

January 7, 2016

North Dakota Traffic Fatalities Lowest in Five Years

The North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT) and the North Dakota Highway Patrol (NDHP) reports 2015 traffic fatalities are the lowest in five years.

Based on preliminary crash data, 131 motor vehicle fatalities occurred in 2015, the lowest number of traffic fatalities since 2010 when there were 105.

“The state has made significant investments into our infrastructure in recent years so it is encouraging to see the decrease in the number of fatalities,” says Grant Levi, NDDOT Director. “Infrastructure improvements can help save lives but those improvements need to be combined with drivers who aren’t distracted, drive defensively and abide by the rules of the road in order to continue to reduce fatalities.”

Of these 131 motor vehicle fatalities, 62 percent were not wearing their seat belt, 41 percent were alcohol-related, and 28 percent were speed-related. Lack of seat belts, alcohol and speed are consistently the most significant factors in motor vehicle fatalities in North Dakota.

Colonel Michael Gerhart, superintendent of the NDHP, adds “The single greatest partnership in law enforcement is with the public. With their support and cooperation to drive sober, buckle up and slow down, many lives can be saved on our roadways.”

Contributing Factor	2015 ND Percentage of MV Fatalities	2014 ND Percentage of MV Fatalities
Unbelted Fatalities	62%	69%
Alcohol-Related	41%*	47%
Speed-Related/Too fast for conditions	28%	34%

*This number could change due to pending lab results.

Preliminary crash data from 2015 also shows that 35 percent of motor vehicle fatalities in 2015 were single vehicle rollovers (excludes motorcycles and ATVs). Nearly 80 percent of fatalities in the single vehicle rollovers were unbelted and nearly 70 percent of those unbelted fatalities were totally or partially ejected. In addition, nearly 70 percent of single-vehicle rollover fatalities were alcohol-related.

These Are Lives Lost, Not Just Numbers

The family and friends of the 131 individuals lost to motor vehicle crashes in North Dakota are grieving this devastating loss. Those lost in a motor vehicle crashes last year range from ages 1 to 95 and 75 percent were North Dakota residents.

Type	2015 ND Fatalities	2014 ND Fatalities
Passenger Vehicle	108	107
Motorcycle	8	10
Pedestrian	7	9
Train	4	3
All-terrain vehicle (ATV)/Miscellaneous	3	3
Bicyclist	1	3
Total	131	135

Personal responsibility by the motoring public will significantly reduce motor vehicle fatalities on North Dakota roads by wearing your seat belt, designating a sober driver and slowing down.

Families are invited to create memorials for those who have died in crashes in North Dakota at ndcodefortheroad.org/memorial.