North Carolina Criminal Law

A UNC School of Government Blog

Reducing Impaired Driving 2.0

Posted on Oct. 31, 2019, 1:24 am by Shea Denning

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) recently released this report on fatal motor vehicle crashes in 2018. The number of traffic fatalities nationwide decreased modestly last year as did the number of alcohol-impaired driving fatalities. In North Carolina, the number of fatalities in both categories modestly increased in 2018. In the aggregate, neither the national nor the state numbers reflect much change in the fatality rate associated with traffic crashes generally or impaired driving-related crashes specifically. While there were precipitous declines in alcohol-impaired driving fatalities from 1982 to 2000, since that time the number of impaired driving-related fatalities has remained rather constant. A similar plateau exists for all types of traffic fatalities, for which the fatality rate per 100 million vehicle miles traveled has remained relatively static for the last decade. This flat trend line has safety advocates wondering what they can do, particularly in the impaired driving context, to push the trend line toward zero.

The numbers. There were 36,560 people killed in traffic crashes in the United States in 2018, a 2.4 percent decrease from 2017. Twenty nine percent of those deaths (10,511) were alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities, a 3.6 percent decrease from 2017. In North Carolina, 1,437 people died in traffic crashes in 2018, a 1.8 percent increase from 2017. Twenty nine percent of those deaths were alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities, a 5 percent increase from 2017. Wondering just how impaired drivers involved in fatality crashes are? A 2014 NHTSA report stated that among the 10,076 alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities the previous year, 68 percent were in crashes in which at least one driver in the crash had a BAC of .15 or higher. The most frequently recorded BAC among drinking drivers in fatal crashes in 2013 was .17.

What can be done? I spent this afternoon at a lunch and learn at the UNC Highway Safety Research Center. The speaker was veteran highway safety researcher Dr. Robert Foss and the topic was "Reducing Impaired Driving 2.0: Foundational Considerations for Progress in North Carolina." Dr. Foss discussed what he had learned during thirty years of field research, academic study, and policy work focusing on the phenomenon of impaired driving and what his recommendations were for a strategy to further reduce deaths from impaired-driving crashes. Among his observations were that deterrence and

controlling drinking drivers must be the focus. Foss opined that there simply are too many impaired drivers to ever catch and prosecute them all. And most impaired drivers who are involved in an alcohol-related crash have never (or at least have not recently) been charged with impaired driving. Dr. Foss had two central recommendations: (1) expand ignition interlock; and (2) conduct more high visibility enforcement. As for ignition interlock, Dr. Foss suggested that every driver charged with impaired driving be required to install ignition interlock. He further suggested that ignition interlock be required until the driver could demonstrate that he or she no longer had an alcohol problem. As for high visibility enforcement, Foss note that this type of enforcement does not stretch law enforcement resources too thin and also serves to counter the views of drinking drivers who believe, based on their past experiences of driving while impaired and not being stopped, that they will not be caught.

Foss's recommendations are not new to the field or this blog (see earlier posts here and here) and are supported by other experts. The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine published last year recommendations for "Getting to Zero Alcohol-Impaired Driving Fatalities." Among the recommendations were that states "enact all-offender ignition interlock laws to reduce alcohol-impaired driving fatalities," requiring ignition interlock for all offenders with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) above the limit set by state law. The report also advised states to consider increased monitoring periods based on an offender's BAC or past recidivism, stating that a 2-year minimum interlock monitoring period is effective for a first offense, and 4 years is effective for a second offense. The report also recommended that states and localities "conduct frequent sobriety checkpoints in conjunction with widespread publicity" to promote awareness of their enforcement initiatives. The authors noted that low-staff checkpoints are effective and are useful in rural areas and in other circumstances when resources for full-scale checkpoints are not available.

The National Academies' other recommendations include increasing alcohol excise taxes, lowering state per se laws for alcohol-impaired driving to 0.05 BAC, preventing illegal alcohol sales to underage persons and to intoxicated adults, strengthening regulation of alcohol marketing, and implementing policies to reduce the physical availability of alcohol. The report also recommended that every state implement DWI courts that require offenders to be evaluated by an addiction-trained clinician, and, when medically indicated, place offenders in a program that includes relapse prevention medication and requires the offender to receive cognitive behavioral therapy.

What do you think? The most recent changes to North Carolina's impaired driving laws have, on the one hand, ratcheted up the punishment (by adding a super-aggravating factor and creating Aggravated Level One sentences) and on the other, reduced potential jail time for defendants who participate in continuous alcohol monitoring. Neither effort has precipitated a significant reduction in alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities. Thus, researchers, advocates and policy makers continue to look for a solution. Have your own ideas? Use the comment feature to share them here.

Category: Motor Vehicles | Tags: DWI, fatalities, Foss, ignition interlock, traffic

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North Carolina Criminal Law

A UNC School of Government Blog

Straight Talk about DWI

Posted on Jan. 9, 2020, 12:05 pm by Shea Denning

Happy New Year, everyone.

A few months ago, I blogged about the continuing phenomenon of impaired driving, the fatalities resulting from crashes involving impaired drivers, and recommendations from experts about how to reduce the incidence of impaired driving. Some of the feedback I received indicated that talk of solutions ought to be preceded by common agreement on the nature of the problem.

Today's post sets forth three impaired-driving-related principles borne out by research. Agreement about these basic precepts can support a more robust and productive policy-oriented debate about strategies to reduce impaired driving.

1. Impaired driving is dangerous, and the risk of crash increases at higher levels of alcohol concentration.

Danger. A 2018 Consensus Study Report of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine listed the following as among the effects of alcohol:

- psychomotor impairment
- decreased inhibition
- diminished alertness and sleepiness
- confusion and problems with concentration; and
- reduced visual focus.

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, *Getting to Zero Alcohol-Impaired Driving Fatalities: A Comprehensive Approach to a Persistent Problem* 10 (2018) [hereinafter *National Academies*].

The report noted that "[d]riving requires several complex skills, and alcohol affects the capacity to drive safely by impairing information processing and reaction time and compromising judgment and coordination." *Id.*

Crash risk. Researchers have estimated the relative crash risk based on a driver's blood alcohol concentration. One widely cited study of drivers in Long Beach, California and Fort Lauderdale, Florida determined that a driver with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of 0.08 has nearly three times the relative risk of crash as a driver with a BAC of 0.00. Richard D. Blomberg et al, *The Long Beach/Fort Lauderdale relative risk study*, 40 Journal of Safety Research 285 (2009). The study found that the crash risk increases exponentially at BACs of .15 and higher. A driver with an alcohol concentration of .15 has nearly 20 times the risk of crash, while a driver with a BAC of 0.20 has 80 times the risk.

Fortunately, the baseline rate of motor vehicle crashes per 100 vehicle miles traveled is relatively low, and most incidents of driving while impaired do not result in a collision. *Compare* Amy Jewett et al, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Alcohol-Impaired Driving Among Adults – United States, 2012*, 64(30) MMWR Mob Mortal Wkly Rep. 2015 (estimating 121 million episodes of impaired driving annually) *with* NHTSA, National Center for Statistics and Analysis, *Summary of motor vehicle crashes; 2016 data* 2 (September 2018) (reporting 7,277,000 police-reported crashes in 2016). And not every collision causes injury or death. Instead, these are merely potential outcomes. *National Academies* at 6.

Crashes. When alcohol-impaired crashes *do* occur, they are estimated to cost tens of billions of dollars in lost productivity, workplace losses, legal and court expenses, medical costs, emergency medical services, insurance administration, congestion, and property damage. NHTSA, National Center for Statistics and Analysis, *Traffic Safety Facts: 2018 Data, Alcohol Impaired Driving* 3 (December 2019) [hereinafter *NHTSA*]. The North Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles reported in 2018 that there were 11,345 alcohol-involved crashes. Those crashes resulted in injuries to 7,602 persons and in the deaths of 411 others. North Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles, *North Carolina 2018 Traffic Crash Facts* 4.

Fatalities. Alcohol-impaired driving is involved in more traffic deaths nationally than any other driving behavior identified and isolated by researchers. *NHTSA* at 8. In 2018, 29 percent of all fatal traffic crashes in the United States involved an alcohol-impaired driver. *Id.* In contrast, 26 percent of fatalities nationwide were speeding-related. *Id.* at 9.

The large majority of drivers in fatal crashes have BAC levels far higher than the per se impairment level in North Carolina and nearly every other state of 0.08. In 2018, 67 percent of alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities were in crashes in which at least one driver

had a BAC of .15 or higher. *Id.* at 7. The most frequently recorded BACs among drinking drivers in fatal crashes in 2018 was .16. *Id.*

Despite anecdotal reports of impaired drivers walking away from crashes without injury, the persons most often killed in crashes involving alcohol-impaired drivers are the impaired drivers themselves. *Id.* at 2 (reporting that of the 10,511 people who died in alcohol-impaired-driving crashes in 2018, there were 6,364 drivers (61 percent) who had BACs of .08 or higher). That's not to minimize the impact on others. Passengers riding with alcohol-impaired drivers (some of whom were children) comprised 13 percent of fatalities, occupants of other vehicles 15 percent, and nonoccupants (including pedestrians and bicyclists) 11 percent of fatalities in crashes involving at least one alcohol impaired driver. *Id*. at 2-3.

2. Impairment from alcohol is still the primary problem – not drugs.

Drug-impaired driving has been a recent focus of research and policy making. Though drugged-driving data is not always gathered and, even when it is, is subject to significant limitations, experts believe that alcohol impairment comprises the larger portion of the impaired driving problem. Survey data from 2014 showed that the "prevalence of driving under the influence of alcohol was higher than the prevalence of driving under the influence of illicit drugs by twofold, and a high proportion of those driving under the influence of drugs were concurrently under the influence of alcohol." *National Academies*, at 78.

In some ways, that is good news for a system already geared toward combatting impairment by alcohol. Many of North Carolina's impaired driving countermeasures have an alcohol-specific focus, including civil license revocations tied to BAC levels (see G.S. 20-16.5), sentencing laws authorizing periods of continuous alcohol monitoring (G.S. 20-179), and ignition interlock requirements (G.S. 20-17.8).

3. Most alcohol-impaired drivers in fatal crashes have ***not*** been convicted of DWI in the past five years.

Only eight percent of alcohol-impaired drivers involved in fatal crashes in 2018 had been convicted of DWI in the previous five years (the longest lookback period utilized). *NHTSA* at 7. Though drivers with BACs of .08 or more involved in fatal crashes *were* four times more likely to have prior DWI convictions than drivers with no alcohol concentrations (8 percent and 2 percent, respectively), the relatively small number of drivers with prior convictions is a strong indicator that successful intervention efforts must extend beyond punishment and rehabilitation for those who are convicted. *Id*.

With that background, I'll return next week to discuss additional research findings and expert recommendations regarding strategies to reduce impaired driving.

Category: Motor Vehicles | Tags: crash risk, DWI, facts, NHTSA, policy

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North Carolina Criminal Law

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More on Efforts to Reduce Impaired Driving

Posted on Jan. 16, 2020, 3:53 pm by Shea Denning

This is not the first (and likely will not be the last) blog post about research findings and strategies to reduce impaired driving. A few months ago, I wrote about a veteran researcher's recommendations to expand ignition interlock and conduct more high visibility enforcement. Last week, I wrote about the risks posed by impaired drivers, the prevalence of impairment by alcohol versus other impairing substances, and the percentage of impaired drivers involved in fatal crashes who have previously been convicted of impaired driving. This week's post addresses research in two areas related to efforts to reduce impaired driving: (1) the impact of transportation network companies, like Uber and Lyft, on the incidence of impaired driving; and (2) British Columbia's success in reducing impaired driving through a program imposing administrative, rather than criminal, sanctions.

1. **Transportation network companies, like Uber and Lyft, may help reduce impaired driving, but are not a silver bullet.**

Researchers have noted that "[i]f would-be drunk drivers were rational, then lowering the difficulty of finding alternate transportation options and the cost of those options would, in theory, reduce the number of drunk driving occurrences and fatalities." Noil Brazil & David S. Kirk, *Uber and Metropolitan Traffic Fatalities in the United States*, 184(3) American Journal of Epidemiology 192, 193 (2016). Transportation network companies (TNCs or ride-share companies) have claimed reducing the incidence of impaired driving as among the benefits they provide. *Id.* Empirical research of this claim has reached mixed results. Jacey Fortin, *Does Uber Really Prevent Drunken Driving? It Depends on the Study*, The New York Times (April 7, 2017). Noli Brazil and David Kirk concluded in a study of the 100 most populated metropolitan areas in the United States that the deployment of Uber services in a given metropolitan county had no association with the number of subsequent traffic fatalities, either in the aggregate or specific to drunk-driving fatalities. Brazil & Kirk at 196. They posited several explanations for this: (1)

Uber represents a small percentage of transportation usage in the United States; (2) while Uber is a substitute for taxis and other forms of public transportation, it is not a substitute for drunk driving as Uber passengers may formerly have been users of these alternate modes of transportation; (3) Uber users may not be representative of the average metropolitan driver since lower-income individuals and those near public transit may be less likely to consider Uber as a practical form of transportation; and (4) an impaired person may not be sufficiently rational to substitute an Uber ride for driving while impaired; or, alternatively, many drunk drivers may rationally conclude that it is too costly to pay for an Uber ride given the low likelihood of being arrested for impaired driving. *Id.* at 197. Indeed, estimates of the risk for arrest for impaired driving in the United States vary from 1 in 2,000 impaired drivers to 1 in 88 impaired drivers. J.C. Fell, *Approaches for Reducing Alcohol-Impaired Driving: Evidence-Based Legislation, Law Enforcement Strategies, Sanctions, and Alcohol Control Policies*, 31(2) Forensic Science Review 162, 164-65 (July 2019).

The New York Times reported a few years ago about differing findings from other researchers, noting that most studies have "noted a correlation between Uber services and lower rates of alcohol-related accidents." *Fortin*. One such study found a 25 to 35 percent reduction in alcohol-related crashes in four boroughs of New York City following Uber's launch in 2011 as compared to other places where Uber did not operate. Other researchers have found declines in fatal crashes, impaired driving arrests, and alcohol-related crashes in other areas of the country correlated with the introduction of Uber service.

In his overview of policies and programs designed to reduce crashes involving impaired drivers, J.C. Fell wrote that ride-sharing programs "hold promise to have substantial effects as the market penetration increases." Fell at 175. Fell noted, however, the need for "a properly designed, scientifically rigorous, controlled study that would be both approved by experts and understood by the public." *Id*.

Whatever the effect of ride-sharing options, they will not be felt when no such options are available. This is true in many rural areas, which, as a group, already are disproportionately affected by alcohol-impaired driving crashes and fatalities. *National Academies* at 12, 32 (noting that "[w]hile 19 percent of the U.S. population lives in rural areas and rural areas account for 30 percent of total vehicle miles traveled, more than half of crash deaths occur there;" and further reporting that "[i]n 2015, 48 percent of alcohol-impaired driving fatalities occurred in rural areas"). So, it is fair to say that even if Uber helps, it is not a silver bullet.

2. **Roadside license revocations in British Columbia were associated with significant reductions in alcohol related collisions and the overall incidence of impaired driving.**

The Canadian province of British Columbia introduced a measure touted as the "toughest anti-drunk-driving law in the country [of Canada]" in September 2010. Ian Mulgrew, *Supreme Court rules on tough British Columbia impaired driving law*, Vancouver Sun (October 19, 2015); *see also* Scott MacDonald et al., *The impact on alcohol-related collisions of the partial decriminalization of impaired driving in British Columbia, Canada*, 59 Accident Analysis and Prevention 200 (2013) (describing enhanced license revocation program and its implementation date). That tough measure relied not on increased criminal prosecution of impaired drivers, but instead upon an enhanced scheme for automatic roadside license revocations (ARLR).

Here is how the ARLR program worked: Law enforcement officers who suspected a driver of drinking and driving asked the person to blow into a portable breath test. If the person registered an alcohol concentration of.05 to .08, the reading was a "warn." *Goodwin v. British Columbia* [2015], 3 S.C.R. 250. 264 (Can.) If the person registered more than a 0.08, the person reading was a "fail." *Id*. A refusal to blow also was deemed a fail. *Id*. Drivers with a "warn" were subject to an immediate three-day license suspension and possible three-day vehicle impoundment. MacDonald at 201. Drivers with a "fail" were subject to an immediate 90-day license suspension, mandatory 90-day vehicle impoundment, and were required to complete a responsible driver program and have ignition interlock installed in their vehicles as a condition of having their driver's licenses restored. *Id*. The sanctions were imposed through provincial law rather than in connection with a criminal charge of impaired driving in violation of the Criminal Code of Canada. *Id*.

The ARLR program was designed to maximize deterrence by being certain, severe, and swift. MacDonald at 201. The certainty derived from reducing the time and resources typically consumed in charging an offender with impaired driving. *Id*.; *see also* Douglas J. Beirness & E. Beasley, *An Evaluation of Immediate Roadside Prohibitions for Drinking Drivers in British Columbia: Findings from Roadside Surveys*, 15 Traffic Injury Prevention 232 (2014) (reporting that after ARLR implementation drivers "perceived that there was a good likelihood of being caught by the police if they had had too much to drink" and that over half of those surveyed had been stopped in a police alcohol checkpoint in the previous two years). The idea was that if law enforcement officers spent less time pursuing criminal charges, they could spend more time detecting drinking drivers and enforcing the law. MacDonald at 201. Imposing sanctions under provincial law required less paperwork and used evidence from roadside breath tests. *Id*. The sanction was severe and became more so as the BAC increased (though drivers with a BAC of .08 who were not also criminally prosecuted suffered less severe sanctions than they previously would have). *Id*. at 201, 204; *see also* Bierness & Beasley at 232 (noting that more than

two thirds of drivers surveyed roadside reported that it would be a "complete inconvenience" if they were subjected to immediate suspension and vehicle impoundment). The sanction was swift, as it was imposed roadside by the officer. The ARLR program was extensively publicized through media campaigns, including events reminding drivers of the new legislation and extra enforcement, and through press coverage of its provisions and litigation over their lawfulness. MacDonald at 201, 203; *see also* Bierness & Beasley at 232 (stating that "it was apparent" in roadside surveys "that awareness of [the ARLR] law was widespread, with over 90 percent of drivers indicating that they were aware of the new measures").

Criminal charges for impaired driving dropped by nearly 70 percent following implementation of the ARLR program. *Id*. at 204.

Researchers found that in the two years following its introduction, the ARLR program was associated with a 40 percent mean reduction in alcohol related fatal collisions, a 23 percent reduction in alcohol related injury collisions, and a 20 percent reduction in alcohol-related property-damage-only collisions. *Id*. at 201. Researchers cautioned that they could not distinguish between the impact of the ARLR program itself and its associated publicity and that the study focused only on effects over a two-year period. Nevertheless, they noted the study indicated that "effective legislation for drinking and driving" did not require the criminal prosecution of all offenders, and that the partial "decriminalization" brought about by the ARLR program was associated with savings in police time and significant reductions in alcohol-related road deaths, collisions and nonfatal injuries. *Id*. at 204.

A separate study found that driving after drinking decreased significantly following the introduction of enhanced ARLR. Beirness & Beasley at 230. The percentage of drivers with a BAC of more than .08 decreased by 59 percent. *Id*. Drivers with BACs of at least .05 decreased by 44 percent. *Id*. at 232. Researchers also found a changing pattern of driving after drinking. They did not observe increased incidences of drinking and driving on weekend nights that had been observed before implementation of the 2010 ARLR program. *Id*. In addition, the prevalence of drinking drivers on the road during late night hours was less than half that in 2010. *Id*. at 230. The researchers noted, however, "that as compelling and persuasive as the present results are, they cannot be unambiguously attributed to the [ARLR] legislation introduced in September 2010." *Id*. Their research utilized a "simple pre–post design" that did not include a control group. *Id*. That deficit, they explained, "leaves open a number of threats to the validity of a causal interpretation of the documented decrease in drinking and driving." *Id*.

These findings comport with long-standing advice from experts about the deterrence benefits of administrative license revocations (ALRs). *See* National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, *Countermeasures That Work: A Highway Safety Countermeasure Guide For State Highway Safety Offices* 1-15 (9th ed. 2017) (characterizing administrative license revocations as one of the most effective ways of deterring

impaired driving). They also add new information about how the deterrent effect of ALRs may compare to that associated with the threat of criminal prosecution.

