

## Comparing the 1999 Annual Report of the New Mexico Traffic Safety Bureau to reality...

Each year, the Traffic Safety Bureau sets a number of performance goals. Listed below are the Bureau's 1999 performance goals and the state's success in attaining them.

**4 out of 7, actually**

|  |               |
|--|---------------|
| Reduce alcohol-involved traffic fatalities from 44 percent of total traffic fatalities in 1998 to 43 percent in 1999.                                  | Result: 41%   |
| Reduce the percentage of alcohol-involved deaths among young adults (20-24) from 63 percent of young adult crash deaths in 1998 to 54 percent in 1999. | Result: 48%   |
| Reduce alcohol-involved crash deaths among adolescents (15-19) from 44 percent of adolescent crash deaths in 1998 to 40 percent in 1999.               | Result: 39%   |
| Reduce New Mexico's traffic fatality rate from 24.4 per 100,000 population in 1998 to 23 in 1999.  | Result: 25.0  |
| Reduce New Mexico's fatal traffic crash rate from 1.56 per 100 million vehicle miles traveled in 1998 to 1.50 in 1999.                                 | Result: 1.56  |
| Increase front seat occupant seatbelt use rate from 83 percent 1998 to 86 percent or higher in 1999.   | Result: 88.4% |
| Reduce the pedestrian fatality rate from 3.3 per 100,000 in 1998 to 3.0 in 1999.   | Result: 3.8%  |

\*1999 figures represent fatalities from November 1998 through October 1999. MVM and 1999 population are estimates.

**Misleading. They don't mention the percent went down mainly because non-alcohol-involved deaths went up.** If n.a.i. deaths had stayed at the 1994 level of 212 (the year before the Governor took office), we'd have had 47%, scarcely different from the actual 1994 value of 51%. Instead n.a.i. deaths rose to 257, 45 extra people died. Claiming that as success is inappropriate.

**Down from 1998, yes, but they don't mention it's up from 1997!**

**But the percentage dropped partly because non-alcohol deaths rose.** N.a.i. deaths went from 23 in 1994 to 30 in 1999. In effect they used extra deaths to create an illusion of progress. The percentage would be 45% without the extras.

**Why do they have a checkmark and say "success" above when they missed these goals by a lot?** The goal was 23.0 per 100,000 = 400 deaths, they got 441. That is a lot of extra deaths -- which they don't mention.

**Belt usage has barely changed since 1995, and their goal is very weak. They don't mention that.** They changed measurement methods without including a comparison to the old measurements, leaving their goals & scores with little meaning.

**They missed this one, too, but checked it anyway, and called it "success" anyway.** Seven extra pedestrians were killed, compared to their goal.

All counts and percentages referenced on this page are based on the November-October annual periods they cite. Values are calculated by the [DWI Resource Center](#) from [Traffic Safety Bureau](#) databases, as reprocessed by the [UNM Division of Government Research](#) under contract to the Bureau.