

Office of the Governor

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NEWS RELEASE

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Fourth of July Fatalities Fall Whitman Thanks Motorists, State and Local Police

NJ Gov. Christie Whitman welcomed reports that Fourth of July highway traffic deaths fell by more than half this year - down to 8 fatalities from last year's level of 19. The Governor credited stepped-up aggressive driving enforcement efforts and increased driver caution for the improvement.

"Even one motor vehicle death is too many, but I am certainly pleased that this year's accident toll fell so dramatically. Holidays should be times of happiness and celebration, not sorrow and remorse," the Governor said.

"Much of the credit for this year's improvement goes to stepped-up enforcement of traffic safety laws by state and local police, and to drivers themselves. Drivers in New Jersey understand that there is no percentage in speeding, driving aggressively or driving while under the influence of alcohol," she said.

"Not only have we improved enforcement of laws to curb aggressive driving, we've also increased our public education programs so people are aware of the dangers of driving with an attitude," Gov. Whitman said.

"New Jersey's campaign against aggressive driving includes not only an increased law enforcement component, but an important driver awareness program, as well," said Attorney General Peter Verniero.

"Our bottom line is to prevent the aggressive driving that leads to accidents before it takes place. Our goal isn't to write tickets, it's to save lives," he said.

Attached is a report on fatal accidents from the holiday period as well as for the year-to-date.