Potential application in North Carolina. North Carolina's administrative license revocation system is considerably more time-consuming and resource-intensive than the British Columbia program. It requires that the suspect be charged and that testing be conducted on evidential breath test instruments in accordance with statutory procedures. G.S. 20-16.2; G.S. 20-16.5.. Moreover, administrative revocations under North Carolina law are ordered by a judicial official or by a hearing officer (after first affording a defendant the opportunity to be heard) rather than a law enforcement officer.

As state policymakers consider new strategies to reduce impaired driving and consider recommendations from advocates that the per se BAC level be lowered to .05, they may wish to consider the British Columbia experience. Studies of the provincial license revocation program there indicate that expediated license revocation can be effective in certain contexts – even without a companion criminal prosecution.

Due process concerns. Any administrative license revocation program must, of course, be formulated in a manner that protects a driver's due process interests. The United States Supreme Court in *Mackey v. Montrym*, 443 U.S. 1 (1979), upheld against constitutional challenge a statutory scheme under which the Massachusetts Registrar of Motor Vehicles was required to suspend the petitioner's driver's license upon receiving an affidavit from a law enforcement officer averring that the petitioner had been arrested for impaired driving, there was probable cause for the arrest, and he had refused to submit to a breath test. The Court rejected the petitioner's argument that the suspension of his license without first holding an evidentiary hearing violated due process. The court explained that when a prompt postdeprivation hearing is available (as it was under Massachusetts law), the predeprivation procedures must "provide a reasonably reliable basis for concluding that the facts justifying the action are as a responsible governmental official warrants them to be." *Id*. at 13. The Massachusetts scheme met that standard. The risk of erroneous observation or deliberate misrepresentation of the facts by the reporting officer was insubstantial. And the review of the affidavit by the registrar, a detached public officer, minimized the risk that a facially deficient report would result in revocation.

British Columbia's ARLR program did not involve predeprivation review by a detached public officer. In fact, portions of the original program were deemed unconstitutional by the Supreme Court of Canada on the basis that a driver had no meaningful opportunity to challenge the reliability of a "fail" reading. *Goodwin v. British Columbia* [2015], 3 S.C.R. 250 (Can.). The statutory scheme was amended to (1) require that the driver be advised of the right to a second breath test on a different device; (2) allow the government to rely only on the lower of the two test results; and (3) require a determination on appeal that the breath test was reliable. *Id*. at 289. Any attempt to

implement a similar license revocation program in the United States must, of course, be preceded by considerations of the constitutionally required process that must come before and that must follow an administrative license suspension.

Category: Motor Vehicles | Tags: DWI; research; British Columbia; Uber; TNCs; impaired driving; CVRs; ARLR

NORTH CAROLINA
2022 TRAFFIC CRASH FACTS

North Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles

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An Illustrated Analysis of North Carolina Traffic Crash Statistics

Information contained in this booklet has been compiled by the Traffic Records Unit and Traffic Safety Unit from 2022 crash data received prior to May 4, 2023.

A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER OF THE NORTH CAROLINA DIVISION OF MOTOR VEHICLES

The mission of the North Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles is to deliver quality driver and motor vehicle services, promote highway safety, furnish timely and accurate information, and fight fraud. We accomplish these goals by providing stellar customer service, enforcing motor vehicle laws, and maintaining the integrity of official DMV records and credentials.

This Division and its many partners, including the Governor's Highway Safety Program, continue to emphasize and promote safety. We encourage drivers to change their habits and assist with the national goals of reducing both motor vehicle crashes and the severity of injuries on our state highways. However, many drivers still create dangers by ignoring the rules of the road.

For example, in 2022, reportable traffic crashes decreased by .08 percent. The number of fatalities though increased by 0.1 percent compared to those in 2021. Motorcyclist deaths decreased by .05 percent, and pedal-cyclist deaths decreased by 9.1 percent from 2021. Increases were noted in the number of pedestrians killed in motor vehicle crashes, up 2.7 percent in 2022. Unfortunately, 23.9 percent of all traffic crash fatalities were related to speeding, unchanged from 2021.

As you study these statistics, we invite to you learn about the types of actions that contribute to motor vehicle deaths. Spread the word to all you know that activities like speeding or texting while driving have disastrous consequences. And, being distracted by devices -- including your cell phone and navigational devices -- take your attention away from safe driving habits. We encourage you to help us make North Carolina a safer place to drive, bicycle, and walk.

Please visit our website MyNCDMV.gov for more information. This publication is available online at https://connect.ncdot.gov/business/DMV/Pages/Crash-Facts.aspx

Sincerely,

Wayne Goodwin
DMV Commissioner

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SECTION 1

GENERAL COMPOSITE CRASH PICTURE

2022 General Crash Picture

GENERAL

- 1,784 persons killed, a 0.1% increase from 2021
- 110,544 persons injured, a 3.6% decrease from 2021
- 273,732 traffic crashes reported, an 0.8% decrease from 2021
- Out-of-state drivers were involved in 7.6% of all reported crashes
- Out-of-state drivers accounted for 7.8% of all drivers killed
- 71.1% of all crashes occurred between 7:00 a.m. and 6:59 p.m.
- 16.67 persons were killed for every 100,000 people
- 23.9% of all fatalities were related to speeding

CYCLIST

- 30.0% of pedal-cyclists* killed were between 60 and 69 years old
- 20 pedal-cyclists* killed, a 9.1% decrease from 2021
- 201 motorcyclists were killed, a 0.5% decrease from 2021
- 3,017 motorcyclists were injured, an 1.5% increase from 2021
- 812 moped, motor scooter or motor bikes involved in reportable crashes; 3.9% were fatal crashes; 84.1% were injury crashes

**The pedal-cycle category includes all non-motorized road vehicles propelled by pedaling.*

PEDESTRIAN

- 12.0% of all pedestrians involved in a motor vehicle crash were killed
- 269 pedestrians were killed in motor vehicle crashes, a 2.7% increase from 2021

CHILD RESTRAINT

- 47% of children age 0-4 killed in a motor vehicle crash that were unbelted, compared to 23% in 2021
- 25% of children age 5-7 killed in a motor vehicle crash that were unbelted, compared to 10% in 2021
- 50% of children age 8-14 killed in a motor vehicle crash that were unbelted, compared to 60% in 2021

DRIVER DISTRACTION

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) defines distracted driving as any non-driving activity a person engages in while operating a motor vehicle. Such activities have the potential to distract the person from the primary task of driving and increase the risk of crashing (http://www.distraction.gov/).

Driver Distraction is a self-reporting contributing circumstance. Therefore, the data collected may not reflect the severity of this issue. In 2022, 17.3% of the crashes in North Carolina involved a driver that was distracted.

BAC DATA

Blood Alcohol Concentration Levels for Drivers Involved in a Crash

	B.A.C.			
	.00	**.01-.07**	**.08-.14**	**> .15**
Fatal Crashes	9	30	92	172
Non-Fatal Crashes	16	249	703	939
PDO Crashes	18	324	1,458	1,900
Total Crashes	**43**	**603**	**2,253**	**3,011**

Note: The BAC data reflects the actual numbers taken from the DMV-349 crash report if a breath test is administered and the officer records the results or if the officer files a supplemental report for results obtained from lab blood testing.

SECTION 2

CRASH DATA

2022 January - December							
	2017	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**	**17-21 Avg.**	**2022**
All Crashes							
Total Crashes	275,067	281,685	285,074	247,214	276,026	**273,013**	273,732
Fatal Crashes	1,287	1,324	1,369	1,523	1,653	**1,431**	1,647
Injury Crashes	81,865	80,653	80,277	69,001	74,639	**77,287**	71,963
All People							
Total Persons Killed	1,396	1,442	1,470	1,658	1,783	**1,550**	1,784
Total Persons Injured	127,964	125,454	125,232	105,382	114,722	**119,751**	110,544
Rates							
Vehicle Miles Traveled (100 MVMT)	1,191.04	1,211.34	1,225.06	1,059.22	1,177.66	**1,172.86**	1,188.44
Crash Rate	230.95	232.54	232.70	233.39	234.39	**232.77**	230.33
Fatality Rate	1.17	1.19	1.20	1.57	1.51	**1.32**	1.50
Injury Rate	107.44	103.57	102.23	99.49	97.42	**102.10**	93.02
Belt Use*							
Total Persons Killed	1,016	1,001	999	1,164	1,252	**1,086**	1,254
Unbelted Persons Killed	417	410	434	545	555	**472**	562
% Killed that were Unbelted	41%	41%	43%	47%	44%	**43%**	45%
Alcohol							
Crashes	11,342	11,345	11,492	11,475	12,264	**11,584**	11,850
Fatalities	368	411	348	412	407	**389**	448
Injuries	7,922	7,602	7,665	7,426	8,100	**7,743**	7,728
Percent of Total							
Crashes	*4.1%*	*4.0%*	*4.0%*	*4.6%*	*4.4%*	***4.3%***	*4.3%*
Fatalities	*26.4%*	*28.5%*	*23.7%*	*24.8%*	*22.8%*	***25.2%***	*25.1%*
Injuries	*6.2%*	*6.1%*	*6.1%*	*7.0%*	*7.1%*	***6.5%***	*7.0%*
Speed**							
Crashes	17,482	21,339	15,500	18,340	16,282	**17,789**	16,713
Fatalities	338	312	377	416	427	**374**	426
Injuries	9,272	10,188	8,550	8,902	8,574	**9,097**	8,317
Percent of Total							
Crashes	*6.4%*	*7.6%*	*5.4%*	*7.4%*	*5.9%*	***6.5%***	*6.1%*
Fatalities	*24.2%*	*21.6%*	*25.6%*	*25.1%*	*23.9%*	***24.1%***	*23.9%*
Injuries	*7.2%*	*8.1%*	*6.8%*	*8.4%*	*7.5%*	***7.6%***	*7.5%*
Lane Departure							
Crashes	60,577	63,776	59,666	64,705	64,380	**62,621**	61,384
Fatalities	743	754	814	932	982	**845**	997
Injuries	30,159	30,137	28,451	28,953	29,193	**29,379**	27,560
Percent of Total							
Crashes	*22.0%*	*22.6%*	*20.9%*	*26.2%*	*23.3%*	***23.0%***	*22.4%*
Fatalities	*53.2%*	*52.3%*	*55.4%*	*56.2%*	*55.1%*	***54.4%***	*55.9%*
Injuries	*23.6%*	*24.0%*	*22.7%*	*27.5%*	*25.4%*	***24.6%***	*24.9%*
Distracted Driving							
Crashes	54,133	54,046	53,541	44,128	49,485	**51,067**	47,327
Fatalities	152	121	154	157	165	**150**	164
Injuries	25,237	24,178	23,467	18,552	20,722	**22,431**	19,072
Percent of Total							
Crashes	*19.7%*	*19.2%*	*18.8%*	*17.9%*	*17.9%*	***18.7%***	*17.3%*
Fatalities	*10.9%*	*8.4%*	*10.5%*	*9.5%*	*9.3%*	***9.7%***	*9.2%*
Injuries	*19.7%*	*19.3%*	*18.7%*	*17.6%*	*18.1%*	***18.7%***	*17.3%*

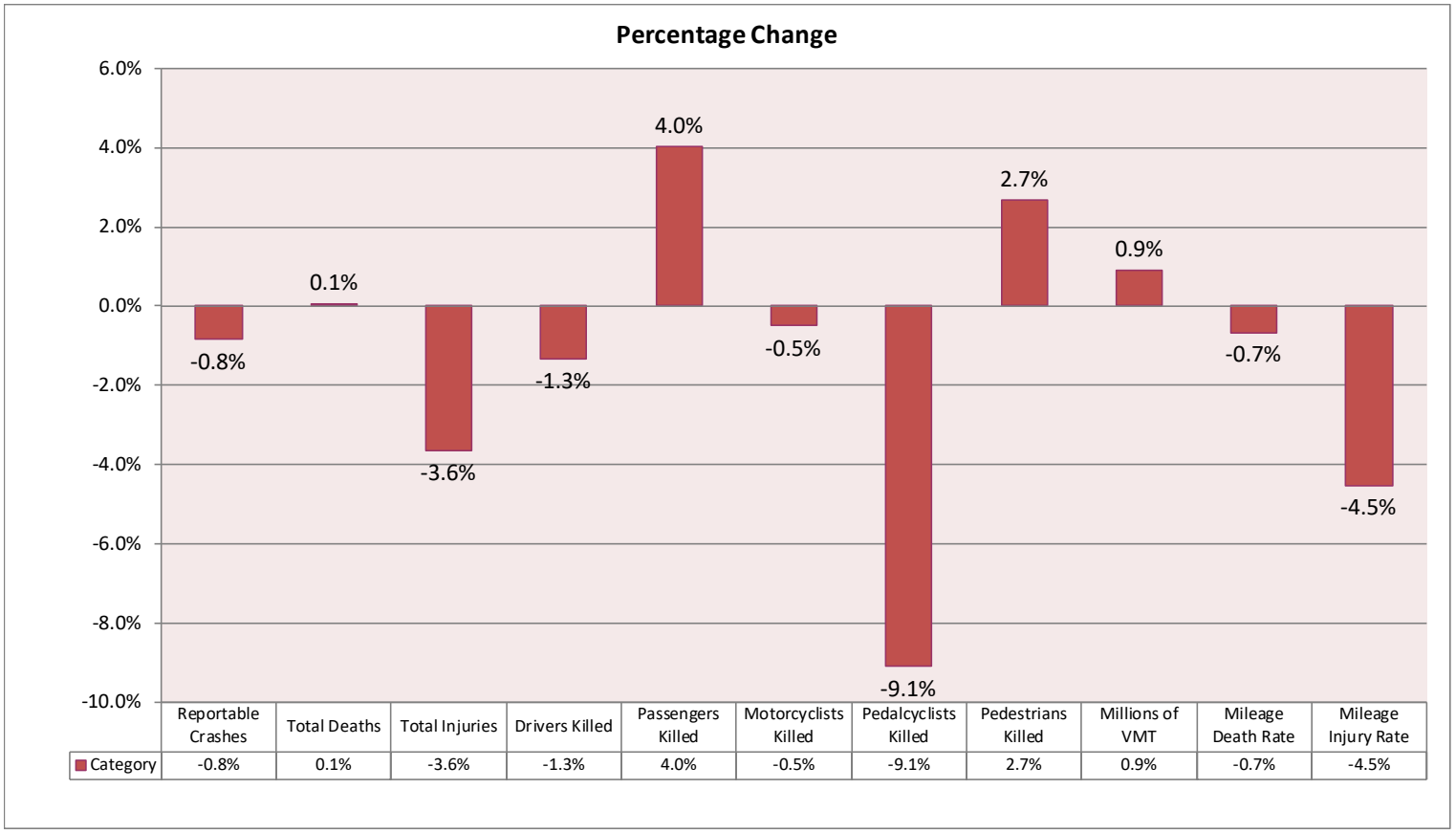
** Counts only vehicle occupants in vehicle types with safety belts*

*** Modified from previous NC Traffic Crash Facts booklets. Counts only driver contributing circumstances exceeded authorized speed limit and exceeded safe speed for conditions.*

Comparative Summary 2021-2022

	2021	2022
Reportable Crashes	276,026	273,732
Total Deaths	1,783	1,784
Total Injuries	114,722	110,544
Drivers Killed	1,218	1,202
Passengers Killed	273	284
Motorcyclists Killed	202	201
Pedalcyclists Killed	22	20
Pedestrians Killed	262	269
Millions of Vehicle Miles Traveled*	117,766	118,844
Mileage Death Rate	1.51	1.50
Mileage Injury Rate	97.42	93.02

Per Hundred Million Miles Traveled (estimated from gasoline tax revenue by Planning & Environmental Branch, Division of Highways



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FATALITIES BY COUNTY: 10 YEAR TREND

County	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	10 Year Average	2022
Alamance	13	23	9	23	15	23	19	15	29	20	19	**32**
Alexander	7	8	7	5	4	1	9	2	5	7	6	**6**
Alleghany	2	3	1	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	**1**
Anson	8	7	9	2	1	5	7	4	9	5	6	**11**
Ashe	4	4	2	5	8	2	1	7	2	6	4	**2**
Avery	4	2	0	3	2	2	1	2	3	1	2	**0**
Beaufort	14	13	6	5	6	10	8	6	6	5	8	**11**
Bertie	5	5	12	6	7	7	7	8	2	9	7	**5**
Bladen	8	16	11	4	16	9	10	14	13	12	11	**14**
Brunswick	28	13	14	12	16	30	24	21	22	21	20	**30**
Buncombe	22	33	31	38	23	33	33	30	27	21	29	**35**
Burke	7	8	15	9	17	16	20	16	16	9	13	**12**
Cabarrus	12	19	17	24	21	16	17	28	20	28	20	**32**
Caldwell	7	8	10	12	10	6	12	12	9	11	10	**16**
Camden	4	1	3	0	0	3	5	0	2	1	2	**1**
Carteret	12	7	3	4	9	3	10	12	12	8	8	**15**
Caswell	2	2	4	6	8	6	5	10	6	2	5	**7**
Catawba	19	19	24	26	18	20	14	20	26	39	23	**31**
Chatham	5	13	11	13	15	11	10	16	12	19	13	**11**
Cherokee	6	6	5	4	5	11	6	6	5	4	6	**6**
Chowan	1	0	3	1	2	3	1	7	2	0	2	**3**
Clay	2	2	1	2	2	3	2	1	1	3	2	**0**
Cleveland	11	10	17	18	33	9	30	18	20	17	18	**22**
Columbus	22	22	18	14	25	30	16	17	19	24	21	**26**
Craven	13	17	12	16	19	10	11	10	11	14	13	**19**
Cumberland	44	50	38	43	45	43	44	57	58	60	48	**55**
Currituck	3	4	4	4	9	4	0	7	4	6	5	**7**
Dare	4	7	2	2	3	2	5	6	1	7	4	**7**
Davidson	34	28	23	27	34	25	33	22	37	40	30	**32**
Davie	4	3	7	6	8	9	6	8	3	5	6	**10**
Duplin	15	8	17	19	8	10	18	21	17	30	16	**22**
Durham	22	25	27	25	22	29	32	36	36	23	28	**33**
Edgecombe	9	8	9	11	7	13	12	12	10	16	11	**10**
Forsyth	35	25	31	40	42	41	45	34	44	46	38	**46**
Franklin	5	11	4	7	18	15	9	15	17	12	11	**29**
Gaston	23	23	32	42	29	24	33	19	29	23	28	**22**
Gates	4	3	5	4	3	2	2	3	4	2	3	**6**
Graham	2	5	2	3	5	2	5	6	2	4	4	**3**
Granville	13	7	18	12	11	12	17	18	20	18	15	**15**
Greene	5	3	4	5	1	4	2	5	3	6	4	**2**
Guilford	42	48	56	59	59	67	61	64	73	97	63	**67**
Halifax	14	13	9	13	10	12	16	15	22	17	14	**18**
Harnett	20	28	22	22	22	37	35	23	36	37	28	**19**
Haywood	2	7	6	9	14	13	12	8	8	10	9	**13**
Henderson	7	8	16	9	14	14	12	12	13	17	12	**10**
Hertford	3	3	1	4	7	7	3	5	9	8	5	**6**
Hoke	17	6	11	14	15	17	5	11	18	15	13	**12**
Hyde	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	**1**
Iredell	15	21	25	17	22	30	25	26	31	22	23	**31**
Jackson	8	5	7	6	9	4	7	13	8	10	8	**9**

