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Law helps cut traffic deaths involving teens

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Kieran Nicholson Denver Post Staff Writer

Fatal traffic accidents in Colorado involving 16-year-old drivers are down sharply over a two-year period, according to the Colorado Department of Transportation.

CDOT officials said Tuesday that the Graduated **Driver Licensing** Law, passed in 1999, played a significant role in the drop.

"The evidence suggests that the GDL Law has allowed us to make significant progress with teen safety on Colorado's roads," said Tom Norton, CDOT executive director.

In 1998, 33 people were killed in Colorado traffic accidents involving 16-year-old drivers, compared with 18 such deaths in 2000, according to statistics.

The GDL Law requires 16-year- olds to gain more experience behind the wheel before they are licensed to drive alone.

Under the law, new drivers must hold a learner's permit for six months and must log 50 driving hours, including 10 at night, under adult supervision before being eligible to take a driving test.

A campaign to further cut down on teen driving accidents, called Colorado Drive Time, sponsors a website at

www.coloradodrivetime.com.

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