retroreflective material when responders want a higher degree of day- and nighttime visibility.

Learn more about roadside safety studies at NIJ.gov.

Keyword: Roadside safety

Read “Keeping Officers Safe on the Road” in the NIJ Journal:
http://www.nij.gov/journals/265/officers.htm

A Message From the Director,
Hon. John H. Laub, Ph.D.

At the National Institute of Justice, we believe science can help save lives, ensure justice and save money.

This pamphlet contains a sampling of how NIJ-funded research can be used to increase officer safety and wellness. Visit our website, NIJ.gov, to learn more about our entire body of work on officer safety and wellness.

On behalf of NIJ, I thank our country’s law enforcement officers for their invaluable service and sacrifice. I look forward to our continued collaboration with the law enforcement community to identify evidence-based solutions to the field’s most pressing problems.

The National Institute of Justice — the research, development and evaluation agency of the U.S. Department of Justice — is dedicated to improving knowledge and understanding of crime and justice issues through science. NIJ provides objective and independent knowledge and tools to reduce crime and promote justice, particularly at the state and local levels.
In The Shift Length Experiment, researchers at the Police Foundation found that 10-hour shifts offered numerous benefits over the traditionally used 8-hour shifts and compressed 12-hour shifts. Officers working 10-hour shifts:

• Worked less overtime (and thus saved their department money).
• Reported a significantly higher quality of work life.
• Made fewer errors.
• Exhibited no decrease in performance.
• Got more sleep.

This study was released on the heels of Sleep Disorders, Health and Safety in Police Officers, another NIJ-funded study that found sleep disorders are about twice as prevalent among police officers than among the general public.

Learn more about officer safety at NIJ.gov.

Keyword: Officer Safety