FATALITIES BY COUNTY: 10 YEAR TREND

County	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	10 Year Average	2022
Johnston	31	26	36	28	33	36	36	27	47	41	34	**42**
Jones	2	2	2	1	3	2	4	2	3	3	2	**4**
Lee	4	15	8	21	7	17	14	8	12	16	12	**18**
Lenoir	10	8	10	10	10	3	17	19	10	26	12	**8**
Lincoln	9	11	6	19	15	11	11	16	11	14	12	**14**
Macon	7	5	9	5	8	7	6	9	1	3	6	**3**
Madison	3	3	4	3	2	6	7	2	5	3	4	**4**
Martin	7	5	3	2	9	3	3	6	6	3	5	**5**
McDowell	7	10	9	5	8	5	8	6	6	8	7	**10**
Mecklenburg	73	69	69	81	102	109	116	94	125	138	98	**139**
Mitchell	2	5	0	2	2	0	0	0	4	2	2	**0**
Montgomery	5	4	9	3	7	13	5	11	13	7	8	**9**
Moore	4	7	24	17	18	17	16	14	22	26	17	**19**
Nash	22	21	24	23	27	18	30	27	28	23	24	**25**
New Hanover	29	17	19	21	18	19	12	34	19	30	22	**19**
Northampton	8	7	7	5	2	9	10	10	10	7	8	**10**
Onslow	22	24	21	24	21	18	21	23	19	29	22	**39**
Orange	13	13	10	12	11	12	9	15	12	19	13	**21**
Pamlico	1	2	3	4	3	0	0	2	4	3	2	**3**
Pasquotank	3	0	3	4	5	1	6	5	6	11	4	**13**
Pender	9	15	19	13	17	16	28	20	14	14	17	**13**
Perquimans	0	5	2	2	1	0	3	1	4	3	2	**3**
Person	7	6	7	6	3	10	4	3	8	7	6	**4**
Pitt	24	19	17	32	23	23	21	16	45	30	25	**25**
Polk	6	5	6	4	2	2	4	2	5	4	4	**1**
Randolph	17	22	25	26	22	25	17	33	27	32	25	**25**
Richmond	9	11	9	5	17	9	12	7	6	12	10	**17**
Robeson	51	40	32	53	37	53	48	43	53	69	48	**66**
Rockingham	19	12	11	15	20	8	12	15	23	20	16	**16**
Rowan	28	27	26	24	19	13	23	15	33	33	24	**24**
Rutherford	9	12	13	6	5	11	10	12	26	13	12	**11**
Sampson	15	14	9	24	23	16	18	17	12	18	17	**22**
Scotland	6	9	8	10	5	10	5	10	9	29	10	**18**
Stanly	5	10	8	11	13	11	6	8	8	13	9	**6**
Stokes	8	8	9	9	9	7	5	7	2	6	7	**15**
Surry	20	10	17	17	16	8	12	20	13	17	15	**15**
Swain	2	5	2	1	2	1	2	3	1	3	2	**3**
Transylvania	5	2	7	4	1	7	4	6	2	3	4	**1**
Tyrrell	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	1	**2**
Union	25	21	19	16	27	30	24	22	22	26	23	**32**
Vance	9	13	8	12	9	8	9	7	15	19	11	**18**
Wake	69	72	63	67	79	50	65	76	88	102	73	**118**
Warren	9	0	3	6	10	6	8	4	10	10	7	**4**
Washington	4	0	0	3	3	3	3	1	0	2	2	**0**
Watauga	6	4	3	11	5	4	2	9	7	3	5	**4**
Wayne	19	25	22	18	22	14	19	16	30	17	20	**29**
Wilkes	9	9	12	11	10	11	8	13	13	19	12	**18**
Wilson	6	12	13	15	18	19	12	8	19	16	14	**17**
Yadkin	8	5	6	8	8	6	4	11	12	11	8	**12**
Yancey	6	3	3	3	4	1	3	4	2	0	3	**7**
Totals	**1,262**	**1,260**	**1,277**	**1,380**	**1,441**	**1,396**	**1,442**	**1,470**	**1,658**	**1,783**	**1,437**	**1,784**

HOLIDAY DATA

	PERIOD		STATEWIDE					ALCOHOL RELATED			
HOLIDAY	Beginning (6:00 p.m.)	Ending (Midnight)	Crashes	Injuries	Fatalities	Unbelted Fatalities*	% Fatalities Unbelted	Crashes	Injuries	Fatalities	% of All Fatalities
NEW YEARS											
2017-2018	12-31-17	1-1-18	670	290	8	6	75%	78	44	5	63%
2018-2019	12-31-18	1-1-19	695	298	7	6	86%	69	46	5	71%
2019-2020	12-31-19	1-1-20	702	321	7	6	86%	81	42	4	57%
2020-2021	12-31-20	1-1-21	986	421	11	8	73%	115	63	4	36%
2021-2022	12-31-21	1-1-22	737	379	7	6	86%	96	50	4	57%
EASTER											
2018	3-29-18	4-1-18	1,964	1,087	15	11	73%	136	112	3	20%
2019	4-18-19	4-21-19	2,115	969	19	9	47%	142	98	4	21%
2020	4-9-20	4-12-20	1,193	513	19	13	68%	105	66	4	21%
2021	4-1-21	4-4-21	2,136	990	19	8	42%	157	112	7	37%
2022	4-14-22	4-17-22	1,988	980	13	7	54%	143	109	4	31%
MEMORIAL DAY											
2018	5-25-18	5-28-18	1,862	984	10	3	30%	145	135	2	20%
2019	5-24-19	5-27-19	1,758	969	23	14	61%	155	109	7	30%
2020	5-22-20	5-25-20	1,641	800	9	4	44%	165	104	1	11%
2021	5-28-21	5-31-21	1,996	960	11	6	55%	168	106	4	36%
2022	5-27-22	5-30-22	1,882	942	30	18	60%	170	128	13	43%
FOURTH OF JULY											
2018	7-3-18	7-4-18	643	369	10	4	40%	45	37	2	20%
2019	7-3-19	7-4-19	736	390	1	0	0%	70	58	0	0%
2020	7-2-20	7-4-20	1,453	725	20	15	75%	127	101	10	50%
2021	7-2-21	7-4-21	1,431	676	16	8	50%	149	100	4	25%
2022	7-1-22	7-4-22	1,946	968	17	9	53%	160	124	6	35%
LABOR DAY											
2018	8-31-18	9-3-18	1,887	1,005	14	8	57%	139	90	3	21%
2019	8-30-19	9-2-19	1,920	1,084	16	11	69%	172	133	2	13%
2020	9-4-20	9-7-20	1,854	915	28	14	50%	146	115	12	43%
2021	9-3-21	9-6-21	1,936	924	23	13	57%	164	121	4	17%
2022	9-2-22	9-5-22	2,000	978	18	8	44%	142	90	6	33%
THANKSGIVING											
2018	11-21-18	11-25-18	2,957	1,155	20	13	65%	188	118	7	35%
2019	11-27-19	12-1-19	3,076	1,304	19	10	53%	204	135	5	26%
2020	11-25-20	11-29-20	2,713	1,131	23	15	65%	173	108	4	17%
2021	11-24-21	11-28-21	2,908	1,112	13	6	46%	193	134	3	23%
2022	11-23-22	11-27-22	3,080	1,167	27	17	63%	185	118	8	30%
CHRISTMAS											
2018	12-21-18	12-26-18	3,308	1,408	15	7	47%	220	136	8	53%
2019	12-24-19	12-25-19	563	210	6	4	67%	53	20	1	17%
2020	12-23-20	12-27-20	2,828	1,179	23	17	74%	196	95	6	26%
2021	12-22-21	12-26-21	2,719	1,140	24	8	33%	167	100	6	25%
2022	12-23-22	12-26-22	1,684	683	17	10	59%	140	102	6	35%

**Note: Unbelted fatality data on this summary sheet, does not take into account person type or vehicle style. (i.e. it does not exclude person types such as bicyclist or pedestrians or vehicle styles where belt use is not applicable such as motorcycles.)*

2022 - CRASHES, FATALITIES AND INJURIES BY MONTH

REPORTED MOTOR VEHICLE CRASHES

MONTH	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	5 Yr. Avg.	2022
January	21,330	23,650	22,570	23,055	20,083	22,138	**21,214**
February	19,098	19,345	20,784	21,910	19,048	20,037	**19,965**
March	22,534	23,354	22,949	17,828	21,231	21,579	**22,160**
April	22,348	21,557	23,275	12,641	21,612	20,287	**21,580**
May	23,630	23,806	23,801	17,976	22,361	22,315	**23,043**
June	22,250	21,954	22,714	19,528	22,426	21,774	**20,860**
July	20,894	21,118	21,408	20,438	22,606	21,293	**21,139**
August	22,462	23,425	23,347	20,654	23,312	22,640	**21,487**
September	22,515	21,586	22,244	20,989	23,466	22,160	**23,209**
October	26,837	28,097	28,240	24,219	27,354	26,949	**26,236**
November	26,180	28,515	27,569	24,775	27,277	26,863	**27,077**
December	24,989	25,278	26,173	23,201	25,250	24,978	**25,762**
TOTALS	**275,067**	**281,685**	**285,074**	**247,214**	**276,026**	**273,013**	**273,732**

REPORTED MOTOR VEHICLE FATALITIES

MONTH	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	5 Yr. Avg.	2022
January	105	126	99	117	137	117	**143**
February	126	113	88	98	102	105	**139**
March	95	107	105	130	120	111	**139**
April	113	119	120	113	194	132	**119**
May	120	121	143	144	156	137	**168**
June	113	150	145	149	165	144	**149**
July	108	114	121	166	158	133	**149**
August	110	120	111	173	145	132	**147**
September	138	113	139	159	151	140	**155**
October	150	127	141	131	189	148	**168**
November	109	144	136	138	122	130	**151**
December	109	88	122	140	144	121	**157**
TOTALS	**1,396**	**1,442**	**1,470**	**1,658**	**1,783**	**1,550**	**1,784**

REPORTED MOTOR VEHICLE INJURIES

MONTH	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	5 Yr. Avg.	2022
January	8,846	9,273	9,251	9,470	7,882	8,944	**7,407**
February	9,155	8,951	8,770	8,892	7,230	8,600	**7,875**
March	10,666	10,487	10,144	7,767	8,888	9,590	**8,823**
April	11,122	10,293	10,602	5,338	9,748	9,421	**9,152**
May	11,517	11,082	11,213	7,940	10,269	10,404	**10,099**
June	10,796	10,412	10,536	8,693	10,125	10,112	**8,901**
July	10,224	10,072	9,906	9,394	9,931	9,905	**9,136**
August	11,016	11,029	11,152	9,424	10,175	10,559	**9,295**
September	11,096	10,199	10,210	9,176	9,929	10,122	**9,885**
October	12,155	12,329	12,204	10,567	11,073	11,666	**10,416**
November	11,050	11,368	10,748	9,530	9,582	10,456	**9,831**
December	10,321	9,959	10,496	9,191	9,890	9,971	**9,724**
TOTALS	**127,964**	**125,454**	**125,232**	**105,382**	**114,722**	**119,751**	**110,544**

2022 - Contributing Circumstances
Statewide

CONTRIBUTING CIRCUMSTANCES	ALL CRASHES	FATAL CRASHES	INJURY CRASHES
NO CONTRIBUTING CIRCUMSTANCES INDICATED	212,058	932	52,144
DISREGARDED YIELD SIGN	483	1	119
DISREGARDED STOP SIGN	4,379	54	1,814
DISREGARDED OTHER TRAFFIC SIGNS	977	6	387
DISREGARDED TRAFFIC SIGNALS	7,976	42	3,697
DISREGARDED ROAD MARKINGS	4,397	52	1,368
EXCEEDED AUTHORIZED SPEED LIMIT	4,370	285	2,131
EXCEEDED SAFE SPEED FOR CONDITIONS	12,504	103	3,618
FAILURE TO REDUCE SPEED	65,939	136	18,250
IMPROPER TURN	10,138	17	2,388
RIGHT TURN ON RED	326	0	65
CROSSED CENTERLINE/GOING WRONG WAY	9,168	325	3,733
IMPROPER LANE CHANGE	15,566	14	2,024
USE OF IMPROPER LANE	1,480	9	336
OVERCORRECTED/OVERSTEERED	9,563	133	3,316
PASSED STOPPED SCHOOL BUS	17	0	5
PASSED ON HILL	24	0	6
PASSED ON CURVE	85	3	19
OTHER IMPROPER PASSING	2,514	15	560
FAILED TO YIELD RIGHT OF WAY	42,184	156	14,744
INATTENTION	44,440	137	11,647
IMPROPER BACKING	5,225	2	325
IMPROPER PARKING	931	6	128
DRIVER DISTRACTED	611	4	189
IMPROPER OR NO SIGNAL	181	1	45
FOLLOWED TO CLOSELY	4,356	3	1,083
OPERATED VEHICLE IN ERRATIC, RECKLESS, CARELESS, NEGLIGENT OR AGGRESSIVE MANNER	12,439	375	5,169
SWERVED OR AVOIDED DUE TO WIND, SLIPPERY SURFACE, VEHICLE, OBJECT, NON-MOTORIST	3,992	18	1,036
VISIBILITY OBSTRUCTED	1,171	2	328
OPERATED DEFECTIVE EQUIPMENT	2,771	21	720
ALCOHOL USE	8,856	293	3,887
DRUG USE	1,575	59	825
OTHER	6,251	73	2,102
UNABLE TO DETERMINE	12,221	37	2,890
UNKNOWN	3,955	32	780
DRIVER DISTRACTED BY ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICE (CELL PHONE, TEXTING, ETC.)	1,263	11	449
DRIVER DISTRACTED BY OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICE (NAVIGATION DEVICE, DVD PLAYER, ETC.)	382	2	127
DRIVER DISTRACTED BY OTHER INSIDE THE VEHICLE	1,130	3	376
DRIVER DISTRACTED BY EXTERNAL DISTRACTION (OUTSIDE THE VEHICLE)	397	1	117
TOTAL CIRCUMSTANCES	**516,295**	**3,363**	**142,947**

U.S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
NHTSA

Traffic Safety Facts
2021 Data

DOT HS 813 509 September 2023

2021 State Traffic Data

In this fact sheet for 2021 the information is presented as follows.

Key Findings

- Traffic fatalities in the United States increased by 10 percent from 2020 to 2021 (39,007 to 42,939).
- The fatality rate per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT) was 1.37 in 2021, ranging from a high of 2.08 to a low of 0.71 among States.
- The rate of traffic fatalities per 100 million VMT in the United States increased by 2 percent (1.34 to 1.37) from 2020 to 2021.
- Forty-three States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico showed increases, while 7 States showed decreases in traffic fatalities from 2020 to 2021.
- The greatest decrease in fatality rate per 100 million VMT since 1975 was in Wyoming (-82%), followed by Alaska (-74%), Massachusetts (-74%), and Vermont (-74%).
- From 2012 to 2021 there was a 14-percent increase in the number of registered vehicles in the United States, a 10-percent increase in the number of licensed drivers, and a 6-percent increase in VMT and population.
- Connecticut had the highest percentage of passenger cars involved in fatal crashes (45%) in 2021, while Nebraska had the highest percentage involving large trucks (16%).
- The District of Columbia had the highest percentage of fatalities in 2021 traffic crashes who were pedestrians (44%), more than twice the national percentage (17%), while New Jersey had the second highest percentage (30%).
- Seventy-six percent of the passenger vehicle occupants killed in New Hampshire in 2021 were unrestrained (based on known restraint use), the highest percentage in the country.
- In States without universal helmet laws, 55 percent of motorcyclists killed in 2021 were not wearing helmets, compared to 9 percent in States with universal helmet laws.
- From 2012 to 2021 Oregon had the largest increase in percentage points of alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities at 10 percentage points (26% to 36%), while Mississippi had the greatest decrease at 13 percentage points (33% to 20%).

This fact sheet contains information on fatal motor vehicle traffic crashes based on data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS). Refer to the end of this publication for more information on FARS.

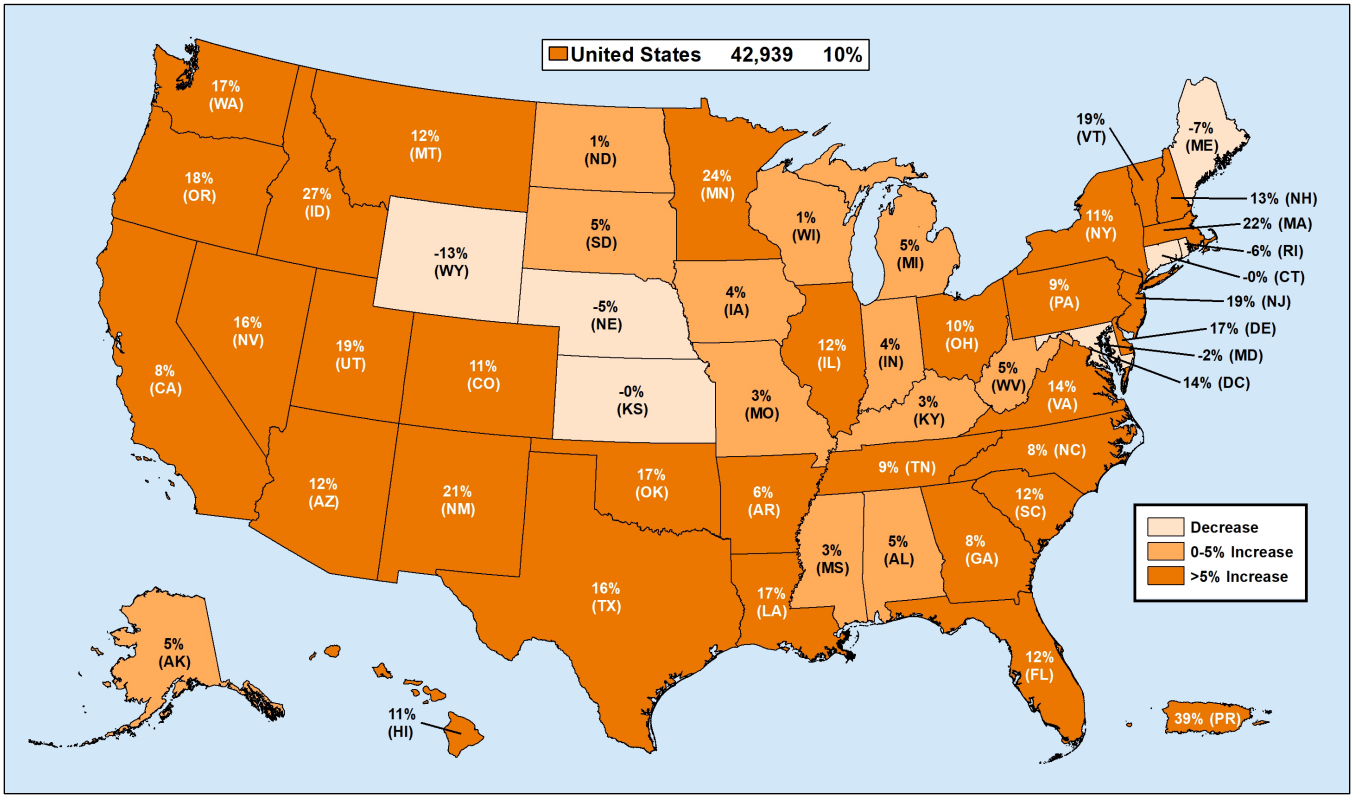
Due to a vehicle classification change, the 2020 and later-year vehicle type classifications are not comparable to 2019 and earlier-year vehicle type classifications. This change affects any analysis with a vehicle component to it. Refer to the end of this publication for more information on Product Information Catalog and Vehicle Listing (vPIC).

A motor vehicle traffic crash is defined as an incident that involved one or more motor vehicles in-transport that originated on or had a harmful event (injury or damage) on a public trafficway, such as a road or highway. Crashes that occurred on private property not regularly used by the public for transport, including some parts of parking lots and driveways, are excluded. The terms "motor vehicle traffic crash" and "traffic crash" are used interchangeably in this document.

Overview

In 2021 there were 42,939 traffic fatalities in the United States (50 States and the District of Columbia, excluding Puerto Rico), an increase of 10 percent from 2020 (39,007). Figure 1 shows the percentage change in 2021 traffic fatalities from 2020 for each State, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. Puerto Rico had the greatest percentage increase in traffic fatalities from 2020 to 2021 at 39 percent, followed by Idaho (27%) and Minnesota (24%), while Wyoming (-13%) had the greatest decrease, followed by Maine (-7%).

Figure 1. Percentage Change in 2021 Traffic Fatalities From 2020, by State



Source: FARS 2020 Final File, 2021 Annual Report File (ARF)
Note: Puerto Rico is not included in the United States national total.

State Traffic Fatality Tables

Table 1 shows traffic fatalities and the fatality rates based on population, licensed drivers, registered vehicles, and VMT for 2021.

