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Fourth in a series of five.

State to promote safety during National Public Health Week, April 4–10

Day four — Safety on the road

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA — The Alaska Department of Health and Social Services is placing special emphasis on safety during National Public Health Week, April 4–10. This year's theme is *Safety is No Accident*. Unintentional injuries — such as motor vehicle crashes, traumatic brain injury and falls — rank among the 10 leading causes of hospitalizations in Alaska.

A different aspect of injury prevention is highlighted each day throughout the week.

For Thursday, April 7, our focus is safety on the road.

Between 2006 and 2010, 338 Alaskans died in motor vehicle crashes on our roadways. So far 13 Alaskans have died in 2011.

Other facts include:

- In 2008, more Alaskans died due to motor vehicle crashes than any other type of accidental death.
- In 2008, 26 percent of fatal motor-vehicle crashes in Alaska involved drivers age 20 and younger.
- Almost half (49 percent) of injuries and fatalities involving children ages 2 to 17 in rural Alaska are motor-vehicle related.
- Driver inattention is cited in 28 percent of all traffic-related crashes in Alaska.
- Nationwide, 80 percent of vehicle crashes and 65 percent of close calls are caused in part by driver distraction.

Seat belts and child safety seats are the two most important things you can do to reduce the risk of injury and death from motor vehicle crashes. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, more than 15,000 lives a year are saved thanks to seat belt use; and more than 400 children's lives are saved due to car seats.

For more information on being safe on the road go to: <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/>

For more safety ideas go to our state injury prevention website:
http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/injury_prevention/

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