

MICHIGAN TRAFFIC DEATHS FALL TO 871 IN 2009

State experiences 11 percent decline

Michigan's traffic deaths reached a milestone of 871 in 2009, the lowest number the state has recorded since 1924 when there were 863 traffic fatalities. Today, there are nearly 10 times more vehicles on the road than in the 1920s. The 2009 fatality figure is down 11 percent

from 2008 when 980 people died on Michigan roads. Just a decade earlier

in 1999, 1,386 people died on state roadways.

³Michigan is part of a national trend where states are seeing significant declines in traffic deaths,² said Office of Highway Safety

Planning Director Michael L. Prince. ³A variety of factors contributed

to the decline, including fewer miles driven, the state's high seat belt use, strict enforcement of traffic laws, roadway engineering improvements and vehicle safety features.²

Overall, the number of traffic crashes dropped 8 percent, fatal crashes

fell 12 percent and injury crashes declined 6 percent.

Declines were noted in several areas, including alcohol and/or drug-involved fatalities. These dropped from 379 in 2008 to 351 in 2009.

Specifically, alcohol-involved fatalities dropped 6 percent, from 317 in

2008 to 299 in 2009. Drug-involved fatalities fell 15 percent, from 140

in 2008 to 119 in 2009. (In some cases, both alcohol and drugs were involved.)

The crash data also shows:

>Motorcycle-involved fatalities fell from 127 in 2008 to 105 in 2009, a

drop of 17 percent.

Commercial motor vehicle-involved fatalities dropped 28 percent, from 106 in 2008 to 76 in 2009.

>The state recorded zero school bus-related traffic deaths in 2009, down from four in 2008. There has not been a child killed on a school bus in Michigan since 1989.

>Cell phone-involved crashes fell from 919 in 2008 to 866 in 2009. (Michigan cannot track crashes involving texting specifically.)

>The number of car-deer crashes remained fairly steady, up 1 percent from 2008. There were 61,486 deer-involved crashes in 2009.

>Pedestrian fatalities increased 10 percent, up from 114 in 2008 to 125 in 2009.

NOTE: Additional 2009 crash information will be posted to www.michigantrafficcrashfacts.org in the coming months. Check frequently for updates.