- The fatality rate per 100 million VMT was 1.37 for the United States in 2021, ranging from a high of 2.08 (South Carolina) to a low of 0.71 (Massachusetts).
- The fatality rate per 100,000 population was 12.94 for the United States in 2021, ranging from a high of 26.17 (Mississippi) to a low of 5.75 (Rhode Island).
- The fatality rate per 100,000 licensed drivers was 18.45 for the United States in 2021, ranging from a high of 37.98 (Mississippi) to a low of 8.02 (District of Columbia).
- The fatality rate per 100,000 registered vehicles was 14.18 for the United States in 2021, ranging from a high of 32.36 (Mississippi) to a low of 7.61 (Hawaii).

Table 2 compares traffic fatalities for 1975, 2012, 2020, and 2021. FARS data was first collected in 1975.

- Forty-three States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico showed increases, while 7 States showed decreases in traffic fatalities from 2020 to 2021.
- The greatest decrease in traffic fatalities since 1975 was Massachusetts (-52%), followed by New York (-51%), while the greatest increase was in Florida (87%).

Table 3 compares traffic fatality rates per 100 million VMT for 1975, 2012, 2020, and 2021.

- The rate of traffic fatalities per 100 million VMT in the United States has increased 2 percent (1.34 to 1.37) from 2020 to 2021.
- Since 1975 the rate of traffic fatalities per 100 million VMT in the United States has decreased 59 percent (3.35 to 1.37).
- The greatest decrease in fatality rate per 100 million VMT since 1975 was in Wyoming (-82%), followed by Alaska (-74%), Massachusetts (-74%), and Vermont (-74%).

Table 4 shows the changes in the population and VMT from 2012 and 2021.

- From 2012 to 2021 there was a 6-percent increase in the population of the United States.
- From 2012 to 2021 there was a 6-percent increase in the number of VMT in the United States.

Table 5 shows the changes in registered vehicles and licensed drivers from 2012 and 2021.

- From 2012 to 2021 there was a 14-percent increase in registered vehicles in the United States.
- From 2012 to 2021 there was a 10-percent increase in licensed drivers in the United States.

Table 6 shows the percentages of traffic fatalities by vehicle type for 2021.

- In 2021 passenger cars and light trucks accounted for more than three-fourths (76% cumulatively and 34% and 42%, respectively) of the vehicles involved in fatal traffic crashes.
- Connecticut had the highest percentage of passenger cars involved in fatal crashes (45%) in 2021, while Nebraska had the highest percentage involving large trucks (16%). A large truck is any vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) greater than 10,000 pounds that may have been used for commercial or non-commercial purposes at the time of the crash.

Table 7 shows the percentage of traffic fatalities by the person type for 2021.

- Over half of the people killed in 2021 traffic crashes were drivers (51%), followed by pedestrians (17%), passengers (15%), motorcyclists (14%), and pedalcyclists (2%).
- Nebraska had the highest percentages of fatalities in 2021 traffic crashes who were drivers (65%), while Hawaii had the highest percentage of fatalities who were motorcyclists (35%).

- The District of Columbia had the highest percentage of fatalities in 2021 traffic crashes who were pedestrians (44%), more than twice the national percentage (17%), while New Jersey had the second highest percentage (30%).
- The top three States with the highest number of pedestrian fatalities (California, Florida, and Texas) account for over a third (37%) of all pedestrian fatalities.

Table 8 shows restraint use for passenger vehicle occupants killed in 2021. Passenger vehicles are passenger cars and light trucks (pickups, SUVs, vans, and other light trucks) with GVWRs of 10,000 pounds or less.

- In 2021 half (50%) of the passenger vehicle occupants killed in the United States were unrestrained (based on known restraint use).
- Seventy-six percent of the passenger vehicle occupants killed in New Hampshire in 2021 were unrestrained (based on known restraint use), the highest percentage in the country.

Table 9 shows motorcyclists killed and their helmet use in 2021.

- Forty percent of motorcyclists killed in traffic crashes the United States in 2021 were not helmeted, based on known helmet use.
- In States without universal helmet laws, 55 percent of motorcyclists killed in 2021 traffic crashes were not wearing helmets, as compared to 9 percent in States with universal helmet laws.

Table 10 compares the alcohol involvement in fatal traffic crashes for 2012 and 2021.

- In 2021 alcohol-impaired driving (blood alcohol concentration [BAC]=.08+ grams per deciliter [g/dL]) was involved in 31 percent of traffic fatalities in the United States, which was the same percentage in 2012.
- From 2012 to 2021 Oregon had the largest increase in percentage points of alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities at 10 percentage points (26% to 36%), while Mississippi had the greatest decrease at 13 percentage points (33% to 20%).
- Fifty-nine percent of drivers killed in 2021 in the United States were tested for alcohol and their BAC results were known, while only 21 percent of drivers who survived fatal crashes were tested with known BAC results.

Table 11 shows speeding-related traffic fatalities and the roadway function class for 2021.

- There were 12,330 speeding-related traffic fatalities in the United States in 2021.
- In the United States, Texas had the largest number of speeding-related traffic fatalities (1,568), while the District of Columbia had the fewest (19).
- More than 4 out of every 5 (10,628 or 86%) speeding-related traffic fatalities in 2021 occurred on non-interstates.

Table 1. Traffic Fatalities and Fatality Rates, by State, 2021

State	Traffic Fatalities	Population	Licensed Drivers	Registered Vehicles	VMT (millions)	Fatality Rates per 100,000 Population	Fatality Rates per 100,000 Licensed Drivers	Fatality Rates per 100,000 Registered Vehicles	Fatality Rates per 100 Million VMT
Alabama	983	5,039,877	4,061,837	5,463,966	71,892	19.50	24.20	17.99	1.37
Alaska	67	732,673	519,288	686,142	5,752	9.14	12.90	9.76	1.16
Arizona	1,180	7,276,316	5,795,216	6,064,542	73,760	16.22	20.36	19.46	1.60
Arkansas	693	3,025,891	2,306,921	3,555,142	38,427	22.90	30.04	19.49	1.80
California	4,285	39,237,836	27,112,595	31,349,073	310,823	10.92	15.80	13.67	1.38
Colorado	691	5,812,069	4,411,587	5,096,394	53,840	11.89	15.66	13.56	1.28
Connecticut	298	3,605,597	2,606,396	2,756,485	28,989	8.26	11.43	10.81	1.03
Delaware	136	1,003,384	848,504	472,175	10,152	13.55	16.03	28.80	1.34
District of Columbia	41	670,050	510,985	363,287	3,248	6.12	8.02	11.29	1.26
Florida	3,738	21,781,128	16,144,302	19,180,165	217,566	17.16	23.15	19.49	1.72
Georgia	1,797	10,799,566	7,663,847	9,142,656	120,685	16.64	23.45	19.66	1.49
Hawaii	94	1,441,553	917,464	1,235,473	9,972	6.52	10.25	7.61	0.94
Idaho	271	1,900,923	1,343,453	1,976,199	19,308	14.26	20.17	13.71	1.40
Illinois	1,334	12,671,469	8,364,843	11,003,729	97,530	10.53	15.95	12.12	1.37
Indiana	932	6,805,985	4,636,114	6,241,291	78,640	13.69	20.10	14.93	1.19
Iowa	356	3,193,079	2,345,355	3,839,312	33,039	11.15	15.18	9.27	1.08
Kansas	424	2,934,582	2,089,707	2,606,313	31,693	14.45	20.29	16.27	1.34
Kentucky	806	4,509,394	2,980,331	4,408,730	48,111	17.87	27.04	18.28	1.68
Louisiana	972	4,624,047	3,437,733	3,862,490	54,728	21.02	28.27	25.17	1.78
Maine	153	1,372,247	1,056,535	1,387,656	14,560	11.15	14.48	11.03	1.05
Maryland	561	6,165,129	4,439,757	4,910,674	56,601	9.10	12.64	11.42	0.99
Massachusetts	417	6,984,723	4,899,931	5,207,052	59,115	5.97	8.51	8.01	0.71
Michigan	1,136	10,050,811	7,982,471	9,556,452	96,744	11.30	14.23	11.89	1.17
Minnesota	488	5,707,390	4,143,272	5,511,960	57,171	8.55	11.78	8.85	0.85
Mississippi	772	2,949,965	2,032,775	2,385,768	40,853	26.17	37.98	32.36	1.89
Missouri	1,016	6,168,187	4,275,228	5,603,939	79,791	16.47	23.76	18.13	1.27
Montana	239	1,104,271	856,696	2,140,014	13,482	21.64	27.90	11.17	1.77
Nebraska	221	1,963,692	1,438,842	1,933,528	21,210	11.25	15.36	11.43	1.04
Nevada	385	3,143,991	2,150,707	2,676,143	27,077	12.25	17.90	14.39	1.42
New Hampshire	118	1,388,992	1,174,826	1,417,949	13,130	8.50	10.04	8.32	0.90
New Jersey	699	9,267,130	6,461,950	6,249,905	73,673	7.54	10.82	11.18	0.95
New Mexico	481	2,115,877	1,477,213	1,862,673	26,823	22.73	32.56	25.82	1.79
New York	1,157	19,835,913	11,879,057	9,408,796	106,870	5.83	9.74	12.30	1.08
North Carolina	1,663	10,551,162	7,765,109	8,707,506	117,734	15.76	21.42	19.10	1.41
North Dakota	101	774,948	549,721	925,186	9,256	13.03	18.37	10.92	1.09
Ohio	1,354	11,780,017	8,283,546	10,892,377	112,923	11.49	16.35	12.43	1.20
Oklahoma	762	3,986,639	2,597,441	3,353,167	44,760	19.11	29.34	22.72	1.70
Oregon	599	4,246,155	3,029,912	4,010,635	36,842	14.11	19.77	14.94	1.63
Pennsylvania	1,230	12,964,056	9,098,570	10,927,881	102,686	9.49	13.52	11.26	1.20
Rhode Island	63	1,095,610	754,507	801,654	7,526	5.75	8.35	7.86	0.84
South Carolina	1,198	5,190,705	3,990,909	5,091,679	57,492	23.08	30.02	23.53	2.08
South Dakota	148	895,376	671,149	1,433,044	9,994	16.53	22.05	10.33	1.48
Tennessee	1,327	6,975,218	5,009,697	6,712,722	82,596	19.02	26.49	19.77	1.61
Texas	4,498	29,527,941	18,297,900	23,012,990	285,028	15.23	24.58	19.55	1.58
Utah	328	3,337,975	2,207,208	2,838,505	33,638	9.83	14.86	11.56	0.98
Vermont	74	645,570	469,624	614,340	6,625	11.46	15.76	12.05	1.12
Virginia	973	8,642,274	5,912,644	7,652,036	80,102	11.26	16.46	12.72	1.21
Washington	670	7,738,692	5,868,509	7,966,147	57,797	8.66	11.42	8.41	1.16
West Virginia	280	1,782,959	1,138,290	1,219,024	16,079	15.70	24.60	22.97	1.74
Wisconsin	620	5,895,908	4,340,851	5,769,058	64,983	10.52	14.28	10.75	0.95
Wyoming	110	578,803	430,472	870,969	11,097	19.00	25.55	12.63	0.99
U.S. Total	**42,939**	**331,893,745**	**232,781,797**	**302,722,453**	**3,132,411**	**12.94**	**18.45**	**14.18**	**1.37**
Puerto Rico	337	3,263,584	*	**	13,869	10.33	*	**	2.43

Sources: Fatalities – FARS 2021 ARF; VMT and Licensed Drivers – Federal Highway Administration (FHWA); Registered Vehicles for States – FHWA; Registered Vehicles for USA – FHWA and Polk data from S&P Global Mobility, Copyright © R.L. Polk & Co.; Population – Census Bureau

*Licensed driver data not available

**Registration data not available

Table 2. Traffic Fatalities and Percentage Change, by State, 1975–2021

State	Total Fatalities				Percentage Change		
	1975	2012	2020	2021	1975–2021	2012–2021	2020–2021
Alabama	902	865	934	983	+9%	+14%	+5%
Alaska	112	59	64	67	-40%	+14%	+5%
Arizona	670	821	1,053	1,180	+76%	+44%	+12%
Arkansas	559	560	651	693	+24%	+24%	+6%
California	4,092	2,966	3,980	4,285	+5%	+44%	+8%
Colorado	581	474	622	691	+19%	+46%	+11%
Connecticut	389	264	299	298	-23%	+13%	-0%
Delaware	122	114	116	136	+11%	+19%	+17%
District of Columbia	70	15	36	41	-41%	173%	+14%
Florida	1,998	2,431	3,329	3,738	+87%	+54%	+12%
Georgia	1,360	1,192	1,658	1,797	+32%	+51%	+8%
Hawaii	144	125	85	94	-35%	-25%	+11%
Idaho	281	184	214	271	-4%	+47%	+27%
Illinois	2,041	956	1,193	1,334	-35%	+40%	+12%
Indiana	1,128	781	897	932	-17%	+19%	+4%
Iowa	670	365	343	356	-47%	-2%	+4%
Kansas	509	405	426	424	-17%	+5%	-0%
Kentucky	863	746	780	806	-7%	+8%	+3%
Louisiana	934	723	828	972	+4%	+34%	+17%
Maine	223	164	164	153	-31%	-7%	-7%
Maryland	670	511	573	561	-16%	+10%	-2%
Massachusetts	864	383	343	417	-52%	+9%	+22%
Michigan	1,779	940	1,086	1,136	-36%	+21%	+5%
Minnesota	754	395	394	488	-35%	+24%	+24%
Mississippi	546	582	748	772	+41%	+33%	+3%
Missouri	1,045	826	987	1,016	-3%	+23%	+3%
Montana	291	205	213	239	-18%	+17%	+12%
Nebraska	369	212	233	221	-40%	+4%	-5%
Nevada	218	261	333	385	+77%	+48%	+16%
New Hampshire	151	108	104	118	-22%	+9%	+13%
New Jersey	1,043	589	586	699	-33%	+19%	+19%
New Mexico	555	366	398	481	-13%	+31%	+21%
New York	2,366	1,180	1,045	1,157	-51%	-2%	+11%
North Carolina	1,506	1,299	1,538	1,663	+10%	+28%	+8%
North Dakota	167	170	100	101	-40%	-41%	+1%
Ohio	1,766	1,121	1,230	1,354	-23%	+21%	+10%
Oklahoma	757	709	653	762	+1%	+7%	+17%
Oregon	562	337	507	599	+7%	+78%	+18%
Pennsylvania	2,078	1,310	1,129	1,230	-41%	-6%	+9%
Rhode Island	110	64	67	63	-43%	-2%	-6%
South Carolina	820	863	1,066	1,198	+46%	+39%	+12%
South Dakota	195	133	141	148	-24%	+11%	+5%
Tennessee	1,126	1,015	1,217	1,327	+18%	+31%	+9%
Texas	3,372	3,408	3,876	4,498	+33%	+32%	+16%
Utah	272	217	276	328	+21%	+51%	+19%
Vermont	143	77	62	74	-48%	-4%	+19%
Virginia	993	776	850	973	-2%	+25%	+14%
Washington	758	438	574	670	-12%	+53%	+17%
West Virginia	461	339	267	280	-39%	-17%	+5%
Wisconsin	930	615	612	620	-33%	+1%	+1%
Wyoming	210	123	127	110	-48%	-11%	-13%
U.S. Total	**44,525**	**33,782**	**39,007**	**42,939**	**-4%**	**+27%**	**+10%**
Puerto Rico	496	366	242	337	-32%	-8%	+39%

Source: FARS 1975–2020 Final File, 2021 ARF

Table 3. Traffic Fatality Rates per 100 Million VMT and Percentage Change, by State, 1975–2021

State	Fatality Rate per 100 Million VMT				Percentage Change		
	1975	2012	2020	2021	1975–2021	2012–2021	2020–2021
Alabama	3.63	1.33	1.38	1.37	-62%	+3%	-1%
Alaska	4.38	1.23	1.21	1.16	-74%	-6%	-4%
Arizona	4.19	1.37	1.60	1.60	-62%	+17%	0%
Arkansas	4.01	1.67	1.92	1.80	-55%	+8%	-6%
California	3.09	0.91	1.33	1.38	-55%	+52%	+4%
Colorado	3.50	1.01	1.28	1.28	-63%	+27%	0%
Connecticut	2.13	0.84	1.00	1.03	-52%	+23%	+3%
Delaware	3.37	1.24	1.39	1.34	-60%	+8%	-4%
District of Columbia	2.27	0.42	1.19	1.26	-44%	+200%	+6%
Florida	3.24	1.27	1.60	1.72	-47%	+35%	+8%
Georgia	3.46	1.11	1.43	1.49	-57%	+34%	+4%
Hawaii	3.47	1.24	0.97	0.94	-73%	-24%	-3%
Idaho	4.78	1.13	1.23	1.40	-71%	+24%	+14%
Illinois	3.56	0.91	1.27	1.37	-62%	+51%	+8%
Indiana	3.02	0.99	1.17	1.19	-61%	+20%	+2%
Iowa	3.75	1.16	1.15	1.08	-71%	-7%	-6%
Kansas	3.29	1.32	1.53	1.34	-59%	+2%	-12%
Kentucky	3.50	1.58	1.68	1.68	-52%	+6%	0%
Louisiana	4.60	1.54	1.71	1.78	-61%	+16%	+4%
Maine	3.14	1.16	1.25	1.05	-67%	-9%	-16%
Maryland	2.66	0.90	1.13	0.99	-63%	+10%	-12%
Massachusetts	2.75	0.68	0.63	0.71	-74%	+4%	+13%
Michigan	3.06	0.99	1.25	1.17	-62%	+18%	-6%
Minnesota	2.94	0.69	0.76	0.85	-71%	+23%	+12%
Mississippi	3.80	1.51	1.89	1.89	-50%	+25%	0%
Missouri	3.41	1.21	1.36	1.27	-63%	+5%	-7%
Montana	5.08	1.72	1.76	1.77	-65%	+3%	+1%
Nebraska	3.29	1.10	1.20	1.04	-68%	-5%	-13%
Nevada	4.74	1.08	1.32	1.42	-70%	+31%	+8%
New Hampshire	2.85	0.84	0.87	0.90	-68%	+7%	+3%
New Jersey	2.15	0.79	0.88	0.95	-56%	+20%	+8%
New Mexico	5.59	1.43	1.68	1.79	-68%	+25%	+7%
New York	3.63	0.96	1.02	1.08	-70%	+13%	+6%
North Carolina	4.14	1.24	1.45	1.41	-66%	+14%	-3%
North Dakota	3.71	1.69	1.14	1.09	-71%	-36%	-4%
Ohio	2.75	0.99	1.19	1.20	-56%	+21%	+1%
Oklahoma	3.33	1.48	1.55	1.70	-49%	+15%	+10%
Oregon	3.53	1.02	1.57	1.63	-54%	+60%	+4%
Pennsylvania	3.26	1.32	1.28	1.20	-63%	-9%	-6%
Rhode Island	1.94	0.82	0.98	0.84	-57%	+2%	-14%
South Carolina	3.98	1.76	1.98	2.08	-48%	+18%	+5%
South Dakota	3.76	1.46	1.45	1.48	-61%	+1%	+2%
Tennessee	3.42	1.43	1.59	1.61	-53%	+13%	+1%
Texas	3.99	1.43	1.49	1.58	-60%	+10%	+6%
Utah	3.42	0.82	0.91	0.98	-71%	+20%	+8%
Vermont	4.32	1.07	1.03	1.12	-74%	+5%	+9%
Virginia	2.87	0.96	1.12	1.21	-58%	+26%	+8%
Washington	3.16	0.77	1.07	1.16	-63%	+51%	+8%
West Virginia	4.36	1.76	1.66	1.74	-60%	-1%	+5%
Wisconsin	3.25	1.04	1.06	0.95	-71%	-9%	-10%
Wyoming	5.36	1.33	1.30	0.99	-82%	-26%	-24%
U.S. Total	**3.35**	**1.14**	**1.34**	**1.37**	**-59%**	**+20%**	**+2%**
Puerto Rico	7.27	1.97	1.76	2.43	-67%	+23%	+38%

