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Media Advisory

Nevada Traffic Fatalities Rise in First Half of 2012

The Nevada Departments of Public Safety and Transportation are reminding motorists to always drive safely after Nevada traffic fatalities rose in the first half of 2012 compared to the same time last year. Preliminary numbers show that 129 traffic fatalities occurred on Nevada roads in the first half of 2012 through July 2, an increase of nine deaths over the same time last year. In Elko County, there have been a total of six traffic deaths in 2012, a reduction from eight deaths at the same time last year.

Overall, Nevada traffic fatalities dropped to 246 in 2011 after reaching an all-time high of 432 in 2006 when the Nevada Strategic Highway Safety Plan was developed. The plan brings Nevada traffic and safety advocates together to implement strategies for cutting the yearly traffic fatality average in half by 2030, with the ultimate goal of zero traffic deaths on Nevada roads.

“One death on Nevada roads is too many,” Nevada Department of Transportation Director Susan Martinovich explained. “That’s why Nevada’s goal is zero fatalities. We are working together and continually putting strategies in place to save lives and prevent serious injury.”

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“These are so much more than numbers. The loss and toll on individuals and families across the state is monumental for each and every traffic fatality,” explained Traci Pearl, Administrator of the Nevada Department of Public Safety, Office of Traffic Safety. “Traffic safety ultimately relies on each and every person on the road, and we’re asking everyone to be safe every time they drive, every time they’re in a vehicle and every time they’re on the road as a pedestrian.”

“Wearing a seat belt is a must, every trip, every time,” Nevada Highway Patrol Trooper Jim Stewart added. “The two seconds it takes to buckle up may end up saving a life or reduce injuries. Never drive impaired. And it’s so important to pay attention at all times while driving, whether it’s for pedestrians, at intersections or for anything else on the road.”

Motorists should always follow these safe driving tips:

- **Buckle Up/Click It or Ticket:** Nearly 50 percent of fatality crashes that Nevada law enforcement agencies investigated this past year involved unbuckled vehicle occupants. It only takes two seconds to click your seat belt, and the life you save might just be your own.
- **Don’t Drive Impaired/Buzzed Driving is Drunk Driving:** On average, more than 50 people are arrested for driving under the influence every day in Nevada. A first DUI arrest will likely result in a 90-day loss of driving privileges, an impounded vehicle, legal fees, court fees, two days in jail and attendance at a Victim Impact Panel, with harsher penalties for subsequent offenses.
- **Be Pedestrian Safe:** To date in 2012, there have been 30 pedestrian deaths on Nevada roads, double the number from the same time last year. Pedestrians should always cross safely, making eye contact with drivers, and drivers should always look for and yield to pedestrians.
- **Focus on the Road:** Distracted and/or sleepy driving are just one of the factors that can lead drivers to unintentionally leave their lane. Put away the distractions and drive with your full attention. **Handheld cell phone use is illegal while driving in Nevada.**
- **Stop on Red:** In a recent five-year span, 467 people died in Nevada intersection crashes. Whether at a traffic signal or stop sign, always stop on red!

To learn more about Nevada traffic safety, log on to **www.zerofatalitiesnv.com**.

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