

Traffic Safety Facts

Crash • Stats

DOT HS 811 172

A Brief Statistical Summary

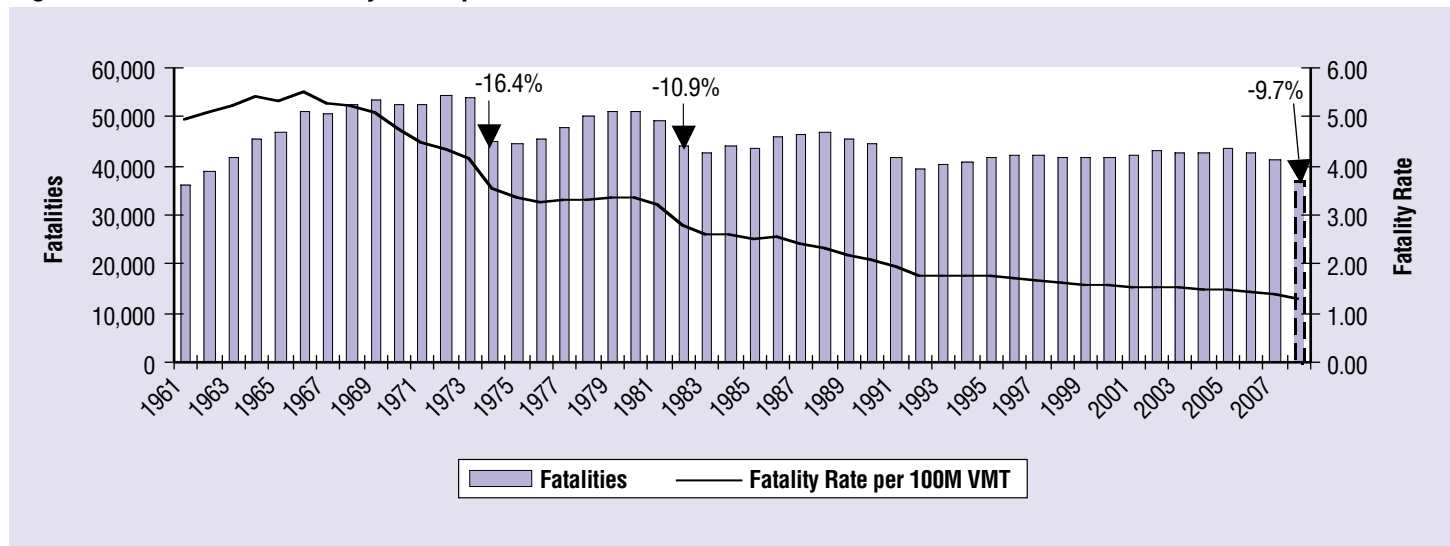
June 2009

2008 Traffic Safety Annual Assessment – Highlights

The number of traffic fatalities in 2008 reached its lowest level since 1961. There was a 9.7-percent decline in the number of people killed in motor vehicle crashes in the United States, from 41,259 in 2007 to 37,261, according to NHTSA's 2008 Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) (see Figure 1). This decline of 3,998 fatalities is the largest annual reduction in terms of both number and percentage since 1982. More than 90 percent of this reduction was in passenger vehicles, which make up over 90 percent of the fleet of registered vehicles. Passenger car occupant fatalities declined for the sixth consecutive year, and are at their lowest level since NHTSA be-

gan collecting fatality crash data in 1975. Light-truck occupant fatalities dropped for the third consecutive year, and are at their lowest level since 1998. However, motorcyclist fatalities continued their 11-year increase, reaching 5,290 in 2008, accounting for 14 percent of the total fatalities. Data from previous years has shown that while motorcycle registrations have increased, the increase in motorcyclist fatalities has increased more steeply. The data (see Table 1) shows a decrease in fatalities for all person types except motorcyclists and pedalcyclists.

Figure 1: Fatalities and Fatality Rates per 100 Million VMT From 1961 - 2008



1961-1974: National Center for Health Statistics, HEW, and State Accident Summaries (Adjusted to 30-Day Traffic Deaths by NHTSA); FARS 1975-2007 (Final), 2008 Annual Report File (ARF); Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT): Federal Highway Administration.