Sources: FARS 1975–2020 Final File, 2021 ARF; VMT – FHWA

Table 4. Population and Vehicle Miles Traveled, by State, 2012 and 2021

State	2012 Population	2021 Population	Population Percentage Change (2012–2021)	2012 VMT (millions)	2021 VMT (millions)	VMT Percentage Change (2012–2021)
Alabama	4,816,632	5,039,877	+5%	64,959	71,892	+11%
Alaska	730,810	732,673	+0%	4,792	5,752	+20%
Arizona	6,556,344	7,276,316	+11%	60,129	73,760	+23%
Arkansas	2,952,876	3,025,891	+2%	33,522	38,427	+15%
California	37,944,551	39,237,836	+3%	326,272	310,823	-5%
Colorado	5,193,660	5,812,069	+12%	46,769	53,840	+15%
Connecticut	3,595,211	3,605,597	+0%	31,269	28,989	-7%
Delaware	915,518	1,003,384	+10%	9,186	10,152	+11%
District of Columbia	635,737	670,050	+5%	3,572	3,248	-9%
Florida	19,302,016	21,781,128	+13%	191,374	217,566	+14%
Georgia	9,903,580	10,799,566	+9%	107,488	120,685	+12%
Hawaii	1,395,199	1,441,553	+3%	10,050	9,972	-1%
Idaho	1,595,910	1,900,923	+19%	16,315	19,308	+18%
Illinois	12,883,029	12,671,469	-2%	104,578	97,530	-7%
Indiana	6,538,989	6,805,985	+4%	78,923	78,640	-0%
Iowa	3,076,844	3,193,079	+4%	31,596	33,039	+5%
Kansas	2,886,024	2,934,582	+2%	30,572	31,693	+4%
Kentucky	4,387,865	4,509,394	+3%	47,344	48,111	+2%
Louisiana	4,602,067	4,624,047	+0%	46,889	54,728	+17%
Maine	1,328,094	1,372,247	+3%	14,199	14,560	+3%
Maryland	5,888,375	6,165,129	+5%	56,476	56,601	+0%
Massachusetts	6,664,269	6,984,723	+5%	55,940	59,115	+6%
Michigan	9,898,289	10,050,811	+2%	94,548	96,744	+2%
Minnesota	5,377,500	5,707,390	+6%	56,988	57,171	+0%
Mississippi	2,984,599	2,949,965	-1%	38,667	40,853	+6%
Missouri	6,026,027	6,168,187	+2%	68,504	79,791	+16%
Montana	1,004,168	1,104,271	+10%	11,885	13,482	+13%
Nebraska	1,853,691	1,963,692	+6%	19,277	21,210	+10%
Nevada	2,744,670	3,143,991	+15%	24,148	27,077	+12%
New Hampshire	1,324,677	1,388,992	+5%	12,894	13,130	+2%
New Jersey	8,845,671	9,267,130	+5%	74,225	73,673	-1%
New Mexico	2,087,715	2,115,877	+1%	25,562	26,823	+5%
New York	19,574,362	19,835,913	+1%	122,903	106,870	-13%
North Carolina	9,751,810	10,551,162	+8%	104,950	117,734	+12%
North Dakota	702,227	774,948	+10%	10,081	9,256	-8%
Ohio	11,550,971	11,780,017	+2%	112,715	112,923	+0%
Oklahoma	3,819,320	3,986,639	+4%	47,872	44,760	-7%
Oregon	3,900,102	4,246,155	+9%	33,173	36,842	+11%
Pennsylvania	12,769,123	12,964,056	+2%	98,884	102,686	+4%
Rhode Island	1,054,893	1,095,610	+4%	7,807	7,526	-4%
South Carolina	4,719,027	5,190,705	+10%	49,036	57,492	+17%
South Dakota	833,859	895,376	+7%	9,113	9,994	+10%
Tennessee	6,455,752	6,975,218	+8%	71,167	82,596	+16%
Texas	26,084,120	29,527,941	+13%	237,836	285,028	+20%
Utah	2,854,146	3,337,975	+17%	26,528	33,638	+27%
Vermont	626,361	645,570	+3%	7,216	6,625	-8%
Virginia	8,187,456	8,642,274	+6%	80,959	80,102	-1%
Washington	6,898,599	7,738,692	+12%	56,762	57,797	+2%
West Virginia	1,857,446	1,782,959	-4%	19,226	16,079	-16%
Wisconsin	5,720,825	5,895,908	+3%	59,087	64,983	+10%
Wyoming	576,656	578,803	+0%	9,271	11,097	+20%
U.S. Total	**313,877,662**	**331,893,745**	**+6%**	**2,963,497**	**3,132,411**	**+6%**
Puerto Rico	3,634,488	3,263,584	-10%	18,588	13,869	-25%

Sources: Population – Census Bureau; VMT – FHWA

Table 5. Registered Vehicles and Licensed Drivers, by State, 2012 and 2021

State	2012 Registered Vehicles	2021 Registered Vehicles	Registered Vehicle Percentage Change (2012–2021)	2012 Licensed Drivers	2021 Licensed Drivers	Licensed Driver Percentage Change (2012–2021)
Alabama	4,844,632	5,463,966	+13%	3,827,522	4,061,837	+6%
Alaska	775,245	686,142	-11%	526,371	519,288	-1%
Arizona	5,163,015	6,064,542	+17%	4,697,579	5,795,216	+23%
Arkansas	2,479,915	3,555,142	+43%	2,199,164	2,306,921	+5%
California	27,702,150	31,349,073	+13%	24,200,997	27,112,595	+12%
Colorado	4,561,896	5,096,394	+12%	3,807,673	4,411,587	+16%
Connecticut	2,706,459	2,756,485	+2%	2,485,708	2,606,396	+5%
Delaware	943,642	472,175	-50%	720,290	848,504	+18%
District of Columbia	322,350	363,287	+13%	400,993	510,985	+27%
Florida	15,665,986	19,180,165	+22%	13,896,581	16,144,302	+16%
Georgia	7,646,995	9,142,656	+20%	6,581,534	7,663,847	+16%
Hawaii	1,231,742	1,235,473	+0%	915,033	917,464	+0%
Idaho	1,644,228	1,976,199	+20%	1,092,977	1,343,453	+23%
Illinois	10,131,883	11,003,729	+9%	8,235,745	8,364,843	+2%
Indiana	6,004,366	6,241,291	+4%	5,375,973	4,636,114	-14%
Iowa	3,511,050	3,839,312	+9%	2,217,304	2,345,355	+6%
Kansas	2,449,230	2,606,313	+6%	2,018,029	2,089,707	+4%
Kentucky	3,670,566	4,408,730	+20%	2,985,234	2,980,331	-0%
Louisiana	3,889,416	3,862,490	-1%	2,923,744	3,437,733	+18%
Maine	1,180,092	1,387,656	+18%	1,008,190	1,056,535	+5%
Maryland	3,982,734	4,910,674	+23%	4,102,154	4,439,757	+8%
Massachusetts	4,949,859	5,207,052	+5%	4,733,936	4,899,931	+4%
Michigan	7,798,432	9,556,452	+23%	7,018,713	7,982,471	+14%
Minnesota	5,099,007	5,511,960	+8%	3,321,760	4,143,272	+25%
Mississippi	2,052,140	2,385,768	+16%	1,957,980	2,032,775	+4%
Missouri	5,684,682	5,603,939	-1%	4,288,488	4,275,228	-0%
Montana	1,488,608	2,140,014	+44%	757,812	856,696	+13%
Nebraska	1,888,478	1,933,528	+2%	1,363,596	1,438,842	+6%
Nevada	2,130,331	2,676,143	+26%	1,728,060	2,150,707	+24%
New Hampshire	1,302,441	1,417,949	+9%	1,064,604	1,174,826	+10%
New Jersey	7,911,474	6,249,905	-21%	6,039,623	6,461,950	+7%
New Mexico	1,805,790	1,862,673	+3%	1,430,475	1,477,213	+3%
New York	10,448,743	9,408,796	-10%	11,248,617	11,879,057	+6%
North Carolina	7,792,555	8,707,506	+12%	6,677,693	7,765,109	+16%
North Dakota	810,355	925,186	+14%	502,807	549,721	+9%
Ohio	10,116,248	10,892,377	+8%	8,006,183	8,283,546	+3%
Oklahoma	3,439,937	3,353,167	-3%	2,400,358	2,597,441	+8%
Oregon	3,527,237	4,010,635	+14%	2,769,757	3,029,912	+9%
Pennsylvania	10,471,413	10,927,881	+4%	8,842,587	9,098,570	+3%
Rhode Island	854,359	801,654	-6%	749,706	754,507	+1%
South Carolina	3,896,832	5,091,679	+31%	3,455,931	3,990,909	+15%
South Dakota	1,003,571	1,433,044	+43%	606,779	671,149	+11%
Tennessee	5,392,661	6,712,722	+24%	4,573,871	5,009,697	+10%
Texas	20,238,122	23,012,990	+14%	15,252,192	18,297,900	+20%
Utah	1,981,341	2,838,505	+43%	1,788,822	2,207,208	+23%
Vermont	606,941	614,340	+1%	529,501	469,624	-11%
Virginia	7,116,791	7,652,036	+8%	5,538,480	5,912,644	+7%
Washington	5,849,945	7,966,147	+36%	5,227,889	5,868,509	+12%
West Virginia	1,458,802	1,219,024	-16%	1,241,586	1,138,290	-8%
Wisconsin	5,215,294	5,769,058	+11%	4,056,649	4,340,851	+7%
Wyoming	799,405	870,969	+9%	421,580	430,472	+2%
U.S. Total	**265,647,194**	**302,722,453**	**+14%**	**211,814,830**	**232,781,797**	**+10%**
Puerto Rico	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

Sources: Registered Vehicles for States – FHWA; Registered Vehicles for USA – FHWA and Polk data from S&P Global Mobility, Copyright © R.L. Polk & Co.; Licensed Drivers – FHWA
NA = Not Available.

Table 6. Vehicles Involved in Fatal Traffic Crashes, by State and Vehicle Type, 2021

State	Total Vehicles Involved	Percentage of Vehicles That Were (by Vehicle Type)				
		Passenger Cars	Light Trucks*	Large Trucks	Motorcycles	Other/Unknown
Alabama	1,381	38%	43%	10%	6%	3%
Alaska	93	18%	63%	9%	8%	2%
Arizona	1,707	32%	41%	7%	9%	11%
Arkansas	960	29%	44%	12%	11%	5%
California	6,114	42%	36%	7%	9%	6%
Colorado	1,024	26%	49%	10%	14%	1%
Connecticut	438	45%	31%	6%	15%	3%
Delaware	207	42%	39%	6%	11%	2%
District of Columbia	67	43%	31%	1%	10%	13%
Florida	5,482	37%	39%	7%	12%	5%
Georgia	2,640	37%	42%	9%	7%	4%
Hawaii	127	22%	41%	6%	28%	4%
Idaho	376	26%	46%	13%	9%	7%
Illinois	1,901	38%	39%	9%	9%	5%
Indiana	1,392	34%	40%	13%	10%	3%
Iowa	491	28%	40%	15%	14%	3%
Kansas	603	29%	46%	14%	7%	3%
Kentucky	1,163	32%	44%	11%	9%	5%
Louisiana	1,381	32%	48%	9%	6%	4%
Maine	195	25%	54%	9%	11%	1%
Maryland	801	44%	37%	5%	10%	4%
Massachusetts	586	37%	39%	5%	12%	6%
Michigan	1,658	29%	49%	7%	11%	4%
Minnesota	672	29%	45%	12%	11%	4%
Mississippi	1,045	35%	45%	10%	4%	5%
Missouri	1,434	32%	43%	9%	11%	5%
Montana	287	21%	54%	12%	9%	3%
Nebraska	311	26%	49%	16%	7%	2%
Nevada	567	29%	41%	10%	16%	5%
New Hampshire	148	32%	46%	5%	16%	1%
New Jersey	974	40%	37%	9%	10%	4%
New Mexico	645	29%	44%	14%	9%	5%
New York	1,600	33%	41%	7%	14%	6%
North Carolina	2,363	38%	44%	7%	10%	2%
North Dakota	139	19%	57%	9%	6%	9%
Ohio	1,932	35%	39%	11%	12%	4%
Oklahoma	1,085	30%	48%	12%	8%	3%
Oregon	833	29%	46%	10%	10%	6%
Pennsylvania	1,761	33%	40%	9%	13%	4%
Rhode Island	94	40%	43%	3%	14%	0%
South Carolina	1,726	36%	42%	8%	11%	3%
South Dakota	179	32%	41%	11%	13%	3%
Tennessee	1,966	35%	42%	9%	9%	5%
Texas	6,510	31%	44%	13%	8%	4%
Utah	474	30%	46%	13%	8%	3%
Vermont	102	28%	43%	8%	15%	6%
Virginia	1,342	37%	43%	9%	9%	3%
Washington	951	36%	41%	9%	10%	3%
West Virginia	384	26%	48%	11%	8%	8%
Wisconsin	879	29%	41%	11%	14%	6%
Wyoming	142	15%	54%	14%	11%	6%
U.S. Total	**61,332**	**34%**	**42%**	**9%**	**10%**	**4%**
Puerto Rico	467	41%	31%	5%	16%	7%

Source: FARS 2021 ARF
*Includes pickups, SUVs, and vans.

Table 7. Traffic Fatalities, by State and Person Type, 2021

State	Total Fatalities*	Percentage of Fatalities Who Were (by Person Type)				
		Drivers	Passengers	Motorcyclists	Pedestrians	Pedalcyclists
Alabama	983	60%	18%	8%	13%	1%
Alaska	67	42%	19%	9%	24%	3%
Arizona	1,180	45%	17%	13%	21%	4%
Arkansas	693	56%	17%	14%	11%	1%
California	4,285	43%	14%	13%	26%	3%
Colorado	691	49%	16%	20%	13%	2%
Connecticut	298	51%	8%	22%	18%	1%
Delaware	136	44%	16%	17%	21%	1%
District of Columbia	41	27%	5%	17%	44%	7%
Florida	3,738	40%	14%	17%	22%	5%
Georgia	1,797	55%	16%	10%	17%	1%
Hawaii	94	23%	11%	35%	27%	4%
Idaho	271	61%	18%	11%	8%	1%
Illinois	1,334	52%	16%	13%	16%	3%
Indiana	932	56%	15%	14%	12%	2%
Iowa	356	54%	14%	19%	8%	3%
Kansas	424	61%	16%	11%	10%	1%
Kentucky	806	60%	17%	13%	9%	1%
Louisiana	972	53%	16%	9%	19%	3%
Maine	153	56%	17%	14%	12%	1%
Maryland	561	48%	14%	14%	23%	1%
Massachusetts	417	53%	11%	17%	18%	1%
Michigan	1,136	51%	14%	15%	15%	3%
Minnesota	488	58%	15%	14%	10%	2%
Mississippi	772	63%	17%	5%	12%	2%
Missouri	1,016	56%	16%	16%	12%	1%
Montana	239	62%	18%	11%	8%	1%
Nebraska	221	65%	18%	10%	7%	0%
Nevada	385	41%	13%	23%	21%	2%
New Hampshire	118	54%	14%	22%	7%	2%
New Jersey	699	39%	12%	14%	30%	3%
New Mexico	481	46%	19%	11%	21%	1%
New York	1,157	41%	11%	19%	25%	3%
North Carolina	1,663	56%	14%	14%	15%	1%
North Dakota	101	57%	24%	8%	10%	1%
Ohio	1,354	52%	16%	16%	12%	2%
Oklahoma	762	57%	17%	10%	14%	2%
Oregon	599	55%	13%	14%	15%	3%
Pennsylvania	1,230	50%	15%	18%	14%	2%
Rhode Island	63	51%	14%	21%	11%	3%
South Carolina	1,198	53%	14%	15%	16%	2%
South Dakota	148	57%	18%	15%	9%	0%
Tennessee	1,327	57%	16%	13%	13%	1%
Texas	4,498	50%	17%	11%	18%	2%
Utah	328	51%	21%	12%	13%	2%
Vermont	74	58%	11%	20%	11%	0%
Virginia	973	57%	16%	11%	13%	2%
Washington	670	46%	16%	13%	21%	2%
West Virginia	280	63%	14%	10%	13%	0%
Wisconsin	620	57%	14%	20%	8%	1%
Wyoming	110	62%	13%	15%	10%	0%
U.S. Total	**42,939**	**51%**	**15%**	**14%**	**17%**	**2%**
Puerto Rico	337	38%	10%	20%	27%	4%

Source: FARS 2021 ARF
*Includes other/unknown person type.

Table 8. Passenger Vehicle* Occupant Fatalities in Traffic Crashes, by State and Restraint Use, 2021

State	Restraint Use						Total		Percent Based on Known Restraint Use	
	Restrained		Unrestrained		Unknown					
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Restrained	Unrestrained
Alabama	316	44%	354	49%	51	7%	721	100%	47%	53%
Alaska	17	44%	13	33%	9	23%	39	100%	57%	43%
Arizona	212	35%	290	48%	100	17%	602	100%	42%	58%
Arkansas	180	40%	228	51%	40	9%	448	100%	44%	56%
California	1,245	53%	878	37%	221	9%	2,344	100%	59%	41%
Colorado	179	42%	222	52%	28	7%	429	100%	45%	55%
Connecticut	70	41%	74	44%	25	15%	169	100%	49%	51%
Delaware	36	46%	40	51%	3	4%	79	100%	47%	53%
District of Columbia	5	50%	5	50%	0	0%	10	100%	50%	50%
Florida	1,013	52%	884	46%	33	2%	1,930	100%	53%	47%
Georgia	515	44%	555	47%	112	9%	1,182	100%	48%	52%
Hawaii	10	33%	19	63%	1	3%	30	100%	34%	66%
Idaho	68	36%	106	57%	13	7%	187	100%	39%	61%
Illinois	311	37%	332	39%	201	24%	844	100%	48%	52%
Indiana	258	42%	245	40%	111	18%	614	100%	51%	49%
Iowa	106	48%	87	40%	26	12%	219	100%	55%	45%
Kansas	126	42%	134	45%	40	13%	300	100%	48%	52%
Kentucky	267	48%	286	52%	0	0%	553	100%	48%	52%
Louisiana	226	36%	334	53%	68	11%	628	100%	40%	60%
Maine	52	49%	55	51%	0	0%	107	100%	49%	51%
Maryland	151	45%	147	44%	36	11%	334	100%	51%	49%
Massachusetts	91	37%	111	45%	44	18%	246	100%	45%	55%
Michigan	321	46%	235	34%	135	20%	691	100%	58%	42%
Minnesota	164	51%	99	31%	59	18%	322	100%	62%	38%
Mississippi	258	44%	238	41%	87	15%	583	100%	52%	48%
Missouri	207	32%	402	61%	48	7%	657	100%	34%	66%
Montana	54	31%	109	63%	10	6%	173	100%	33%	67%
Nebraska	63	38%	76	46%	26	16%	165	100%	45%	55%
Nevada	96	50%	71	37%	24	13%	191	100%	57%	43%
New Hampshire	15	19%	48	62%	15	19%	78	100%	24%	76%
New Jersey	146	43%	160	47%	31	9%	337	100%	48%	52%
New Mexico	101	36%	165	59%	12	4%	278	100%	38%	62%
New York	314	57%	184	33%	54	10%	552	100%	63%	37%
North Carolina	558	50%	515	46%	44	4%	1,117	100%	52%	48%
North Dakota	30	44%	31	46%	7	10%	68	100%	49%	51%
Ohio	305	36%	440	52%	109	13%	854	100%	41%	59%
Oklahoma	231	44%	260	49%	40	8%	531	100%	47%	53%
Oregon	174	47%	116	31%	80	22%	370	100%	60%	40%
Pennsylvania	266	36%	367	50%	99	14%	732	100%	42%	58%
Rhode Island	19	46%	18	44%	4	10%	41	100%	51%	49%
South Carolina	342	45%	379	50%	43	6%	764	100%	47%	53%
South Dakota	31	30%	65	62%	9	9%	105	100%	32%	68%
Tennessee	416	46%	393	44%	92	10%	901	100%	51%	49%
Texas	1,330	47%	1,172	42%	316	11%	2,818	100%	53%	47%
Utah	114	53%	78	36%	25	12%	217	100%	59%	41%
Vermont	17	38%	27	60%	1	2%	45	100%	39%	61%
Virginia	339	50%	336	49%	6	1%	681	100%	50%	50%
Washington	198	50%	149	38%	49	12%	396	100%	57%	43%
West Virginia	77	42%	74	40%	33	18%	184	100%	51%	49%
Wisconsin	154	40%	164	42%	70	18%	388	100%	48%	52%
Wyoming	26	37%	43	61%	2	3%	71	100%	38%	62%
U.S. Total	**11,820**	**45%**	**11,813**	**45%**	**2,692**	**10%**	**26,325**	**100%**	**50%**	**50%**
Puerto Rico	42	27%	112	73%	0	0%	154	100%	27%	73%

Source: FARS 2021 ARF

*Includes passenger cars and light trucks (pickups, SUVs, vans, and other light trucks) with GVWRs of 10,000 pounds or less.

Table 9. Motorcyclist Fatalities in Traffic Crashes, by State and Helmet Use, 2021

State	Helmet Use						Total		Percent Based on Known Helmet Use	
	Helmeted		Unhelmeted		Unknown					
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Helmeted	Unhelmeted
Alabama	64	80%	13	16%	3	4%	80	100%	83%	17%
Alaska	4	67%	2	33%	0	0%	6	100%	67%	33%
Arizona	74	47%	75	47%	9	6%	158	100%	50%	50%
Arkansas	41	42%	54	56%	2	2%	97	100%	43%	57%
California	528	90%	46	8%	12	2%	586	100%	92%	8%
Colorado	48	35%	86	63%	3	2%	137	100%	36%	64%
Connecticut	25	38%	36	55%	5	8%	66	100%	41%	59%
Delaware	19	79%	5	21%	0	0%	24	100%	79%	21%
District of Columbia	6	67%	3	33%	0	0%	9	100%	67%	33%
Florida	320	48%	341	51%	9	1%	670	100%	48%	52%
Georgia	167	86%	21	11%	6	3%	194	100%	89%	11%
Hawaii	12	36%	21	64%	0	0%	33	100%	36%	64%
Idaho	11	34%	21	66%	0	0%	32	100%	34%	66%
Illinois	63	36%	109	62%	4	2%	176	100%	37%	63%
Indiana	43	31%	88	64%	6	4%	137	100%	33%	67%
Iowa	17	25%	51	75%	0	0%	68	100%	25%	75%
Kansas	18	38%	26	55%	3	6%	47	100%	41%	59%
Kentucky	32	30%	76	70%	0	0%	108	100%	30%	70%
Louisiana	63	69%	25	27%	3	3%	91	100%	72%	28%
Maine	8	38%	13	62%	0	0%	21	100%	38%	62%
Maryland	61	76%	17	21%	2	3%	80	100%	78%	22%
Massachusetts	66	92%	1	1%	5	7%	72	100%	99%	1%
Michigan	78	44%	74	42%	24	14%	176	100%	51%	49%
Minnesota	24	35%	44	64%	1	1%	69	100%	35%	65%
Mississippi	35	92%	2	5%	1	3%	38	100%	95%	5%
Missouri	72	43%	87	52%	7	4%	166	100%	45%	55%
Montana	7	27%	19	73%	0	0%	26	100%	27%	73%
Nebraska	19	90%	0	0%	2	10%	21	100%	100%	0%
Nevada	64	73%	9	10%	15	17%	88	100%	88%	12%
New Hampshire	5	19%	19	73%	2	8%	26	100%	21%	79%
New Jersey	83	85%	12	12%	3	3%	98	100%	87%	13%
New Mexico	23	43%	30	56%	1	2%	54	100%	43%	57%
New York	184	82%	33	15%	7	3%	224	100%	85%	15%
North Carolina	211	91%	19	8%	3	1%	233	100%	92%	8%
North Dakota	3	38%	5	63%	0	0%	8	100%	38%	63%
Ohio	67	30%	156	69%	3	1%	226	100%	30%	70%
Oklahoma	15	19%	59	74%	6	8%	80	100%	20%	80%
Oregon	78	91%	5	6%	3	3%	86	100%	94%	6%
Pennsylvania	107	47%	114	50%	9	4%	230	100%	48%	52%
Rhode Island	5	38%	8	62%	0	0%	13	100%	38%	62%
South Carolina	65	35%	118	64%	1	1%	184	100%	36%	64%
South Dakota	5	23%	17	77%	0	0%	22	100%	23%	77%
Tennessee	144	85%	16	9%	9	5%	169	100%	90%	10%
Texas	266	51%	240	46%	17	3%	523	100%	53%	47%
Utah	23	59%	15	38%	1	3%	39	100%	61%	39%
Vermont	14	88%	2	13%	0	0%	16	100%	88%	13%
Virginia	101	89%	11	10%	2	2%	114	100%	90%	10%
Washington	86	92%	4	4%	3	3%	93	100%	96%	4%
West Virginia	14	48%	14	48%	1	3%	29	100%	50%	50%
Wisconsin	36	29%	85	69%	2	2%	123	100%	30%	70%
Wyoming	6	33%	8	44%	4	22%	18	100%	43%	57%
U.S. Total	**3,530**	**58%**	**2,355**	**39%**	**199**	**3%**	**6,084**	**100%**	**60%**	**40%**
Puerto Rico	29	42%	40	58%	0	0%	69	100%	42%	58%

Source: FARS 2021 ARF
Note: Shading indicates requiring helmet use for all motorcyclists.

Table 10. Percentage of 2012 and 2021 Fatalities by Highest Driver BAC in Fatal Traffic Crashes And 2021 Driver Alcohol Testing by Survival Status, by State

State	Percentage of Fatalities by Highest Driver BAC in the Crash				Percentage of Drivers Involved in Fatal Crashes Tested for BAC With Known Results in 2021	
	Alcohol Involved (BAC=.01+ g/dL)		Alcohol-Impaired (BAC=.08+ g/dL)			
	2012	2021	2012	2021	Killed	Survived
Alabama	34%	33%	28%	29%	55%	34%
Alaska	26%	39%	25%	33%	82%	40%
Arizona	33%	41%	28%	36%	40%	14%
Arkansas	31%	34%	26%	27%	78%	65%
California	33%	38%	28%	32%	39%	19%
Colorado	36%	37%	28%	31%	89%	16%
Connecticut	43%	45%	38%	38%	88%	6%
Delaware	41%	29%	31%	25%	65%	15%
District of Columbia	24%	36%	21%	30%	72%	33%
Florida	34%	31%	29%	27%	51%	13%
Georgia	30%	26%	25%	22%	45%	16%
Hawaii	46%	40%	38%	29%	93%	32%
Idaho	32%	33%	28%	31%	58%	31%
Illinois	41%	41%	34%	35%	60%	22%
Indiana	34%	30%	30%	25%	41%	55%
Iowa	30%	41%	26%	33%	54%	23%
Kansas	31%	30%	26%	26%	39%	23%
Kentucky	26%	27%	23%	24%	72%	49%
Louisiana	37%	36%	32%	31%	85%	63%
Maine	39%	39%	30%	29%	78%	49%
Maryland	38%	40%	32%	35%	76%	9%
Massachusetts	42%	41%	34%	36%	93%	3%
Michigan	33%	34%	28%	29%	36%	42%
Minnesota	33%	31%	29%	27%	70%	15%
Mississippi	37%	24%	33%	20%	9%	9%
Missouri	40%	35%	34%	29%	77%	56%
Montana	52%	47%	43%	44%	68%	64%
Nebraska	42%	36%	34%	29%	59%	53%
Nevada	38%	37%	33%	30%	80%	22%
New Hampshire	35%	45%	30%	38%	83%	56%
New Jersey	36%	31%	28%	25%	88%	21%
New Mexico	30%	37%	26%	32%	79%	6%
New York	36%	39%	29%	34%	43%	9%
North Carolina	33%	32%	29%	28%	69%	10%
North Dakota	51%	38%	43%	33%	81%	16%
Ohio	39%	45%	35%	39%	84%	15%
Oklahoma	34%	31%	30%	25%	87%	32%
Oregon	31%	44%	26%	36%	68%	22%
Pennsylvania	35%	32%	31%	27%	63%	10%
Rhode Island	51%	46%	44%	39%	84%	10%
South Carolina	46%	38%	40%	33%	73%	7%
South Dakota	39%	42%	33%	35%	79%	84%
Tennessee	34%	32%	28%	27%	49%	27%
Texas	44%	48%	38%	42%	45%	9%
Utah	19%	27%	15%	24%	83%	33%
Vermont	34%	36%	31%	31%	88%	25%
Virginia	32%	34%	27%	29%	83%	1%
Washington	37%	45%	33%	39%	82%	17%
West Virginia	30%	29%	28%	23%	88%	1%
Wisconsin	38%	36%	33%	32%	34%	13%
Wyoming	35%	38%	33%	34%	73%	17%
U.S. Total	**36%**	**36%**	**31%**	**31%**	**59%**	**21%**
Puerto Rico	44%	43%	34%	34%	100%	50%

Source: FARS 2012 Final File, 2021 ARF
Notes: Percentages are computed based on unrounded estimates. NHTSA estimates BACs when alcohol test results are unknown.

Table 11. Speeding-Related Traffic Fatalities, by State and Roadway Function Class, 2021

State	Total Fatalities	Speeding-Related Fatalities by Roadway Function Class							
		Total*	Interstate Rural	Interstate Urban	Non-Interstate Freeway and Expressway	Non-Interstate Other Principal Arterial	Non-Interstate Minor Arterial	Non-Interstate Collector	Non-Interstate Local
Alabama	983	274	36	15	0	46	59	83	35
Alaska	67	27	6	3	0	7	1	5	5
Arizona	1,180	373	15	15	39	90	141	55	8
Arkansas	693	148	8	11	1	26	27	21	54
California	4,285	1,509	59	166	161	450	308	252	113
Colorado	691	202	11	12	3	86	36	29	25
Connecticut	298	119	1	10	11	26	36	30	5
Delaware	136	46	0	4	2	13	9	14	4
District of Columbia	41	19	0	0	1	5	9	0	4
Florida	3,738	391	8	18	3	145	83	85	49
Georgia	1,797	369	8	26	23	82	91	77	62
Hawaii	94	45	0	2	0	28	15	0	0
Idaho	271	59	5	3	1	11	5	18	16
Illinois	1,334	487	24	76	9	123	111	82	57
Indiana	932	252	16	22	4	64	43	57	46
Iowa	356	84	2	3	0	23	12	26	17
Kansas	424	98	7	6	3	12	26	33	11
Kentucky	806	143	13	8	1	28	35	27	31
Louisiana	972	281	30	24	2	54	68	45	58
Maine	153	26	0	0	0	4	3	13	5
Maryland	561	168	2	16	21	48	34	37	9
Massachusetts	417	114	2	21	8	29	25	16	13
Michigan	1,136	321	5	25	16	86	64	67	53
Minnesota	488	167	2	13	6	34	53	39	18
Mississippi	772	122	5	1	0	35	19	35	10
Missouri	1,016	404	11	42	27	104	65	80	75
Montana	239	86	14	8	0	17	9	16	20
Nebraska	221	36	5	5	2	5	5	7	7
Nevada	385	112	2	6	0	36	30	12	26
New Hampshire	118	40	1	1	4	11	6	11	6
New Jersey	699	178	3	9	22	61	35	20	27
New Mexico	481	186	24	12	1	51	32	43	21
New York	1,157	418	4	42	39	109	75	50	99
North Carolina	1,663	478	9	26	29	102	92	124	96
North Dakota	101	29	2	0	0	14	1	2	9
Ohio	1,354	341	4	50	11	54	66	94	56
Oklahoma	762	181	3	10	0	50	20	66	32
Oregon	599	154	5	5	0	44	40	45	15
Pennsylvania	1,230	500	34	29	27	130	91	86	102
Rhode Island	63	20	0	4	2	6	4	3	1
South Carolina	1,198	486	55	23	6	73	186	74	69
South Dakota	148	35	3	0	0	7	12	8	5
Tennessee	1,327	231	9	15	7	77	61	32	30
Texas	4,498	1,568	68	171	79	424	296	386	141
Utah	328	109	15	10	3	38	21	14	8
Vermont	74	30	2	0	0	3	8	9	8
Virginia	973	337	13	42	13	66	79	87	34
Washington	670	206	11	24	14	38	39	60	18
West Virginia	280	64	9	8	0	11	4	20	12
Wisconsin	620	212	6	9	2	55	51	53	35
Wyoming	110	45	8	1	0	18	1	11	5
U.S. Total	**42,939**	**12,330**	**585**	**1,052**	**603**	**3,159**	**2,642**	**2,559**	**1,665**
Puerto Rico	337	112	11	12	0	33	28	23	5

Source: FARS 2021 ARF

*Includes fatalities that occurred on roads for which the roadway function class was unknown.

Restraint Use and Motorcycle Helmet Use Laws

Restraint Use Laws

The first mandatory seat belt use law was enacted in New York in 1984. Adult seat belt use laws are in effect in 49 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. The laws differ from State to State, according to the type and age of the vehicle, occupant age, and seating position. The goal of these laws is to promote seat belt use and thereby reduce deaths and injuries in motor vehicle crashes.

In 2021 there were 34 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico that had primary seat belt laws in effect for front seat occupants, enabling law enforcement officers to stop vehicles and write citations when they observed violations of the seat belt law. In 15 States the laws specified secondary enforcement, meaning that police officers were permitted to write citations only after a vehicle was stopped for some other traffic infraction. New Hampshire is the only State without a seat belt law for adults, although it does have a primary child passenger safety law that covers all drivers and passengers under 18 years old.

The first mandatory child restraint use law was implemented in Tennessee in 1978. Since 1985 all 50 States and the District of Columbia have had child restraint use laws in effect. Child restraint use laws differ from State to State, in terms of the ages of children covered and in other important ways, including height and weight limits, seating position requirements, and various exemptions and exceptions.

The most current information on seat belt laws and child passenger safety laws are available on the website of the GHSA at www.ghsa.org/.

- Seat belt laws—www.ghsa.org/html/stateinfo/laws/seatbelt_laws.html.
- Child passenger safety laws—www.ghsa.org/html/stateinfo/laws/childsafety_laws.html.

In 2021 seat belt use rates in the United States ranged from 75.5 percent in New Hampshire to 97.2 percent in California. These results are from probability-based observational surveys conducted by 50 States, the District of Columbia, and United States Territories. The nationwide seat belt use rate in 2021 was 90.4 percent, as measured by NHTSA's National Occupant Protection Use Survey (NOPUS). NOPUS is a national probability-based survey, which is independent from State belt use surveys. Observed seat belt use rates for the States and the Nation in 2021 can be found in *Seat Belt Use in 2021—Use Rates in the States and Territories*, Report No. DOT HS 813 307, https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813307.

Motorcycle Helmet Use Laws

In 2021 only 18 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico required helmet use for all motorcyclists. Excluding the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, the known helmet use percentages in fatal crashes ranged from 54 percent (West Virginia) to 100 percent (Nebraska) for these 18 States.

In 29 States helmet use was required for only a subset of motorcyclists (typically, motorcyclists under age 18), and 3 States (Illinois, Iowa, and New Hampshire) did not require helmet use for motorcyclists of any age. The known helmeted percentages in fatal crashes ranged from 20 percent (Oklahoma) to 83 percent (Delaware) for these 32 States.

The most current information on helmet use laws is available on the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) website at www.ghsa.org/state-laws/issues/motorcyclists. In States without universal helmet laws, 55 percent of motorcyclists killed in 2021 were not wearing helmets, as compared to 9 percent in States with universal helmet laws. According to NOPUS, in 2021 DOT-compliant motorcycle helmet use in States requiring all to use helmets was 86.1 percent compared to 53.4 percent in other States. Information on motorcycle helmet use in 2021 can be found in *Motorcycle Helmet Use in 2021—Overall Results*, Report No. DOT HS 813 270, https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813270.

Fatality Analysis Reporting System

FARS contains data on every fatal motor vehicle traffic crash within the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. To be included in FARS, a traffic crash must involve a motor vehicle traveling on a trafficway customarily open to the public, and must result in the death of a vehicle occupant or a nonoccupant within 30 days of the crash. The Annual Report File (ARF) is the FARS data file associated with the most recent available year, which is subject to change when it is finalized the following year to the final version known as the Final File. The additional time between the ARF and the Final File provides the opportunity for submission of important variable data requiring outside sources, which may lead to changes in the final counts. More information on FARS can be found at www.nhtsa.gov/crash-data-systems/fatality-analysis-reporting-system.

The updated final counts for the previous data year will be reflected with the release of the recent year's ARF. For example, along with the release of the 2021 ARF, the 2020 Final File was released to replace the 2020 ARF. The final fatality count in motor vehicle traffic crashes for 2020 was 39,007, which was updated from 38,824 in the 2020 ARF.

Product Information Catalog and Vehicle Listing (vPIC) Vehicle Classification

Historically, vehicle type classifications (e.g., passenger cars, light trucks, large trucks, motorcycles, buses) from FARS used for analysis and data reporting were based on analyst-coded vehicle body type. NHTSA did not have manufacturer authoritative data to assist in vehicle body type coding. NCSA has developed a Product Information Catalog and Vehicle Listing (vPIC) dataset that is being used to decode VINs (Vehicle Identification Numbers) and extract vehicle information. Details of vehicles (make, model, body class, etc.) involved in crashes are obtained from vPIC via VIN-linkage. The VIN-derived information from vPIC uses the manufacturer's classification of body class, which allows for more accurate vehicle type analysis.

The vPIC-based analysis data are available beginning with 2020 FARS data file. Starting with the release of 2021 FARS data, all vehicle-related analysis for 2020 and later years will be based on vPIC vehicle classification. As a result, the 2020 and later-year vehicle type classifications are not comparable to 2019 and earlier-year vehicle type classifications. This change affects any analysis with a vehicle component to it. More information on vPIC can be found at https://vpic.nhtsa.dot.gov/.

The suggested APA format citation for this document is:

National Center for Statistics and Analysis. (2023, September). *State traffic data: 2021 data* (Traffic Safety Facts. Report No. DOT HS 813 509). National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

For More Information:

Motor vehicle traffic crash data are available from the National Center for Statistics and Analysis (NCSA), NSA-230. NCSA can be contacted at NCSARequests@dot.gov or 800-934-8517. NCSA programs can be found at www.nhtsa.gov/data. To report a motor vehicle safety-related problem or to inquire about safety information, contact the Vehicle Safety Hotline at 888-327-4236 or www.nhtsa.gov/report-a-safety-problem.

The following data tools and resources can be found at https://cdan.nhtsa.gov/.

- Fatal Motor Vehicle Traffic Crash Data Visualizations
- Motor Vehicle Traffic Crash Databook
- Fatality and Injury Reporting System Tool (FIRST)
- State Traffic Safety Information (STSI)
- Traffic Safety Facts Annual Report Tables
- FARS Data Tables (FARS Encyclopedia)
- Crash Viewer
- Product Information Catalog and Vehicle Listing (vPIC)
- FARS, NASS GES, CRSS, NASS Crashworthiness Data System (CDS), and Crash Investigation Sampling System (CISS) data can be downloaded for further analysis.

Other fact sheets available from NCSA:

- Alcohol-Impaired Driving
- Bicyclists and Other Cyclists
- Children
- Large Trucks
- Motorcycles
- Occupant Protection in Passenger Vehicles
- Older Population
- Passenger Vehicles
- Pedestrians
- Rural/Urban Comparison of Motor Vehicle Traffic Fatalities
- School-Transportation-Related Crashes
- Speeding
- State Alcohol-Impaired-Driving Estimates
- Summary of Motor Vehicle Traffic Crashes
- Young Drivers

Detailed data on motor vehicle traffic crashes are published annually in *Traffic Safety Facts: A Compilation of Motor Vehicle Traffic Crash Data*. The fact sheets and Traffic Safety Facts annual report can be found at https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/.

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National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

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National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
NHTSA

DOT HS 813 450 June 2023

Alcohol-Impaired Driving

In this fact sheet for 2021 the information is presented as follows.

Drivers are considered to be alcohol-impaired when their blood alcohol concentrations (BACs) are .08 grams per deciliter (g/dL) or higher. Thus, any fatal crash involving a driver with a BAC of .08 g/dL or higher is considered to be an alcohol-impaired-driving crash, and fatalities occurring in those crashes are considered to be alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities. The term "drunk driving" is used instead of alcohol-impaired driving in some other NHTSA communications and material. The term "driver" refers to the operator of any motor vehicle, including a motorcycle.

Estimates of alcohol-impaired driving are generated using BAC values reported to the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) and BAC values imputed when they are not reported. For more information on multiple imputation, see *Multiple Imputation of Missing Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) Values in FARS*.[1] In this fact sheet NHTSA uses the term "alcohol-impaired" in evaluating the FARS statistics. **In all cases throughout this fact sheet, use of the term does not indicate that a crash or a fatality was caused by alcohol impairment, only that an alcohol-impaired driver was involved in the crash.** This report also includes BACs of .00 g/dL (no alcohol), .01+ g/dL, and .15+ g/dL solely for comparison purposes.

Key Findings

- In 2021 there were 13,384 fatalities in motor vehicle traffic crashes in which at least one driver was alcohol-impaired. This represented 31 percent of all traffic fatalities in the United States for the year.
- Fatalities in alcohol-impaired-driving crashes increased by 14.2 percent (11,718 to 13,384 fatalities) from 2020 to 2021.
- One alcohol-impaired-driving fatality occurred every 39 minutes in 2021, on average.
- The 21- to 24-year-old age group and the 25- to 34-year-old age group had the highest percentages (27% each) of alcohol-impaired drivers involved in fatal crashes compared to other age groups in 2021.
- In 2021 there were about 4 male alcohol-impaired drivers involved for every female alcohol-impaired driver involved.

[1] Rubin, D.B., Schafer, J.L., & Subramanian, R. (1998, October). *Multiple imputation of missing blood alcohol concentration (BAC) values in FARS* (Report No. DOT HS 808 816). National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/808816.

- The percentages of alcohol-impaired drivers involved in fatal crashes in 2021 was highest for motorcycle riders (28%) compared to drivers of passenger cars (24%), light trucks (20%), and large trucks (3%).
- Of the 1,184 traffic fatalities in 2021 among children 14 and younger, 25 percent (294) occurred in alcohol-impaired-driving crashes.
- In 2021, among the 13,384 alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities, 67 percent (9,027) were in crashes in which at least one driver had a BAC of .15 g/dL or higher.
- The rate of alcohol impairment among drivers involved in fatal crashes in 2021 was 2.8 times higher at night than during the day.

This fact sheet contains information on fatal motor vehicle traffic crashes based on data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS). Refer to the end of this publication for more information on FARS.

Due to a vehicle classification change, the 2020 and later-year vehicle type classifications are not comparable to 2019 and earlier-year vehicle type classifications. This change affects any analysis with a vehicle component to it. Refer to the end of this publication for more information on Product Information Catalog and Vehicle Listing (vPIC).

A motor vehicle traffic crash is defined as an incident that involved one or more motor vehicles in-transport that originated on or had a harmful event (injury or damage) on a public trafficway, such as a road or highway. Crashes that occurred on private property not regularly used by the public for transport, including some parts of parking lots and driveways, are excluded. The terms “motor vehicle traffic crash” and “traffic crash” are used interchangeably in this document.

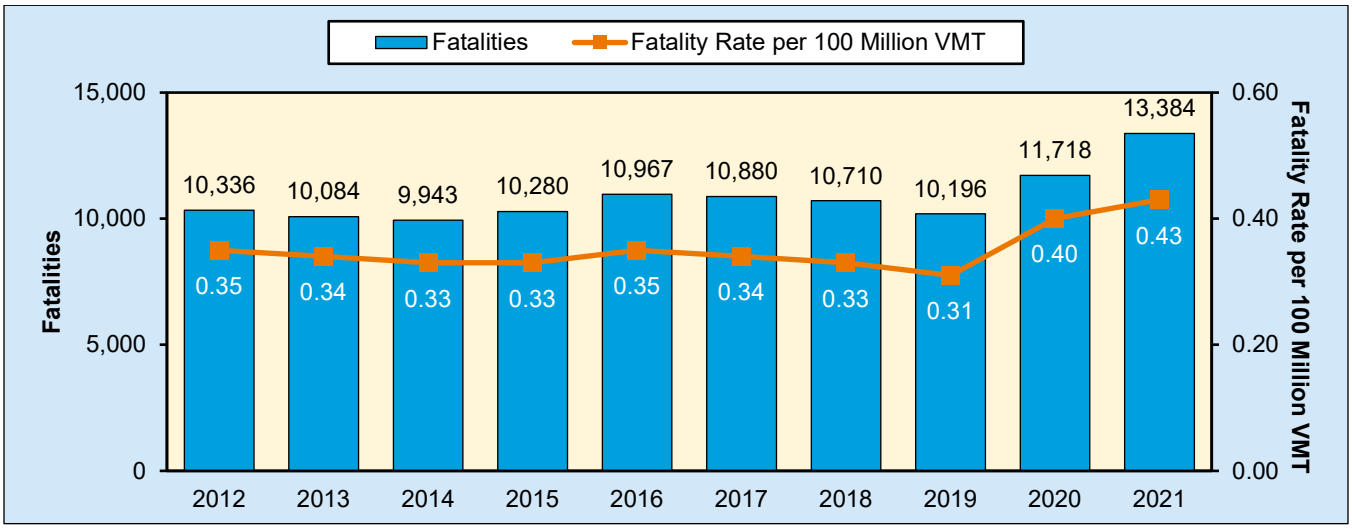
Overview

All 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico have set a threshold making it illegal to drive with a BAC of .08 g/dL or higher. **Note:** Utah set a lower threshold of .05 g/dL or higher that went into effect on December 30, 2018. In addition, people under 21 are legally prohibited from drinking alcohol (except in Puerto Rico where the legal drinking age is 18). Operating a commercial vehicle at a BAC of .04 g/dL or above is a violation of Federal regulations and may result in criminal charges.

In 2021 there were 13,384 people killed in alcohol-impaired-driving crashes, an average of 1 alcohol-impaired-driving fatality every 39 minutes. These alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities accounted for 31 percent of all motor vehicle traffic fatalities in the United States in 2021.

Fatalities in alcohol-impaired-driving crashes increased by 14.2 percent (11,718 to 13,384 fatalities) from 2020 to 2021 compared to a 10.1-percent increase in overall fatalities between 2020 and 2021. The national rate of alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities in motor vehicle traffic crashes in 2021 was 0.43 per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT), up from 0.40 in 2020. Figure 1 presents the fatality numbers and rates for the past decade.

Figure 1. Fatalities and Fatality Rate per 100 Million VMT in Alcohol-Impaired-Driving Traffic Crashes, 2012–2021



Sources: FARS 2012–2020 Final File, 2021 Annual Report File (ARF); VMT – Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
Note: NHTSA estimates BACs when alcohol test results are unknown.

Of the 13,384 people who died in alcohol-impaired-driving crashes in 2021, there were 8,089 drivers (60%) who were alcohol-impaired. The remaining fatalities consisted of 1,603 passengers riding with alcohol-impaired drivers (12%), 2,085 occupants of other vehicles (16%), and 1,607 nonoccupants (12%). The distribution of fatalities in these crashes by role is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Fatalities in Alcohol-Impaired-Driving Traffic Crashes, by Role, 2021

Role	Number	Percent
Alcohol-Impaired Drivers	8,089	60%
Passengers Riding With Alcohol-Impaired Drivers	1,603	12%
Subtotal	**9,692**	**72%**
Occupants of Other Vehicles	2,085	16%
Nonoccupants (pedestrians/pedalcyclists/other)	1,607	12%
Total Alcohol-Impaired-Driving Fatalities	**13,384**	**100%**

Source: FARS 2021 ARF
Notes: Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to individual rounding. NHTSA estimates BACs when alcohol test results are unknown.

Economic Cost for All Traffic Crashes

The estimated economic cost of all motor vehicle traffic crashes in the United States in 2019 (the most recent year for which cost data is available) was $340 billion, of which $58 billion resulted from alcohol-impaired crashes (drivers or nonoccupants with a BAC of .08 g/dL or higher). Included in the economic costs are:

- Lost productivity,
- Workplace costs,
- Legal and court costs,
- Medical costs,
- Emergency medical services,
- Insurance administration costs,
- Congestion impacts, and
- Property damage.

These costs represent the tangible losses that result from motor vehicle traffic crashes. However, in cases of serious injury or death, such costs fail to capture the relatively intangible value of lost quality-of-life that results from these injuries. When quality-of-life valuations are considered, the total value of societal harm from motor vehicle traffic crashes in the United States in 2019 was an estimated $1.37 trillion, of which $296 billion resulted from alcohol-impaired crashes. For further information on cost estimates, see *The Economic and Societal Impact of Motor Vehicle Crashes, 2019 (Revised)*.[2]

Drivers

Table 2 provides information on alcohol-impaired drivers involved (killed or survived) in fatal crashes by the age of the driver as well as sex and vehicle type. In fatal crashes in 2021 the highest percentages of alcohol-impaired drivers were for 21- to 24-year-old and 25- to 34-year-old drivers (27% each), followed by 35- to 44-year-old drivers (23%).

The percentages of alcohol-impaired drivers involved in fatal crashes in 2021 was 22 percent among males and 17 percent among females. In 2021 there were about 4 male alcohol-impaired drivers involved for every female alcohol-impaired driver involved (9,693 versus 2,531). When looking at all drivers involved in fatal crashes, there were almost 3 male drivers for every female driver.

The percentages of alcohol-impaired drivers involved in fatal crashes in 2021 by vehicle type were 28 percent for motorcycle riders, 24 percent for drivers of passenger cars, and 20 percent for drivers of light-trucks (22% for drivers of pickups, 19% for drivers of SUVs, and 13% for drivers of vans). The percentages of alcohol-impaired drivers in fatal crashes was the lowest for drivers of large trucks (3%).

Table 2. Alcohol-Impaired Drivers Involved in Fatal Traffic Crashes, by Age Group, Sex, and Vehicle Type, 2020 and 2021

Drivers Involved in Fatal Crashes	2020			2021		
		BAC=.08+ g/dL			BAC=.08+ g/dL	
	Total Drivers	Number	Percentage of Total	Total Drivers	Number	Percentage of Total
Total*	**54,165**	**11,116**	**21%**	**60,904**	**12,762**	**21%**
Age Group						
15–20	4,588	800	17%	5,088	884	17%
21–24	4,911	1,279	26%	5,513	1,499	27%
25–34	12,011	3,134	26%	13,200	3,531	27%
35–44	8,956	2,004	22%	10,291	2,417	23%
45–54	7,778	1,501	19%	8,764	1,735	20%
55–64	7,316	1,142	16%	8,085	1,284	16%
65–74	4,129	489	12%	4,768	589	12%
75+	2,824	202	7%	3,263	253	8%
Sex						
Male	39,594	8,483	21%	44,036	9,693	22%
Female	13,111	2,103	16%	15,130	2,531	17%

[2] Blincoe, L., Miller, T., Wang, J.-S., Swedler, D., Coughlin, T., Lawrence, B., Guo, F., Klauer, S., & Dingus, T. (2023, February). *The economic and societal impact of motor vehicle crashes, 2019 (Revised)* (Report No. DOT HS 813 403). National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813403

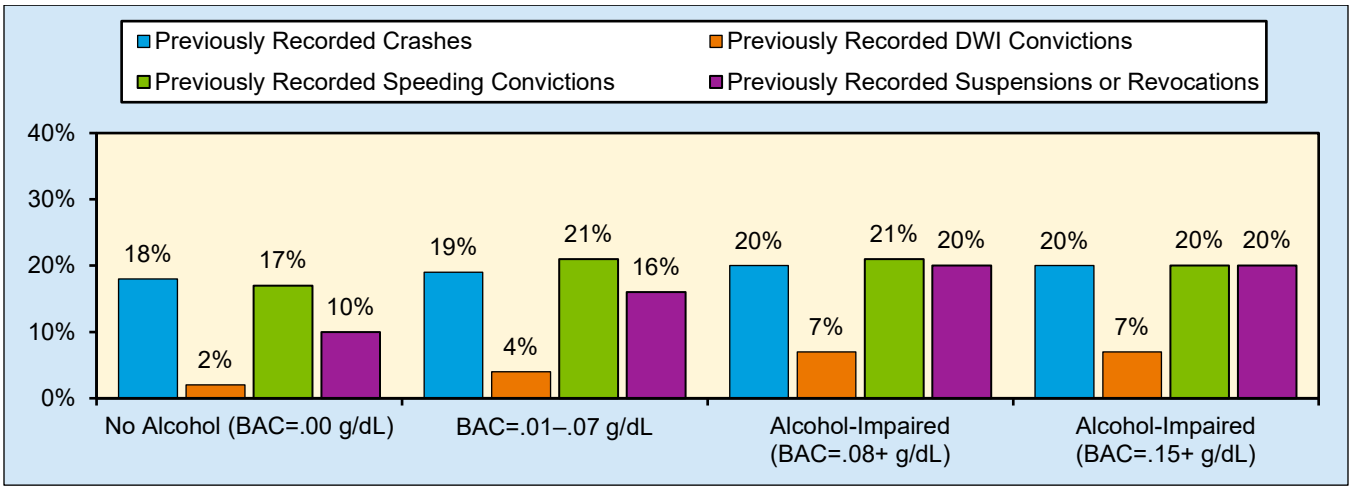
Drivers Involved in Fatal Crashes	2020			2021		
	Total Drivers	BAC=.08+ g/dL		Total Drivers	BAC=.08+ g/dL	
		Number	Percentage of Total		Number	Percentage of Total
Vehicle Type						
Passenger Car	19,063	4,530	24%	20,959	5,057	24%
Light Truck	22,266	4,178	19%	25,525	4,992	20%
--Pickup	*8,746*	*1,898*	*22%*	*9,762*	*2,133*	*22%*
--SUV	*11,730*	*2,042*	*17%*	*13,609*	*2,589*	*19%*
--Van	*1,790*	*237*	*13%*	*2,154*	*270*	*13%*
Large Truck**	4,755	121	3%	5,634	150	3%
Motorcycle	5,636	1,454	26%	6,080	1,727	28%

Source: FARS 2020 Final File, 2021 ARF
*Includes unknown age, unknown sex, and other/unknown vehicle type.
**Includes commercial and non-commercial trucks with GVWRs (gross vehicle weight ratings) over 10,000 pounds.
Note: NHTSA estimates BACs when alcohol test results are unknown.

In 2021 there were 6,080 passenger vehicle drivers killed who were alcohol-impaired (passenger vehicles include passenger cars as well as light trucks such as pickups, SUVs, and vans with gross vehicle weight ratings of 10,000 pounds or less). Of these driver fatalities for whom restraint use was known, 65 percent were unrestrained. Based on known restraint use, 54 percent of passenger vehicle drivers killed who had BACs of .01 to .07 g/dL were unrestrained, 43 percent of passenger vehicle drivers killed who had no alcohol (.00 g/dL) were unrestrained, and 66 percent of passenger vehicle drivers who had BACs of .15 g/dL or higher were unrestrained.

Figure 2 shows information on the driving record of drivers in fatal crashes in 2021 at different BAC levels. There was little difference by BAC level in the percentages of drivers with previously recorded crashes. Alcohol-impaired drivers involved in fatal crashes were almost 4 times more likely to have prior DWI convictions than were drivers with no alcohol (7% and 2%, respectively).

Figure 2. Percentages of Previous 5-Year Driving Records of Drivers Involved in Fatal Traffic Crashes, by BAC, 2021

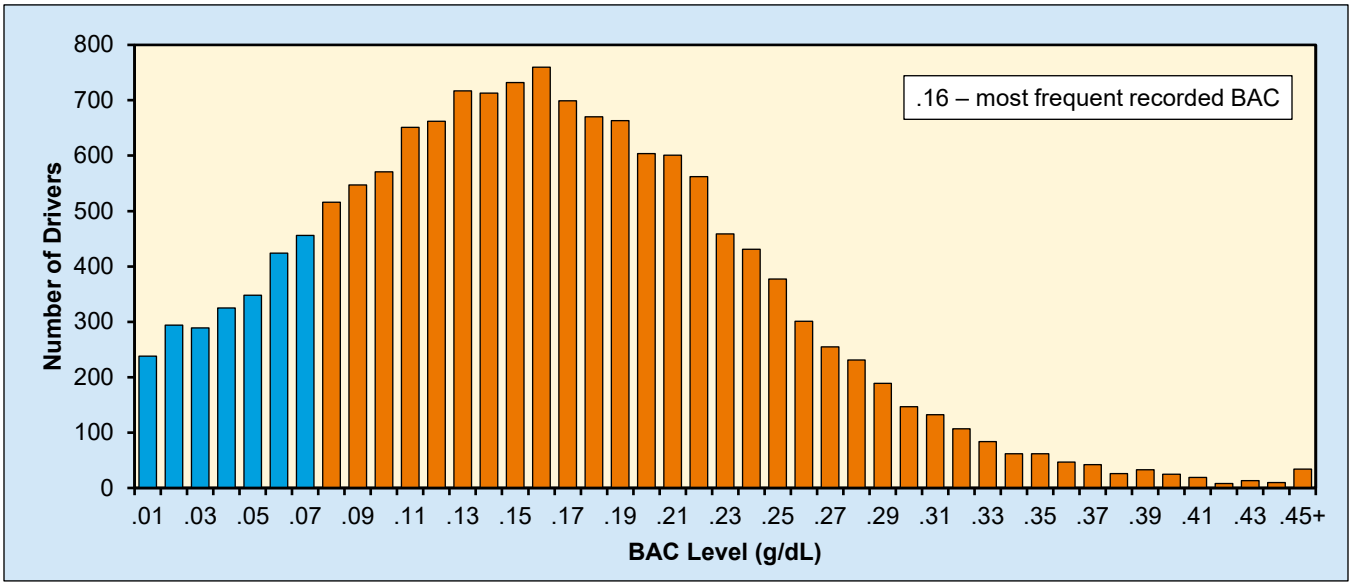


Source: FARS 2021 ARF
Notes: Excludes all drivers with previous records that were unknown. NHTSA estimates BACs when alcohol test results are unknown.

While a BAC of .08 g/dL is considered to be impaired, the large majority of drivers in fatal crashes with any measurable alcohol had levels far higher. Eighty-four percent (12,762) of the 15,135 drivers with alcohol in their systems who were involved in fatal crashes in 2021 had BAC levels at or above .08 g/dL, and 55 percent (8,385)

had BAC levels at or above .15 g/dL. In 2021 among the 13,384 alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities, 67 percent (9,027) were in crashes in which at least one driver in the crash had a BAC of .15 g/dL or higher. Figure 3 presents the distribution of BACs for those drivers with any alcohol in their systems. The most frequently recorded BAC among drinking drivers in fatal crashes was at .16 g/dL; the median BAC among drinking drivers was .15 g/dL.

Figure 3. Distribution of BACs for Drivers With BACs of .01 g/dL or Higher Involved in Fatal Traffic Crashes, 2021



Source: FARS 2021 ARF
Note: NHTSA estimates BACs when alcohol test results are unknown.

Children

A total of 1,184 children 14 and younger were killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes in 2021. Of these 1,184 fatalities, 294 children (25%) died in alcohol-impaired-driving crashes. Of these 294 child deaths:

- 162 (55%) were passengers of vehicles with alcohol-impaired drivers;
- 100 (34%) were occupants of other vehicles;
- 28 (10%) were nonoccupants (pedestrians, pedalcyclists, or other nonoccupants); and
- 4 (1%) were child drivers.

