



NEWS RELEASE

Chris Krueger, Director of Communications

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 11, 2007

CONTACT:

Dennis Smith, 651-201-7569

Alcohol
and Gambling
Enforcement

ARMER/911
Program

Bureau of
Criminal
Apprehension

Driver
and Vehicle
Services

Homeland
Security and
Emergency
Management

Minnesota
State Patrol

Office of
Communications

Office of
Justice Programs

Office of
Traffic Safety

State Fire Marshal
and
Pipeline Safety

STATE TRAFFIC DEATHS HIT 100-MARK YEAR-TO-DATE

Attention Stressed as Most Deadly Road Months Approach

ST. PAUL — Minnesota's year-to-date traffic fatalities reached 100 this past Monday — a milestone slightly below the pace of road deaths last year. At this rate, the Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) projects 440 deaths for the year, or an average of 8.5 traffic fatalities per week.

In 2006, road deaths in the state reached 100 on March 31. There were 492 traffic deaths last year, the lowest annual number since 1945.

The latest 2007 traffic fatality was a 60-year-old male killed in a crash Monday on Hwy. 135 in St. Louis County. Traffic deaths to-date this year include seven pedestrians and one motorcyclist.

OTS officials urge all motorists to commit to safe driving practices, especially as warmer weather means more pedestrian, bicycle and motorcycle traffic. Typically, the greatest number of fatal and serious injury crashes occurs during the summer months.

"It's easy to be distracted while driving on a beautiful Minnesota spring day," says Katherine Burke Moore, OTS deputy director. "However, not paying attention and not sharing the road is a recipe for disaster. Keep focused and keep your life."

Burke Moore urges all motorists to buckle up, pay attention, drive sober and avoid speeding. She also notes that major law enforcement efforts targeting seat belt use, impaired driving and speeding will continue across Minnesota throughout 2007.

Last year in Minnesota, about 75 percent of traffic deaths occurred in crashes on roads outside the Twin Cities metro area.

Driving Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths