



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: Lauren Stewart
Lauren.v.stewart@maine.gov
207-592-0258

Early numbers in Maine reveal a staggering increase in traffic fatalities

2022 is starting off to be a deadly year with respect to motor vehicle fatalities in Maine. That is a concerning trend given 2021 ended as one of our safest years. 2021 saw a total of 153 fatalities. So far to date we have lost 32 people in car crashes and others have been seriously injured.

If we keep this up, we are on course for a very deadly spring here in Maine.

Month	# of fatalities – 2022	# of fatalities – 2021	% change
January	13	7	+ 85.7%
February	14	11	+ 27.3%
March	5*	5	+ 0.0%

Apparent contributing factors in these fatal crashes continue to be unsafe and illegal speeds, reckless driving, alcohol and drug impaired driving, and non-use of safety restraints.

What can drivers do? For starters, be a responsible driver. Lauren Stewart, the State’s Highway Safety Director says “Make safety for yourselves, and all others sharing the road with you, your top priority. No one typically plans to be involved in a serious injury or fatal crash when they leave one destination for another. However, you can always plan to be a safe driver.”

1. Be courteous and cautious and SLOW DOWN. Give yourself plenty of time to get where you are going so that you don’t make *your* problem of being late to your destination, the problem of another innocent and unsuspecting driver, rider, pedestrian, or bicyclist sharing the road with you. Afterall, it really is not all about you, because you are sharing the road with others.
2. Be a defensive driver always engaged in the act of driving, being alert, and looking out for the other cars on the road. Just drive! Everything else can wait.
3. Buckle Up! Used in combination with airbags, seat belts are your single most important safety feature when you are involved in a crash. Being partially or fully ejected almost always leads to serious injuries and death.

4. Plan ahead and plan a safe ride home for you or a friend, even if you don't plan to get impaired. Live another day for another get-together with friends or family.

5. If you see something, say something. If you see someone driving impaired, driving recklessly, aggressively, or unsafely, call 9-1-1 and be prepared to say where you are and what you see. Your call could save someone's life.

By taking responsibility for your own actions and looking out for others, together we can stop this March Madness!