Crash Characteristics

Figure 4 displays information about the setting surrounding alcohol-impaired drivers involved (killed or survived) in fatal crashes in 2021 including month, land use, weather, light condition, and functional system.[3]

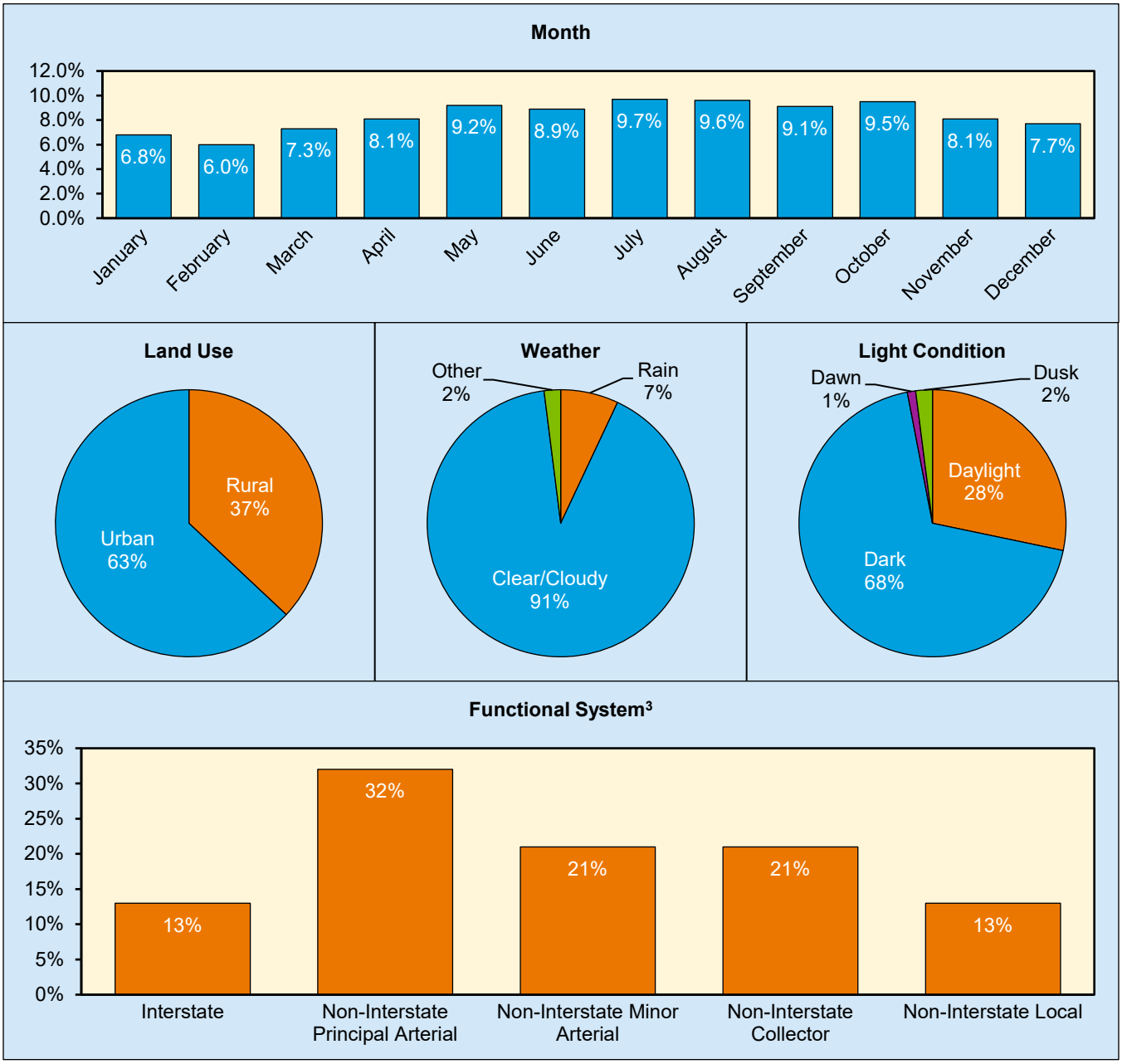
In 2021 based on known crash characteristic values of alcohol-impaired drivers involved in fatal crashes:

- More occurred in July (9.7%) and August (9.6%) than the other months; February had the lowest percentage (6.0%);
- 63 percent occurred in urban areas and 37 percent occurred in rural areas;
- 91 percent occurred in clear/cloudy conditions compared to 7 percent in rainy conditions and 2 percent in other conditions;

[3] Definitions for different functional system can be found at www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/processes/statewide/related/highway_functional_classifications/fcauab.pdf

- 68 percent occurred in the dark compared to 28 percent in daylight, 2 percent in dusk, and 1 percent in dawn; and
- 87 percent occurred on non-interstate roads compared to 13 percent on interstate roads.

Figure 4. Percentages of Alcohol-Impaired Drivers Involved in Fatal Traffic Crashes, by Month, Land Use, Weather, Light Condition, and Functional System, 2021[3]



Source: FARS 2021 ARF
Notes: Unknowns were removed before calculating percentages. Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to individual rounding. NHTSA estimates BACs when alcohol test results are unknown.

[3] Definitions for different functional system can be found at www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/processes/statewide/related/highway_functional_classifications/fcauab.pdf

Time of Day and Day of Week

Table 3 presents information on drivers involved (killed or survived) in fatal crashes in 2020 and 2021 by time of day and day of week, as well as single-vehicle and multiple-vehicle crash data. In 2021:

- The rate of alcohol impairment among drivers involved in fatal crashes was 2.8 times higher at night than during the day (31% versus 11%, respectively);
- 33 percent of all drivers involved in single-vehicle fatal crashes were alcohol-impaired, compared to 14 percent in multiple-vehicle fatal crashes; and
- 16 percent of all drivers involved in fatal crashes during the week were alcohol-impaired, compared to 28 percent on weekends.

Table 3. Alcohol-Impaired Drivers Involved in Fatal Traffic Crashes, by Crash Type, Time of Day, and Day of Week, 2020 and 2021

Drivers Involved in Fatal Crashes	2020			2021		
		BAC=.08+ g/dL			BAC=.08+ g/dL	
	Total Drivers	Number	Percentage of Total	Total Drivers	Number	Percentage of Total
Total*	**54,165**	**11,116**	**21%**	**60,904**	**12,762**	**21%**
Crash Type and Time of Day						
Single Vehicle*	20,760	6,593	32%	22,103	7,291	33%
Daytime	7,849	1,447	18%	8,164	1,634	20%
Nighttime	12,635	5,019	40%	13,666	5,526	40%
Multiple Vehicle*	33,405	4,524	14%	38,801	5,471	14%
Daytime	19,195	1,362	7%	22,253	1,672	8%
Nighttime	14,155	3,153	22%	16,495	3,792	23%
Time of Day						
Daytime	27,044	2,810	10%	30,417	3,307	11%
Nighttime	26,790	8,172	31%	30,161	9,318	31%
Day of Week and Time of Day						
Weekday*	32,829	5,286	16%	36,803	5,899	16%
Daytime	19,759	1,812	9%	22,473	2,100	9%
Nighttime	12,957	3,433	26%	14,216	3,759	26%
Weekend*	21,244	5,793	27%	24,012	6,824	28%
Daytime	7,285	998	14%	7,944	1,207	15%
Nighttime	13,833	4,739	34%	15,945	5,560	35%

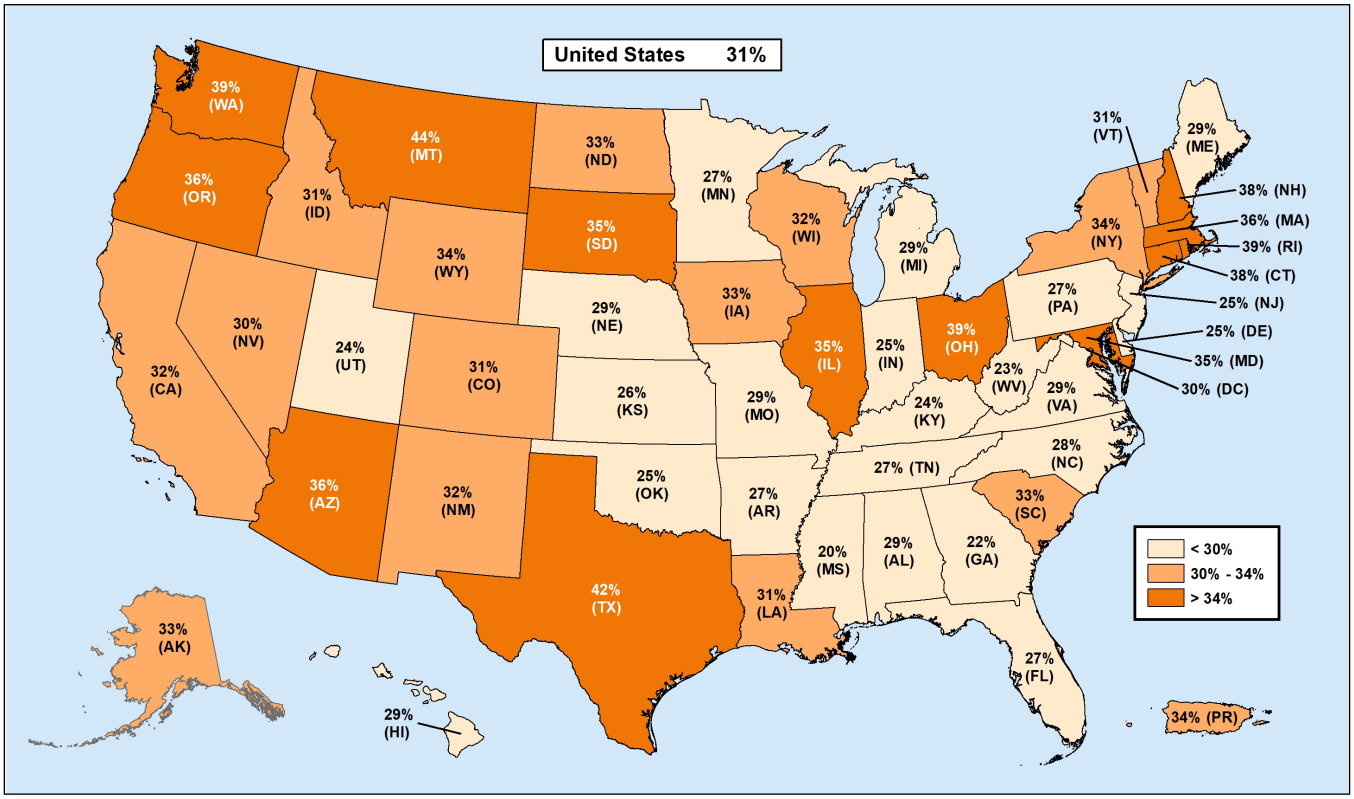
Source: FARS 2020 Final File, 2021 ARF
*Includes drivers involved in fatal crashes when time of day was unknown.
Note: NHTSA estimates BACs when alcohol test results are unknown.
Daytime – 6 a.m. to 5:59 p.m.
Nighttime – 6 p.m. to 5:59 a.m.
Weekday – Monday 6 a.m. to Friday 5:59 p.m. (4.5 days)
Weekend – Friday 6 p.m. to Monday 5:59 a.m. (2.5 days)

State

Figure 5 contains a color-coded map of the percentages of alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities by State in 2021. Table 4 shows traffic fatalities by State and the highest driver BAC in the crashes in 2021.

- Alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities were highest in Texas (1,906), followed by California (1,370) and Florida (1,019), and lowest in the District of Columbia (12).
- The percentages of alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities among total traffic fatalities in States ranged from a high of 44 percent (Montana) to a low of 20 percent (Mississippi), compared to the national average of 31 percent.
- The percentages of fatalities in crashes involving a driver with a BAC of .15 g/dL or higher ranged from a high of 31 percent (Montana) to a low of 13 percent (Mississippi), compared to the national average of 21 percent.

Figure 5. Percentages of Alcohol-Impaired-Driving Traffic Fatalities, by State, 2021



Source: FARS 2021 ARF
Note: NHTSA estimates BACs when alcohol test results are unknown.

Table 4. Traffic Fatalities, by State and Highest Driver BAC in the Crash, 2021

State	Total Fatalities*	No Alcohol (BAC=.00 g/dL)		BAC=.01+ g/dL		Alcohol-Impaired			
						BAC=.08+ g/dL		BAC=.15+ g/dL	
	Number	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Alabama	983	656	67%	328	33%	281	29%	177	18%
Alaska	67	39	58%	26	39%	22	33%	14	21%
Arizona	1,180	698	59%	482	41%	421	36%	275	23%
Arkansas	693	459	66%	234	34%	185	27%	116	17%
California	4,285	2,658	62%	1,619	38%	1,370	32%	880	21%
Colorado	691	433	63%	256	37%	216	31%	158	23%
Connecticut	298	162	54%	135	45%	112	38%	73	25%
Delaware	136	96	70%	39	29%	34	25%	21	15%
District of Columbia	41	25	62%	15	36%	12	30%	9	22%
Florida	3,738	2,562	69%	1,176	31%	1,019	27%	688	18%
Georgia	1,797	1,318	73%	473	26%	391	22%	272	15%
Hawaii	94	57	60%	38	40%	28	29%	14	15%
Idaho	271	176	65%	91	33%	85	31%	65	24%
Illinois	1,334	785	59%	547	41%	461	35%	332	25%
Indiana	932	649	70%	283	30%	234	25%	153	16%
Iowa	356	206	58%	146	41%	118	33%	78	22%
Kansas	424	299	70%	125	30%	109	26%	76	18%
Kentucky	806	583	72%	221	27%	190	24%	136	17%
Louisiana	972	622	64%	349	36%	299	31%	203	21%
Maine	153	94	61%	60	39%	45	29%	35	23%
Maryland	561	335	60%	226	40%	195	35%	124	22%
Massachusetts	417	243	58%	172	41%	150	36%	95	23%
Michigan	1,136	751	66%	385	34%	325	29%	219	19%
Minnesota	488	335	69%	152	31%	130	27%	90	18%
Mississippi	772	589	76%	182	24%	155	20%	102	13%
Missouri	1,016	655	65%	358	35%	290	29%	196	19%
Montana	239	126	53%	111	47%	104	44%	74	31%
Nebraska	221	142	64%	79	36%	65	29%	44	20%
Nevada	385	243	63%	142	37%	116	30%	80	21%
New Hampshire	118	65	55%	53	45%	45	38%	31	26%
New Jersey	699	479	69%	220	31%	178	25%	114	16%
New Mexico	481	301	63%	176	37%	154	32%	111	23%
New York	1,157	705	61%	452	39%	388	34%	249	21%
North Carolina	1,663	1,132	68%	531	32%	466	28%	300	18%
North Dakota	101	63	62%	38	38%	33	33%	26	25%
Ohio	1,354	744	55%	610	45%	531	39%	373	28%
Oklahoma	762	523	69%	236	31%	192	25%	139	18%
Oregon	599	335	56%	263	44%	215	36%	142	24%
Pennsylvania	1,230	834	68%	395	32%	337	27%	221	18%
Rhode Island	63	34	54%	29	46%	24	39%	18	29%
South Carolina	1,198	745	62%	453	38%	401	33%	282	24%
South Dakota	148	86	58%	62	42%	52	35%	43	29%
Tennessee	1,327	907	68%	420	32%	355	27%	247	19%
Texas	4,498	2,320	52%	2,169	48%	1,906	42%	1,301	29%
Utah	328	238	73%	89	27%	79	24%	52	16%
Vermont	74	47	64%	27	36%	23	31%	14	19%
Virginia	973	637	65%	335	34%	281	29%	187	19%
Washington	670	369	55%	299	45%	262	39%	181	27%
West Virginia	280	197	70%	82	29%	65	23%	47	17%
Wisconsin	620	399	64%	221	36%	199	32%	125	20%
Wyoming	110	69	62%	41	38%	38	34%	29	27%
U.S. Total	**42,939**	**27,221**	**63%**	**15,650**	**36%**	**13,384**	**31%**	**9,027**	**21%**
Puerto Rico	337	191	57%	146	43%	116	34%	73	22%

Source: FARS 2021 ARF

*Includes fatalities in crashes in which there was no driver (includes motorcycle riders) present.

Notes: Percentages are computed based on unrounded estimates. NHTSA estimates BACs when alcohol test results are unknown.

Important Safety Reminders

The best way to prevent alcohol-impaired driving is to never drive after drinking. When your plans involve drinking alcohol, follow these safety tips. Take a taxi or ride-hailing service to your destination to stop yourself from driving home after drinking.

- Always plan your safe ride home before you go out, choose a non-drinking friend as a designated driver.
- If you do drink, call a taxi, a ride-hailing service, or a sober friend to take you home.

Ways to support your friends and family:

- If you're hosting a party where alcohol is served, ask your guests to plan ahead and designate a sober driver before they arrive; offer alcohol-free beverages, and make sure all guests get home safely.
- If someone you know has been drinking, don't let them drive. Take their keys and arrange a sober ride home for them or have them stay for the night.

Ways to protect yourself and others against impaired drivers:

- Always wear your seat belt — it's your best defense against impaired drivers.
- If you see an impaired driver on the road, pull over and contact local law enforcement. Your actions could help save someone's life.

— NHTSA's Research and Program Development

Fatality Analysis Reporting System

FARS contains data on every fatal motor vehicle traffic crash within the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. To be included in FARS, a traffic crash must involve a motor vehicle traveling on a trafficway customarily open to the public, and must result in the death of a vehicle occupant or a nonoccupant within 30 days of the crash. The Annual Report File (ARF) is the FARS data file associated with the most recent available year, which is subject to change when it is finalized the following year to the final version known as the Final File. The additional time between the ARF and the Final File provides the opportunity for submission of important variable data requiring outside sources, which may lead to changes in the final counts. More information on FARS can be found at www.nhtsa.gov/crash-data-systems/fatality-analysis-reporting-system.

The updated final counts for the previous data year will be reflected with the release of the recent year's ARF. For example, along with the release of the 2021 ARF, the 2020 Final File was released to replace the 2020 ARF. The final fatality count in motor vehicle traffic crashes for 2020 was 39,007, which was updated from 38,824 in the 2020 ARF. The number of alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities from the 2020 Final File was 11,718, which was updated from 11,654 from the 2020 ARF.

Product Information Catalog and Vehicle Listing (vPIC) Vehicle Classification

Historically, vehicle type classifications (e.g., passenger cars, light trucks, large trucks, motorcycles, buses) from FARS used for analysis and data reporting were based on analyst-coded vehicle body type. NHTSA did not have manufacturer authoritative data to assist in vehicle body type coding. NCSA has developed a Product Information Catalog and Vehicle Listing (vPIC) dataset that is being used to decode VINs (Vehicle Identification Numbers) and extract vehicle information. Details of vehicles (make, model, body class, etc.) involved in crashes are obtained from vPIC via VIN-linkage. The VIN-derived information from vPIC uses the manufacturer's classification of body class, which allows for more accurate vehicle type analysis.

The vPIC-based analysis data are available beginning with 2020 FARS data file. Starting with the release of 2021 FARS data, all vehicle-related analysis for 2020 and later years will be based on vPIC vehicle classification. As a result, the 2020 and later-year vehicle type classifications are not comparable to 2019 and earlier-year vehicle type classifications. This change affects any analysis with a vehicle component to it. More information on vPIC can be found at https://vpic.nhtsa.dot.gov/.

The suggested APA format citation for this document is:

National Center for Statistics and Analysis. (2023, June). *Alcohol-impaired driving: 2021 data* (Traffic Safety Facts. Report No. DOT HS 813 450). National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

For More Information:

Motor vehicle traffic crash data are available from the National Center for Statistics and Analysis (NCSA), NSA-230. NCSA can be contacted at NCSARequests@dot.gov or 800-934-8517. NCSA programs can be found at www.nhtsa.gov/data. To report a motor vehicle safety-related problem or to inquire about safety information, contact the Vehicle Safety Hotline at 888-327-4236 or https://www.nhtsa.gov/report-a-safety-problem.

The following data tools and resources can be found at https://cdan.nhtsa.gov/.

- Fatal Motor Vehicle Traffic Crash Data Visualizations
- Motor Vehicle Traffic Crash Databook
- Fatality and Injury Reporting System Tool (FIRST)
- State Traffic Safety Information (STSI)
- Traffic Safety Facts Annual Report Tables
- FARS Data Tables (FARS Encyclopedia)
- Crash Viewer
- Product Information Catalog and Vehicle Listing (vPIC)
- FARS, NASS GES, CRSS, NASS Crashworthiness Data System (CDS), and Crash Investigation Sampling System (CISS) data can be downloaded for further analysis.

Other fact sheets available from NCSA:

- Bicyclists and Other Cyclists
- Children
- Large Trucks
- Motorcycles
- Occupant Protection in Passenger Vehicles
- Older Population
- Passenger Vehicles
- Pedestrians
- Rural/Urban Comparison of Motor Vehicle Traffic Fatalities
- School-Transportation-Related Crashes
- Speeding
- State Alcohol-Impaired-Driving Estimates
- State Traffic Data
- Summary of Motor Vehicle Traffic Crashes
- Young Drivers

Detailed data on motor vehicle traffic crashes are published annually in *Traffic Safety Facts: A Compilation of Motor Vehicle Traffic Crash Data*. The fact sheets and Traffic Safety Facts annual report can be found at https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/.

U.S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration