LAS VEGAS HOLDS FIRST WORLD DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

The World Day of Remembrance Ceremony is held on the third Sunday in November and has been celebrated worldwide for the past nine years. This year Las Vegas held their first World Day of Remembrance Ceremony on November 20th at the Palm Mortuary in downtown Las Vegas. The event was hosted by The Vulnerable Road Users Project of the Transportation Research Center at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), which works on traffic safety issues throughout the valley.

The day was held to remember those lost in auto-related incidents throughout Nevada and to discuss solutions to help prevent future crashes. Several families attended the celebration, which was led by Celebrant John Butler from Palm Mortuary, Eastern. John offered blessings and attendees were invited to share stories and memories of their loved ones and the losses they have suffered. Discussions took place with state safety representatives about what can be done to help eliminate these crashes and devastating fatalities. Artist Steve Gamboa was also on hand to make personalized ornaments for the families to place on a memorial tree honoring the victims.

Road deaths are sudden, violent, tragic, and permanent for victims and their families. In 2015, 326 people died in traffic-related incidents in Nevada. 2016 is proving to be a year that tops that number - there have been 311 statewide fatalities so far this year.

Erin Breen, director of UNLV’s Vulnerable Road Users Project said “I don’t know that there’s a worse time of year (than the holiday season) to lose a loved one in a traffic crash. I’ve always called this the club that no one wants to be in.” Breen and state Senator Mark Manendo urged attendees to support legislation that could help protect pedestrians and improve public safety statewide. “We cannot have another year like we did last year between holidays. We just can’t,” Manendo said. “We are going to be aggressive again next session.”

14TH ANNUAL NEVADA BIKE/PED SUMMIT HELD IN LAKE TAHOE

The Nevada Department of Transportation and the Lake Tahoe Bicycle Coalition hosted the 14th Annual Nevada Bicycle and Pedestrian Summit on November 9th at the MontBleu Resort at Lake Tahoe. Summit discussions included everything from Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety, to building Safe Routes to School, to Complete Streets training.

“This annual summit is truly the state’s foremost event for bicycling and walking enthusiasts, advocates, engineers, administrators, educators, and consultants,” NDOT Assistant Chief of Multi-Modal Planning and Program Development Bill Story explained. “People understand that bicycling and walking provide many benefits to health, congestion mitigation and air quality; not to mention ease of finding a parking spot. And this summit provides resources and information to further those benefits in Nevada.”

Nevada bicycling and pedestrian supporters were recognized during the Nevada Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board’s annual awards program at the Summit. The awards recognize individuals, agencies, and groups for improving bicycle and pedestrian facilities, safety, and advocacy throughout Nevada. “Bicycling and walking offer many benefits,” board treasurer Denis Coyne said. “It can make us healthier. Biking and walking also helps connect our communities and reduce congestion and vehicle emissions. Whether government agencies or individuals, these award recipients have helped give our state more means of transportation by promoting and integrating safe walking and bicycling into our communities.”

With proven environmental, economic and health benefits, the public demand for bicycling and walking opportunities is growing. Bicycling and pedestrian planning across the state has created a surge of public interest in bicycling and walking, with more than half of vehicle users surveyed saying they would drive less if other forms of commuting were available.

The Nevada Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board was created by the Nevada Legislature to advise state agencies on policies, programs and facilities, and to promote programs and facilities that encourage the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians in the state. More information is available at (775) 888-7433 (RIDE) or by visiting www.bicyclenevada.com.
WHAT’S TRENDING: WHAT IS THE LINK BETWEEN LEGALIZED MARIJUANA AND FATAL CRASHES?

With the recent passing of Question 2 on the November 8th ballot, many are left wondering what the impact on crashes on Nevada highways will be due to the marijuana legalization initiative. There seems to be evidence that the answer to that question is yes, there will be an impact to crashes on Nevada roadways.

Recent research conducted by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety in the State of Washington after they legalized recreational marijuana use indicates the percentage of drivers under the influence of marijuana that were involved in fatal crashes has doubled between 2013 and 2014. Another study released by the Governor’s Highway Safety Association (GHSA) has shown that the number of drivers killed in crashes that tested positive for drugs has increased from 29 percent in 2005 to 39.9 percent in 2013. Even though the use of prescription drugs must be taken into consideration, this same report shows that marijuana has been the most commonly used drug by fatally injured drivers.

Driving under the influence of marijuana is illegal in all 50 states, however, with the recent legislation that has been passing state-by-state, just about half of the U.S. now allows medical or recreational use of marijuana. Similar to the use of alcohol, drugs often lead individuals to abuse the habit and users become more complacent about using it and getting behind the wheel. They underestimate how drugs impair their judgment and reaction time while driving, which contributes to crashes.

