



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

Highway Accident Brief

Fatal Pedestrian Collision with Pickup Truck Lewiston, Maine, November 3, 2016

Accident Number:	HWY17SH008
Accident Type:	Fatal pedestrian collision with pickup truck
Location:	Main Street (US Route 202) at Frye Street, Lewiston, Maine
Date and Time:	November 3, 2016, about 7:10 a.m. eastern daylight time
Vehicle:	2009 Ford F-150
Driver:	54-year-old female
Pedestrian:	13-year-old male
Fatalities:	1

Crash Description

About 7:10 a.m. on Thursday, November 3, 2016, a 2009 Ford F-150 pickup truck was northbound on Main Street (US Route 202) in Lewiston, Androscoggin County, Maine. As the 54-year-old female driver approached the intersection of Main and Frye streets, a 13-year-old male pedestrian was crossing Main Street from west to east, in a marked crosswalk (figure 1). According to the collision reconstruction report of the Lewiston Police Department, video from a nearby security camera shows the pedestrian

walking northeast bound on the sidewalk. [The pedestrian] positions himself in the crosswalk (western side) on the side of the road. He appears to wait until traffic continues by. When there is a lull in traffic he proceeds to walk across Main St still in the crosswalk. As he passes the centerline he stops briefly and appears to look right to see . . . the vehicle heading towards him. [The pedestrian] attempts to get out of the way by running east bound.. [He] was not able to get out of the way of [the] vehicle. [He] is struck just beyond the crosswalk.

The driver stated that she did not see the pedestrian until just before her vehicle struck him, and investigators found no evidence that she braked before the impact. The pedestrian first struck the pickup's hood and grille, then became stuck underneath, near the right front wheel. The pickup dragged the pedestrian along the pavement for 176 feet before coming to rest. A passerby called 911. Emergency crews responded and pronounced the pedestrian dead at the scene.

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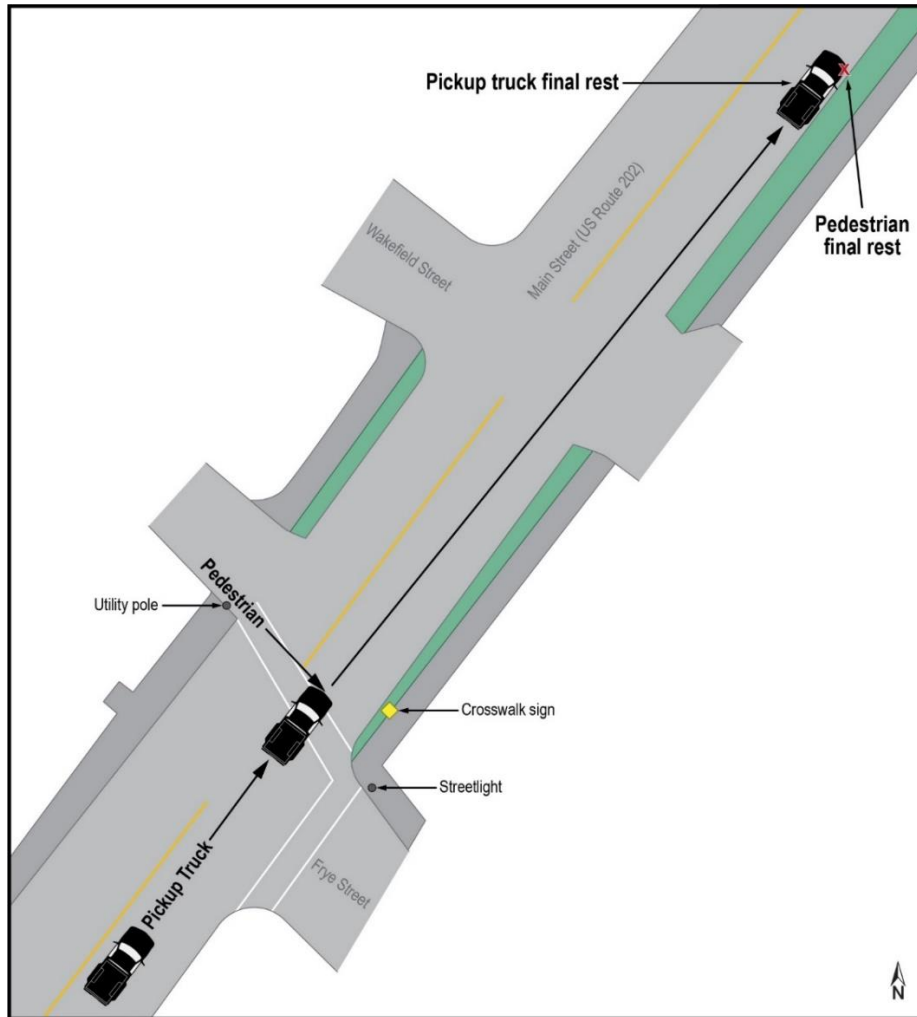


Figure 1. Diagram of crash scene showing path of pickup truck, pedestrian's path in crosswalk to point of impact, and final rest positions of pickup and pedestrian.

