

Nevada launches program to keep drivers safe

An average of 325 people lose their life annually on Nevada roads.

The Nevada Department of Transportation, Nevada Highway Patrol, Nevada Office of Traffic Safety and safety partners across the state have launched a Zero Fatalities traffic safety goal and educational campaign to save lives.

“When we each drive off to work, for a trip or for an errand, we expect to return safely,” NDOT Director Susan Martinovich explained in a press release. “Whether due to unsafe driving or something else, that tragically doesn’t always happen on Nevada roads. As drivers, as citizens, as transportation experts, it is time to stand up and say there is no number other than zero deaths that is acceptable on our roads. Zero Fatalities begins today with each Nevadan deciding to drive safely each time they get in their car.”

The Zero Fatalities goal is part of a revamped Nevada Strategic Highway Safety Plan. The plan, developed in 2006 by more than 75 Nevada traffic and safety experts, identifies five Nevada-specific focus areas including increasing seat belt usage and pedestrian/intersection safety and reducing impaired driving. Traffic engineering, enforcement, education and emergency response strategies were developed in each area to reduce road deaths and injuries. The Nevada safety plan was updated in 2010 with additional life-saving strategies to help reach the new Zero Fatalities goal.

Traffic fatalities have dropped from an all-time high of 434 in 2006 to 256 in 2010.

Over and above the life-saving strategies included in the safety plan, Nevada’s Zero Fatalities goal will be reached

through a public education campaign educating motorists about traffic safety through public service announcements and other educational materials. The state's Zero Fatalities goal is consistent with the national Toward Zero Deaths strategy led by the Federal Highway Administration and others.

Driving safety tips:

- Buckle up – Close to half of Nevadans who die in car crashes aren't buckled up.
- Don't drink and drive – 574 people died in Nevada alcohol-related crashes in a recent five-year period.
- Don't speed – A car traveling at 60 mph travels 88 feet per second. Speed has a great impact on how much time drivers have to react to the road ahead.
- Drive safely near intersections/obey all traffic signals – 467 people died in Nevada intersection crashes in a recent five-year period.
- Watch for pedestrians/cross roads cautiously – 258 pedestrians lost their lives on Nevada roadways in a recent five-year period.
- Don't let distractions take your eye from the road – Inattentive or fatigued driving can result in traffic injuries and deaths.