

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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PennDOT Announces Highway Fatalities at New Low in 2019

Harrisburg, PA – The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) announced today that statewide highway fatalities reached a new low in 2019, dropping to 1,059, the lowest since record keeping began in 1928 and 131 less than in 2018.

“While this is certainly good news, even one life lost is one too many,” said PennDOT Acting Secretary Yassmin Gramian. “We must continue to work with our partners to decrease traffic deaths through education and outreach. We urge all Pennsylvanians to always wear their seat belts and never drive impaired or distracted.”

The number of unrestrained fatalities dropped from 398 in 2018 to 330 last year, the lowest it has been in the last 20 years. Other areas that saw significant decreases in 2019 were fatalities in aggressive driving crashes, fatal crashes involving a driver 65 years of age or older, and pedestrian fatalities:

- There were 129 fatalities in aggressive driving crashes in 2018 compared to 95 in 2019;
- Fatalities in crashes involving a driver 65 or older dropped from 330 in 2018 to 281 in 2019; and
- Pedestrian fatalities decreased from 201 in 2018 to 154 last year.

Aside from the year-to-year decline, longer-term trends also continue to decrease. For example, compared to 2015, there were 141 fewer total traffic deaths, 83 fewer unrestrained deaths, and 42 fewer deaths in crashes involving impaired drivers.

While fatalities for most types of crashes were down for 2019, some types saw fatality increases in 2019:

- There were 174 motorcyclist fatalities last year, up from 164 in 2018;
- Fatalities involving stop-controlled intersections increased to 92 from 67 in 2018;
- Fatalities in vehicle failure-related crashes increased from 45 to 52.

Despite the year-over-year increase, long-term trends for all three categories continue to decrease.

According to national data, over 90 percent of crashes are caused by driver behavior. For this reason, PennDOT focuses on data trends to drive enforcement and education improvements and invests approximately \$18 million annually in federal grant funds statewide to support these behavioral safety programs.

In addition to behavioral safety, PennDOT focuses on infrastructure improvements to roadways in an effort to further reduce fatalities and serious injuries. More than \$403 million in Federal Highway Safety Improvement Program funds were invested on 464 unique safety projects from 2015 to 2019. Another \$50 million of state funds were

invested in low-cost safety improvements at approximately 2,800 locations between 2014-2018. Examples of low-cost safety countermeasures include centerline and edge-line rumble strips and signing and pavement markings. There were approximately 11,000 miles of rumble strips added or replaced during this time.

For more information on reportable crash data, visit [PennDOT's Pennsylvania Crash Information Tool](#) (PCIT) website, www.crashinfo.penndot.gov or for additional information on the department's highway safety initiatives, visit PennDOT.gov/safety.

PennDOT's media center offers resources for safety organizations, community groups, or others who share safety information with their stakeholders. Social-media-sized graphics highlighting topics such as seat belts, impaired driving and distracted driving can be found online at www.PennDOT.gov in the "[Media Center](#)" under the "About Us" footer.