At the time of the collision, it was raining lightly, the temperature was 45°F, and winds were calm. Civil twilight had just begun (6:51 a.m.), and sunrise was a few minutes away (7:22 a.m.).¹ The roadway was wet, streetlights were illuminated, and vehicles had their headlights on. In-car video from the responding Lewiston Police Department vehicle showed visibility to be “very poor,” according to the department’s collision reconstruction report. The report notes that the video from the nearby security camera shows an oncoming vehicle pulling over immediately after the crash. The investigator who wrote the reconstruction report stated, “I do not think [the driver] could have seen the pedestrian based on the glare from the other vehicle’s oncoming headlights.”

¹ Weather data from <https://www.wunderground.com/history/>.

Crash Location

Main Street is classified as an urban arterial roadway. It runs northeast to southwest and in the area of the crash has two lanes separated by a double yellow line. The neighborhood contains a mix of residences and office complexes (figure 2). A hospital is situated just south of the crash site. Traffic in the area is moderate to heavy during the time the crash occurred, according to the police reconstruction report. The posted speed limit on Main Street is 25 mph.

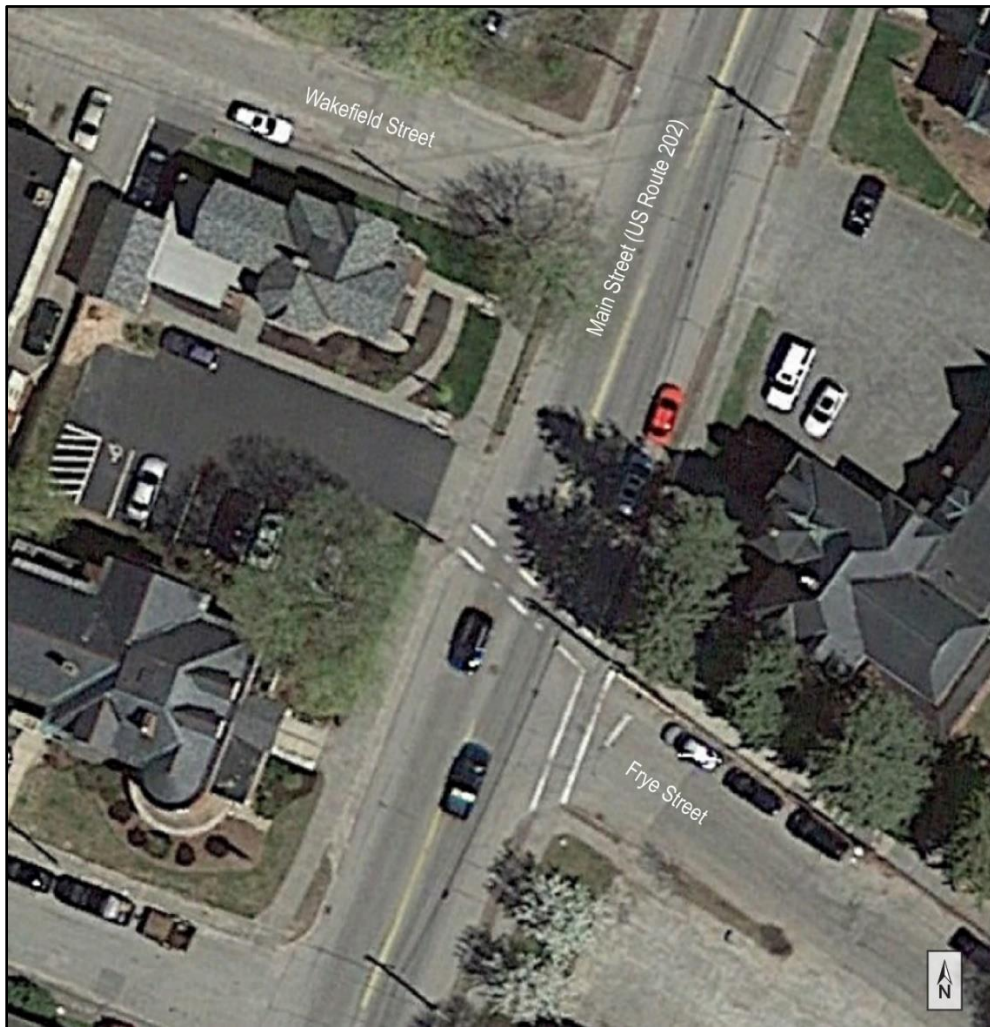


Figure 2. Aerial view of crash location. (Base photo by Google Earth)

The crash intersection has no traffic signals. Traffic entering Main Street from Frye Street is regulated by a stop sign. The area around the intersection includes sidewalks, and a marked pedestrian crosswalk on Main Street goes from the northeast corner of Frye Street to the southeast corner of a driveway. A pedestrian crossing sign is located on Main Street next to the crosswalk, visible to vehicles traveling northeast. A streetlight stands at the northeast corner of the intersection. No other pedestrian crashes have occurred at the intersection, according to its crash history.

