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North Dakota Department of Transportation launches new teen driver website

The North Dakota Department of Transportation is pleased to announce the launching of a new teen drivers website www.ndteendrivers.com. The website has videos to help prepare students to take the driver's permit examination, driving quizzes and information on a variety of topics of interest to students. The site was released statewide today in an effort to promote safe driving practices among teens while reducing the number of fatalities on North Dakota's roadways.

"The percentage of traffic crashes from teen drivers is much greater than we would like to see. National statistics show that for each mile driven, teens are four times more likely to be in a crash than other drivers," said North Dakota Department of Transportation Director Francis Ziegler. "So far this year, there have been 99 fatalities statewide. Thirteen of these fatalities were ages 13-19."

The teen driving website is a one-stop-shop that will help teens learning to drive, as well as provide information for parents. It also provides car care tips, rules of the road, and information about distracted driving and other important safety topics.

Region 7 Safe Communities Coordinator Rebecca Gerhardt of Bismarck states, "The website provides a greatly needed resource for youth and their parents. In addition, the coalition is pleased to offer support to local high schools that wish to participate in a special contest detailed on the website. This contest will assist us in engaging our communities in traffic safety issues."

The contest, sponsored by the North Dakota Safety Council, is set to begin immediately in September and will close on March 1, 2010. High schools score points for a variety of traffic safety activities, such as students completing quizzes on the website, seat belt checks at school events, a video encouraging people to Click it Quick and writing and publishing traffic safety articles in the local paper. The school with the highest average per student wins an event sponsored by the North Dakota Safety Council set for March 26, 2010. The event includes food and a live band provided by the ND Safety Council and Cloverdale. The North Dakota National Guard will bring in a variety of large games for students to enjoy at the school event.

Gerhardt continues, "Teen car crashes are the number one cause of death among teens. These deaths are devastating to families, schools, and communities. It is our goal to decrease the number of teen car crashes and deaths in our region."

For more information on the website or contest, visit www.ndteendrivers.com or contact Rebecca Gerhardt, Region 7 Safe Communities Coalition Coordinator at (701) 223-4517.

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