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### Downward Trend in Missouri Traffic Deaths Continues

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) - Officials say traffic deaths in Missouri have been on a downward trend for nearly 10 years.

The Jefferson City Tribune reports the number of traffic fatalities has dropped since 2005, with 2012 the only year showing an increase from the previous year.

On average, about 1,068 deaths a year have occurred since the Missouri Highway Patrol began reporting traffic fatalities in 1949. Last year, 757 traffic deaths were reported.

Missouri Highway Patrol spokesman Lt. John Hotz says the state agency attributes the general decline in fatalities to education, enforcement, engineering and emergency medical services.

Transportation officials also believe that road improvements, such as adding shoulders to roads that didn't have them before, likely helped decrease traffic fatality numbers.

Associated Press