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Pedestrian

The pedestrian lived in the area. According to an interview with his family, he was walking to school that morning from his house, which was less than a mile from the school. He was wearing a gray-and-white striped shirt over a black undershirt, green camouflage pants, and blue-and-white tennis shoes, and was carrying a dark green pack that contained schoolbooks and papers. None of his clothing was retroreflective, and he did not carry any form of illumination.

The family stated that the pedestrian's overall health was good and that he was not under a doctor's care. He had no significant medical history and did not take medication. Until the day of the crash, he ordinarily took the bus to school.

The medical examiner's office recorded the pedestrian's cause of death as blunt force trauma of the head. A possible fracture of the right femur was also noted. The pedestrian's height was recorded as 5 feet 5 inches and his weight as 160 pounds.²

Driver

The driver held a Maine class C (noncommercial) driver's license, with no restrictions on her driving privileges. The results of a postcrash blood test of the driver were negative for alcohol. Tests for other drugs were not performed. After the crash, the driver consented to a forensic download of her cell phone by police. The download showed that she was not talking or texting at the time of the collision.

Vehicle

The driver reported that the pickup truck was in working order before the crash. The air bags for the driver and front-seat passenger did not deploy in the crash.³ Damage to the pickup, which was examined at the impound site, included a broken grille and dents on the leading edge of the hood on the right (passenger) side (figure 3). There were no indications beyond the damage to the hood that the pedestrian rode onto the pickup. Police found no mechanical defects during the postcrash examination of the vehicle.

The collision reconstruction report listed the speed of the pickup as 34 mph. Using the video from the security camera, Lewiston police and National Transportation Safety Board investigators determined a speed range for the pickup of between 33 and 37 mph. On the basis of a time-distance analysis, the reconstruction report concluded that "if [the driver] had observed the posted speed limit for this section of Main St then the crash would not have happened."

² Pedestrian characteristics, such as height and weight, were documented to aid crash reconstruction and evaluate pedestrian injuries.

³ The change in vehicle velocity caused by the crash most likely did not meet the threshold for airbag deployment.



Figure 3. Closeup of crash vehicle showing damage to hood and grille. (Source: Lewiston Police Department)

Applicable Traffic Laws

Title 29A of the Maine revised statutes regulates the movement of pedestrians on a public roadway and of drivers in relation to pedestrians. At an intersection, a pedestrian is subject to all traffic control signals (section 2057[5, 6]). Pedestrians are required to “yield the right-of-way to a vehicle when crossing a way . . . [o]ther than within a marked crosswalk” (section 2056[5A]).

Maine law requires drivers to yield the right-of-way to pedestrians in marked crosswalks (Title 29A, section 2056[4]):

When traffic control devices are not in operation, an operator must yield the right-of-way to a pedestrian who is crossing within a marked crosswalk or to a pedestrian who has shown visible intent to enter the marked crosswalk.

Drivers are further required to “exercise due care to avoid colliding with a pedestrian” (section 2056[8A]).

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines that the probable cause of the Lewiston, Maine, crash was the pickup truck’s excessive speed and the driver’s failure to yield the right-of-way to the pedestrian in the crosswalk. Contributing to the cause of the crash was diminished visibility due to the weather and low-light conditions.

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Adopted: September 24, 2018

For more details about this accident, visit the [NTSB public docket](#) and search for NTSB accident ID HWY17SH008. The accident dockets include such information as police reports, photographs, driver and witness statements, data on previous crashes, highway engineering reports, and timing of traffic signals.

The NTSB does not assign fault or blame for an accident or incident; rather, as specified by NTSB regulation, “accident/incident investigations are fact-finding proceedings with no formal issues and no adverse parties . . . and are not conducted for the purpose of determining the rights or liabilities of any person.” 49 *Code of Federal Regulations*, Section 831.4. Assignment of fault or legal liability is not relevant to the NTSB’s statutory mission to improve transportation safety by investigating accidents and incidents and issuing safety recommendations. In addition, statutory language prohibits the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report. 49 *United States Code*, Section 1154(b).
