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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MICHIGAN TRAFFIC FATALITIES TOP 1,000 IN 2020

Preliminary data shows increase in crash deaths in 2020 during COVID-19 pandemic

Michigan traffic deaths peaked above 1,000 for the first time in three years according to recently released data from the Michigan State Police Criminal Justice Information Center. The 1,083 fatalities in 2020 marked a 10-percent increase from 985 fatalities in 2019 and the most traffic fatalities in Michigan since 1,084 deaths in 2007.

While fatalities spiked, the number of injuries, crashes and serious injuries declined from the year before:

- Injuries: 74,963 in 2019 to 60,896 in 2020, down 19 percent.
- Crashes: 314,377 in 2019 to 245,432 in 2020, down 22 percent.
- Suspected serious injuries: 5,629 in 2019 to 5,433 in 2020, down 3 percent.

The percentage of alcohol-involved fatalities increased by 11 percent from 295 deaths in 2019 to 326 deaths in 2020. This represents 30 percent of all traffic fatalities for the year.

“Even though there was a dramatic drop in traffic crashes and injuries during 2020, there was an unfortunate surge in fatalities,” said Michael L. Prince, director of the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning (OHSP). “The OHSP will be coordinating high-visibility enforcement campaigns this summer focusing on impaired driving and seat belt use to reverse the trends we are seeing.”

Michigan Traffic Crashes	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Crashes	245,432	314,377	312,798	314,921	312,172
Injuries	60,986	74,963	75,838	78,394	79,724
Fatalities	1,083	985	974	1,028	1,064

Bicycle fatalities climbed to 38 in 2020, up 81 percent, after three consecutive years at 21 deaths.

In other areas:

- Motorcyclist fatalities increased from 122 in 2019 to 152 in 2020, up 25 percent.
- Pedestrian fatalities increased from 149 in 2019 to 175 in 2020, up 17 percent.
- Commercial motor vehicle-involved fatalities decreased from 106 in 2019 to 78 in 2020, down 26 percent.
- Deer-involved fatalities decreased from 12 in 2019 to 5 in 2020, down 58 percent.
- School bus-involved fatalities decreased from 6 in 2019 to zero in 2020, down 100 percent.
- Train-involved fatalities decreased from 7 in 2019 to zero in 2020, down 100 percent.

Prince said Michigan and most other states are seeing a reduction in traffic crashes but a jump in fatalities. This data could indicate a rise in crash “severity,” which may indicate reductions in seat belt use, increases in impairment and increases in speed, but Prince said further analysis is required.

Note: More detailed 2020 crash information will be posted to MichiganTrafficCrashFacts.org in the coming months. Statewide crash information can be found at Michigan.gov/crash.

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