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MEDIA RELEASE

North Dakota Highway Patrol

374 34 St S, Ste A, Fargo, ND 58103



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT

03/04/2019

Sergeant Tom Herzig
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NDHP Crashes Investigated Near Medina, March 4th, 2019

On March 4th, 2019 at 1:22 pm. a 2007 Toyota Corolla driven by Odillio Barrientos Villeda from Portland Oregon was westbound on Interstate 94 west of Medina at a slow speed due to near zero visibility caused by blowing snow. A 2016 Freightliner driven by Benjamin Grant from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, slowed to follow the Toyota. A westbound 2014 Freightliner driven by Donald Powel from Mandan, approached from the rear at a higher rate of speed and veered left attempting to avoid a crash but not before side-swiping the rear of Grant's semi-trailer. Powel's Freightliner veered back onto the right lane, striking Barrientos Villeda's Toyota. The Toyota came to rest in the north ditch. The Freightliner came to rest in the north ditch and a westbound lane. Traffic was restricted to one lane for nearly an hour while vehicles and trailers were towed from the scene.

At 1500hrs, approximately one mile east of the crash noted above, two snow plows, and two patrol vehicles used flashing lights to slow westbound traffic as it entered a crash scene ahead. Near zero visibility continued.

A 2016 Ford Fusion driven by Brad Thingvold from Bismarck, slowed to stop prior to the scene. Thingvold was struck from behind by a 2018 Fusion driven by Thomas Haas from Fargo.

As Sheriff Kaiser stood outside of his 2019 Chevrolet Silverado patrol vehicle to direct traffic, a 2016 Chevrolet Malibu driven by Traci Kelm from Sioux Falls South Dakota sideswiped the Silverado Patrol Vehicle before rear ending a 1996 Peterbilt driven by Bradley Kupser from Zimmerman Minnesota. During the chain of events, Kelm's Malibu brushed Sheriff Kaiser's leg as he ran to the median. He was not injured. Three of the motorists were transported by the Medina Ambulance to the Jamestown Regional Medical Center for non-life threatening injuries. Crashes remain under investigation by the Highway Patrol.

The Vision Zero Traffic Safety Initiative is a multi-agency partnership working toward the goal of zero motor vehicle fatalities and serious injuries on North Dakota roads.

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Zero fatalities. Zero excuses.



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