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**Press Release**

## **NMDOT and City of Las Cruces Remind Motorists and Pedestrians to “Look For Me”**

LAS CRUCES - The New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) and the City of Las Cruces gathered in front of City Hall today to remind motorists and pedestrians to “Look For Me” this spring. The pedestrian safety campaign launched last fall in Albuquerque, Santa Fe and Gallup and is expanding efforts to Las Cruces and Farmington.

Pedestrian fatalities make up nearly 11 percent of all state traffic deaths. Since the beginning of 2012, 21 pedestrians have lost their lives on New Mexico roads; nearly double from this time last year, when 12 people were killed walking the state’s roadways.

“Unfortunately, Dona Ana County is among the top five New Mexico counties with the highest number of pedestrian crashes,” said District One Engineer Frank Guzman. “With a primary focus to raise awareness among pedestrians and motorists to look out for each other, the Department of Transportation hopes to see a significant reduction in the number of crashes and fatalities, saving lives and preventing families from enduring a tragedy.”

“Summer is nearly upon us. As the weather warms, more and more people—including families—take to the streets, filling parks, local attractions and enjoying the various events that the City of Las Cruces has to offer, making the efforts to focus on pedestrian safety even that much more important” said Mayor Ken Miyagishima. “This campaign is specifically designed to change the behaviors that lead to pedestrian crashes. Through this safety campaign and the efforts of our many partners we hope 2012 will be the safest yet.”

The campaign is two-fold, including an education campaign with brochures, reminder cards and radio announcements in both English and Spanish, and on-site safety blitzes with law enforcement concentrating efforts throughout the city, citing those who violate pedestrian safety laws.

Las Cruces Police Chief Richard Williams said officers will be out in force, conducting blitzes at four main intersections:

- Main at El Paseo
- University at Espina
- El Paseo at Missouri
- Idaho at El Paseo

The safety blitzes, aimed at getting drivers to look for pedestrians, are designed to increase the yielding behaviors of drivers as well as promote safe walking and crossing behaviors of pedestrians.

In addition to the launch of the campaign in Las Cruces, Mayor Miyagishima issued a proclamation declaring the month of May “Pedestrian Safety Month.”

For questions regarding this release please call Bridget Spedalieri at (575) 525-7340, NMDOT District One Public Relations Officer.

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