

New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety Invites Drivers, Pedestrians, and Bikers Across the State to Join National

“Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day” on October 10th

Annual One-Day Safety Campaign Aims for Zero Traffic Fatalities Nationwide

TRENTON – The Division of Highway Traffic Safety is calling on drivers, pedestrians, motorcyclists, and bicyclists in New Jersey to join in a one-day national safety campaign next week to raise awareness of the more than 35,000 lives lost each year in motor vehicle-related crashes nationwide.

“Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day,” commemorated each year on October 10, calls attention to reducing fatalities on one specific day in order to heighten consciousness about what people can do to reduce transportation fatalities and accidents on American highways, roads, and streets.

Last year, New Jersey achieved the goal of recording no fatal crashes on Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day.

“New Jersey roadways are among the safest in the nation for vehicular travel in no small part because of initiatives like Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day that raise public awareness of traffic safety and promote ways to improve it,” said Attorney General Gurbir S. Grewal. “New Jersey is known for its ability to rally around important causes and we’ll be looking for that spirit of cooperation as we take part in this national safety campaign next week. If everyone traveling our roadways takes extra care to buckle up, observe speed limits, and pay attention while driving, biking, or walking on October 10, we will be well on our way to reaching our goal of keeping New Jersey roads fatality free.”

Participating law enforcement agencies throughout the state will help engage the public and raise awareness of traffic safety through press releases, proclamations, and electronic traffic signs on roadways throughout the state.

This year, the focus of Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day in New Jersey will be on promoting pedestrian safety to reduce the number of pedestrian-involved crashes and save lives. To address this issue, the Division has provided nearly \$1 million in pedestrian safety grants to law enforcement agencies statewide since the beginning of the 2019 fiscal year.

The grants, which range in size from nearly \$10,000 to more than \$50,000, are being used to fund pedestrian safety initiatives that include public outreach, educational and training programs, assignment of police officers or crossing guards at crosswalks and intersections, installation of signage, and other pedestrian safety measures.

“In a state as densely populated and highly traveled as New Jersey, keeping pedestrians safe on our roadways is paramount. The Division works with public and private partners year round to promote pedestrian safety and reduce the risk of pedestrian-involved motor vehicle crashes,” said Eric Heitmann, Director of the Division Highway Traffic Safety. “Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day is an excellent opportunity to advance those efforts by reminding everyone that pedestrian safety is a shared responsibility and that motorists and pedestrians must be mindful one another to prevent crashes.”

To promote pedestrian safety:

Motorists:

- Stop for pedestrians in marked crosswalks.
- Watch for pedestrians when turning right on red.
- Obey speed limits.
- Do not block or park in crosswalks.
- Keep your windshield clean for maximum visibility.
- Be alert for pedestrians at all times.
- Never pass a school bus when it is loading or unloading students.

Pedestrians:

- If there is no sidewalk available, walk as far off the roadway as possible on the left side of the road, facing oncoming traffic.
- When possible, cross at corners, within marked crosswalks where available.
- If crossing in other locations, yield the right of way to vehicles. Never cross from in-between parked cars.
- Obey traffic signals, especially "Walk/Don't Walk."
- Never assume a driver sees you. To ensure they do, make eye contact with drivers as they approach.
- Remain alert! Don't assume that cars are going to stop.
- Be visible at all times. Wear bright clothing during the day and wear light-colored clothes, reflective materials, or use a flashlight at night.
- Stay sober. Walking while impaired greatly increases your chances of being struck by a vehicle.