The same GHSA report reflected on two focus groups conducted in Colorado and Washington since the legalization of recreational marijuana use. In these groups, participants that regularly used marijuana felt that their use of the drug did not impair their ability to drive. These results can be misleading because the amount of marijuana present in the body that is needed to impair a driver is inconsistent among users. This makes establishing THC (tetrahydrocannabinols) levels for laws, similar to blood alcohol levels (BAC) levels, very difficult. Alcohol present in the bloodstream has proven to increase crash risk in proportion to the BAC level. Marijuana use does not have a similarly proven crash correlation and is currently nearly impossible to determine if a driver is impaired simply based on the amount of the drug in their system.

In Washington, fatal crashes caused by drug impaired drivers rose 98% in 2014. In Colorado, these crashes rose 32% during the first year of legalized recreational marijuana use.

The general public needs access to information about the dangers of driving under the influence of marijuana, just like with alcohol, encouraging them to think twice before getting behind the wheel while under the influence.

(Information courtesy of Rural Road Safety Center)
ZERO FATALITIES CAMPAIGN SPREADING THE WORD:
IT’S A CRASH, NOT AN ACCIDENT

It is not by accident that a driver uses a cell phone to make a call or send a
text. It’s not an accident when he or she runs into someone because they are
distracted instead of paying attention to the road while driving. Most crashes
don’t happen by accident. When we use the word “accident” it implies that no
one is at fault. Reality is that in most cases it is actually a “crash”—a
predictable, preventable event that the driver has a choice to make, or not,
when driving.

Nevada Law declares that the term “crash” as opposed to “accident” should
be used when reporting collisions, especially those where someone chooses
to drive drunk, impaired, distracted, or aggressively. Driving under these conditions is a decision made by the
driver and by no means should be construed as an “accident.”

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) launched a “Crashes Aren’t Accidents” campaign
back in 1997 to change the way we think about these events, and the words we use to describe them. (http://
v3.11/). Use of the term “accident” related to traffic crashes promotes the concept that these events are outside of
human influence or control, when, in fact, they are predictable results of specific actions.

Recent campaigns by the NDOT, Office of Traffic Safety, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and
numerous safety advocates have committed to eliminate the use of the word “accident” in relation to traffic
crashes and are working together to change the way we think about crashes and how they normally don’t occur
by accident. Shifting our thinking away from using this misnomer and focusing more on what can be done to
prevent crashes resulting in devastating injuries and fatalities has become the new focus in Nevada.

This fall, NDOT ran a statewide audio/video ad campaign to spread the word that crashes are not accidents. The
campaign was targeted at a 18-34 year-old adult audience and utilized various forms of digital and social media
including Facebook, Twitter, Pandora, and YouTube. The strategy consisted of informing the target audience and
then encouraging both action and sharing of the information, which resulted in over 5 million impressions statewide.

On January 1, 2016, Nevada enacted a law, passed almost unanimously by our Legislature, to change “accident”
to “crash” in dozens of instances where the word is mentioned in state laws, like those covering police and
insurance reports. It is efforts like these that are moving Nevada forward and to the forefront of road safety in the
United States.

Campaigns like “Crash Not Accident” help to inform and educate drivers of
all ages that their daily choices influence not only their safety, but the safety
of others on the road. The goal is to change driver behavior and reduce
fatalities in the state, ultimately reaching the goal of Zero Fatalities.

To view the Zero Fatalities Crash Not Accident videos
please go to https://www.youtube.com/channel/
UCCrguVB0ikKiuhxJcqDhfvA
NEVADA STRATEGIC HIGHWAY SAFETY PLAN

NEW DRIVING SIMULATOR EFFECTIVE TOOL FOR TEEN DRIVER EDUCATION

With funding from NDOT, the Zero Teen Fatalities program acquired two “dangerous driving” simulators. These simulators are located in the Office of Traffic Safety’s Carson City and Las Vegas offices.

The portable simulators are convincing training tools that simulate the dangers of texting while driving, as well as driving under the influence of alcohol. Each system incorporates actual smart phones – one for the instructor and one for the driver – in order to realistically replicate the distraction caused by attempting to read and send text messages while driving, particularly when holding a device in the driver’s hand. This will give Office of Traffic Safety staff the opportunity to engage in conversation and educate teens why vehicle crashes are the number one reason teens are dying in America.

Please contact us if you would like a Zero Teen Fatalities presentation or the simulators at your events.

Website: ZeroTeenFatalities.com
Email: Info@ZeroTeenFatalities.com

NEVADA TRAFFIC SAFETY Calendar of Events

STRATEGIC HIGHWAY SAFETY PLAN MEETINGS

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<td>26 Nevada Executive Committee on Traffic Safety</td>
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JOINING FORCES

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Contact Us! For questions or to get involved at zerofatalitiesnv@kimley-horn.com