33 Officer Fatalities in the First Quarter of 2017

According to preliminary data from the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, law enforcement officer fatalities have increased 3 percent at the end of the first quarter of 2017, compared to the same period in 2016.

Thirty-three law enforcement officers were killed as of March 31, 2017, up from 32 fatalities during the same period in 2016.

Traffic-related fatalities are the leading cause of officer deaths thus far in 2017, with 14 officer fatalities, up 27 percent from 11 fatalities during the same period in 2016.

Of the remaining 19 officer fatalities, nine officers were shot and killed, seven officers died from job-related illnesses, one officer drowned, one officer was beaten and one officer was poisoned.

Traffic-related incidents are the leading cause of officer deaths

New York suffered the most fatalities in the first quarter of the year, with 5 deaths, followed by California and Georgia, each suffering three deaths. Thirty-one states did not suffer a law enforcement fatality during the first quarter of 2017.

The average age of the officers killed in the line of duty was 42 years old, and the average length of service was 17 years.

Of the 33 fallen officers, one officer was female, and 32 were male. On average, each officer left behind two children.

RECENTLY FALLEN

Detective Chad Parque
North Las Vegas (NV) Police Department
EOW: 1/06/2017

Detective Parque was killed when a wrong-way driver struck his police vehicle.

Deputy First Class Norman Lewis
Orange County (FL) Sheriff’s Office
EOW: 1/09/2017

Deputy First Class Lewis was killed in a motorcycle crash while searching for a suspect.

Police Officer David Fahey
Cleveland (OH) Police Department
EOW: 1/24/2017

Police Officer Fahey was struck and killed while setting out flares at the crash scene.

Register to receive Recently Fallen alerts at www.LawMemorial.org/RecentlyFallenAlerts

This report is part of an innovative partnership with NHTSA to promote law enforcement officer safety. The data and statistics contained in this report are preliminary and do not represent a final or complete list of individual officers who will be added to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in 2018.
Traffic-related Fatalities

Of the 14 officers killed during the first quarter in traffic-related incidents, 10 were killed in automobile crashes, two were struck and killed, and two died in motorcycle crashes. During the same period in 2016, seven officers were killed in automobile crashes, three officers were struck and killed, and one officer was killed in a motorcycle crash.

Four of the 10 officers killed in automobile crashes during the first quarter of 2017 died in single-vehicle crashes, compared to one officer during the same period in 2016.

Traffic-related fatalities accounted for 14 of the 33 deaths in the first quarter of 2017, representing a 27 percent increase over 2016.

Felonious Fatalities: First Quarter 2016 vs. First Quarter 2017

Seventeen officers were feloniously killed in the first quarter of 2017, a 26 percent decrease from 2016 when 23 officers were feloniously killed during the same period. Nine officers were feloniously shot and killed, two officers were killed in felonious crashes, one officer was beaten to death, one officer was struck and killed, one officer died from a heart attack as a result of a gunshot wound sustained years earlier, and three officers died of illnesses contracted during the search and recovery efforts in New York City after the 9-11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center.

During the same period in 2016, 16 officers were shot and killed, one officer was killed in a motorcycle crash, four officers were killed in automobile crashes and one officer was struck and killed.

NHTSA Traffic Safety Tips

Based on fatality information collected by the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, these recommendations are intended to help prevent injuries and death as a result of traffic-related incidents.

Reflective vests
Officers riding departmental motorcycles should wear retro-reflective vests or garments to enhance their visibility.

Right-side stop
Consider a right side (passenger) approach when conducting a traffic stop; especially on a busy roadway.

Arrive alive
Avoid distractions, watch your speed, and drive for the conditions on the road.