

Traffic deaths show an increase following several years of decline

Traffic deaths in Oregon rose by about eight percent in 1993, but the number is still far below the 10 year average, according to the Oregon State Department of Transportation (ODOT).

ODOT reported that 508

people died in traffic crashes last year, compared to 472 deaths in 1992.

While the annual toll did increase in 1993, Jill Vosper of ODOT's Transportation Safety Section said the past three years have been much safer

on Oregon's highways than previous years.

"For the five years prior to 1990, we averaged 620 traffic deaths a year in Oregon," Vosper said "For the past three years, that average has dropped to 487 deaths a year."

Several factors may have contributed to the decrease in

traffic deaths.

"Oregon voters passed a mandatory safety belt law in 1990, and a motorcycle helmet law in 1988," Vosper said "Those two laws alone have certainly had a positive effect on traffic deaths. There also has been a continuing effort to educate drivers about the dangers of driving while intoxicated. Oregon is also doing

a better job of testing drivers, especially young drivers and those who drive large commercial vehicles."

Vosper added that vehicles also are being designed with an increased emphasis on safety and highway designers are continuously looking for ways to make the roads safer.



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Endangered species "cookbook" will go to library

In the mailbox of The INDEPENDENT, this past week, was a copy of a paperback book written by B. R. "Buck" Peterson, titled *Endangered*

Species Cookbook.

Of special interest locally are the illustrations by former Vernonian J. Angus "Sourdough" McLean.

This copy will be donated to the Vernonia Library for the edification of anyone interested in reading it.

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