

KS/MO fatalities down in 2023

(MSC News)--For the first time since 2015, 2023 meant Kansas saw less than 400 traffic fatalities for the year. That's according to a release from the Governor's Office, which shows that preliminary data for 2023 indicates 388 people died in traffic crashes in Kansas, compared to 410 fatalities in 2022.

The number of fatalities has been trending down for three consecutive years.

The simple act of buckling up increases crash survivability by over 45%, according to the Kansas Department of Transportation. The Drive To Zero Coalition credits initiatives included in the Kansas Strategic Highway Safety Plan to helping lower fatalities and serious injuries.

Fatalities also decreased on Missouri roads, with preliminary data showing that 980 occurred in 2023, a decrease of 6% from 2022 when 1,057 fatalities occurred.

According to a release from the Missouri Department of Transportation, 2023 is the first year since 2019 that Missouri has seen a decrease in roadway fatalities

While overall roadway fatalities were down, the release states that "motorcyclist fatalities have never been higher," with the preliminary numbers showing that 175 motorcyclists were killed on Missouri roadways in 2023. That's a 14% increase over the previous year when 153 fatalities occurred on Missouri roads in 2023.

According to the release, the current figures represent the highest number of motorcyclist fatalities ever reported in the state, and almost 50% higher than the average number of motorcyclist fatalities prior to the repeal of Missouri- all-rider helmet law in 2020, with the release saying that "safety professionals cite the lack of helmet use as a major contributing factor to the increase."

Prevalent characteristics observed in roadway fatalities, as noted in the release, include lack of seat belt use, distracted driving, speed, and impairment.

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