

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The goal: Make every day Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day

Today, Oct. 10, is Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day. It's a nationwide campaign encouraging motorists, passengers, pedestrians and cyclists to use caution every day and help prevent fatalities.

As part of the campaign, the Kansas Department of Transportation and its transportation safety partners have been publishing blogs to share the experiences of motorists, first responders and emergency dispatchers. The entire blog series can be seen [here](#).

Their words tell the impact, in personal terms, of crashes. A few examples:

- Debbie Lee, mother of Braden Woodson: "The voice on the other end was Braden, telling me he was hit by a semi... I share our story for several reasons but mostly because Braden was wearing his seat belt, and I believe the seat belt saved him from being thrown from the vehicle."
- Reno County 911 dispatcher Megan Miller: "It's hard not to get emotionally attached. ... When it comes to kids, that's a rough one."
- Lt. Tanner Blakesley: "I was a road trooper in the Topeka area for two years when I woke up in a ditch. The driver of the vehicle we had stopped was standing over me, asking me if I was okay. I realized I had been hit by my patrol car after a passing vehicle struck the rear of my car at full highway speed. Since that day, I have become a strong enforcer of the 'Move Over Law'."

Numbers showing the impact of traffic crashes:

- In 2020, 425 people died in crashes in Kansas, according to KDOT.
- According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 38,824 people died in crashes across the nation in 2020 – an average of 106 traffic deaths a day.
- Inattention has been the biggest factor in all Kansas crashes for many years, accounting for almost one in five crashes. To avoid distractions, the experts say: Keep your eyes on the road. Hands on the wheel. Mind on driving. Remember this:

The average time a person's eyes leave the road while texting and driving is 5 seconds – enough time to traverse a football field at 55 mph.

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