Table 1: Occupants and Nonoccupants Killed and Injured in Traffic Crashes

Description	Killed				Injured			
	2007	2008	Change	% Change	2007	2008	Change	% Change
Total*	41,259	37,261	-3,998	-9.7%	2,491,000	2,346,000	-145,000	-5.8%
Occupants								
Passenger Vehicles	29,072	25,351	-3,721	-13%	2,221,000	2,072,000	-149,000	-6.7%
Passenger Cars	16,614	14,587	-2,027	-12%	1,379,000	1,304,000	-75,000	-5.4%
Light Trucks	12,458	10,764	-1,694	-14%	841,000	768,000	-73,000	-8.7%
Large Trucks	805	677	-128	-16%	23,000	23,000	0	0.0%
Motorcycles	5,174	5,290	+116	+2.2%	103,000	96,000	-7,000	-6.8%
Nonoccupants								
Pedestrians	4,699	4,378	-321	-6.8%	70,000	69,000	-1,000	-1.4%
Pedalcyclists	701	716	+15	+2.1%	43,000	52,000	+9,000	+21%
Other/Unknown	158	188	+30	---	10,000	9,000	-1,000	---

Source: Fatalities - FARS 2007 (Final), 2008 (ARF), Injured - NASS GES 2007, 2008 Annual Files

* Total includes occupants of buses and other/unknown occupants not shown in table.

Changes in injury estimates shown in bold are statistically significant.

In 2008, an estimated 2.35 million people were injured in motor vehicle traffic crashes, compared to 2.49 million in 2007. The estimated number of people injured in crashes is at its lowest point since NHTSA began collecting injury data in 1988. This constitutes the ninth consecutive yearly reduction

in people injured (Figure 2). The number of people injured increased only for pedalcyclists. The number of motorcyclists injured showed the first decrease since 1998, a reduction of 6.8 percent.

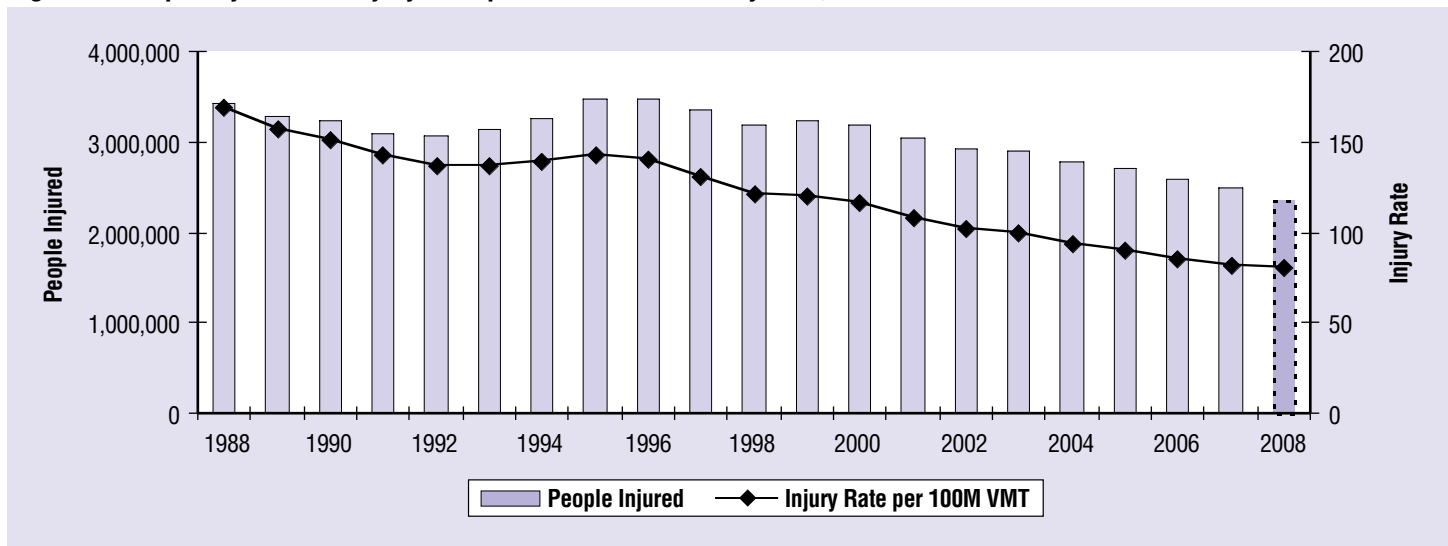
Figure 2: People Injured and Injury Rate per 100 Million VMT by Year, 1988-2008

Table 2: Fatality and Injury Rates per 100 Million VMT

	2007	2008	Change	% Change
Fatality Rate	1.36	1.27	-0.09	-6.6%
Injury Rate	82	80	-2	-2.4%

Source: FARS, GES, and FHWA VMT (April 2009 TVT)

The fatality rate per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT) fell to a historic low of 1.27 in 2008 (Table 2). The overall injury rate also declined, by 2.4 percent. The 2008 rates are based on the latest (April 2009) Traffic Volume Trend (TVT) estimates from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Overall 2008 VMT decreased by 3.4 percent from 2007 VMT – from 3,029,822 million to 2,925,503 million. VMT data will be updated when FHWA officially releases the 2008 Annual Highway Statistics later in fall 2009. It is important to note that while there has been a consistent decrease in VMT since December 2007, there has been an even steeper decline in the number of fatalities, as evidenced by the continued drop in the fatality rate. While the reduction in total fatalities may be due in part to a decrease in miles traveled, there are many other additional factors that affect the outcome from motor vehicle crashes.

Table 3: Alcohol-Impaired Driving Fatalities*

	2007	2008	Change	% Change
Fatalities	13,041	11,773	-1,268	-9.7%

Source: FARS 2007 (Final), 2008 (ARF)

* See definition in text.

Alcohol-impaired driving fatalities (fatalities in crashes involving a driver or motorcycle rider [operator] with a blood alcohol concentration [BAC] of .08 grams per deciliter [g/dL] or greater) declined by 9.7 percent in 2008 (Table 3).

Table 4: Number of Crashes, by Crash Type

Crash Type	2007	2008	Change	% Change
Fatal Crashes	37,435	34,017	-3,418	-9.1%
Nonfatal Crashes	5,987,000	5,777,000	-210,000	-3.5%
Injury Crashes	1,711,000	1,630,000	-81,000	-4.7%
Property-Damage-Only	4,275,000	4,146,000	-129,000	-3.0%
Total Crashes	6,024,000	5,811,000	-213,000	-3.5%

Source: FARS 2007 (Final), 2008 (ARF)

Changes shown in bold are statistically significant.

The number of crashes, by crash type, is presented in Table 4. Note that the percentage decline in the total number of crashes, 3.5 percent, closely matches the percentage decline in overall VMT (-3.4%). The estimated declines in nonfatal, injury, property-damage-only, and total crashes are all statistically significant.

Table 5: Passenger Vehicle Occupant Fatalities by Restraint Use and Time of Day

Type	2007		2008		Change	% Change
	#	%	#	%		
Fatalities	29,072	100	25,351	100	-3,721	-13%
Restraint Used	13,383	46	11,477	45	-1,906	-14%
Restraint Not Used	15,689	54	13,874	55	-1,815	-12%
Day	14,285	49	12,482	49	-1,803	-13%
Restraint Used	7,919	55	6,846	55	-1,073	-14%
Restraint Not Used	6,366	45	5,636	45	-730	-11%
Night	14,537	50	12,671	50	-1,866	-13%
Restraint Used	5,356	37	4,535	36	-821	-15%
Restraint Not Used	9,181	63	8,136	64	-1,045	-11%

Source: FARS 2007 (Final), 2008 (ARF); Day: 6 am to 5:59 pm; Night 6 pm to 5:59 am; Total fatalities include those at unknown time of day; unknown restraint use has been distributed proportionally across known use.

Among fatally injured passenger vehicle occupants, more than half (55%) of those killed in 2008 were unrestrained (Table 5). Almost two-thirds (64%) of those occupants killed

during the night were unrestrained, compared to 45 percent during the day.

Table 6: People Killed in Large-Truck Crashes

Type	2007	2008	Change	% Change
Truck Occupants	805	677	-128	-16%
Single-Vehicle	502	430	-72	-14%
Multivehicle	303	247	-56	-18%
Other Vehicle Occupants	3,608	3,139	-469	-13%
Nonoccupants	409	413	+4	1.0%
Total	4,822	4,229	-593	-12%

Source: FARS 2007 (Final), 2008 (ARF)

There was a 12-percent reduction in fatalities in crashes involving large trucks (Table 6), from 4,822 in 2007 down to 4,229 in 2008. This decrease of 593 fatalities is due primarily to the 469 fewer fatalities of occupants of other vehicles in these crashes.

Table 7: People Killed in Motor Vehicle Crashes, By Land Use

Roadway Function Class	2007	2008	Change	% Change
Rural	23,254	20,905	-2,349	-10%
Urban	17,908	15,983	-1,925	-11%
Unknown	97	373	276	285%
Total	41,259	37,261	-3,998	-9.7%

Source: FARS 2007 (Final), 2008 (ARF)

Fatalities in rural crashes declined by 10 percent (Table 7); those in urban crashes by slightly more, 11 percent. FHWA estimates for 2008 show rural VMT down by 4.1 percent, and urban down by 3.1 percent.

Table 8 compares the total number of fatalities, as well as the number and percent of alcohol-impaired driving fatalities, for 2007 and 2008, the change in the number of fatalities, and the percentage change for each State, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. Forty-six States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico had reductions in the number of fatalities. Five States had reductions of over 200 fatalities, led by California with 561 fewer fatalities than last year.

North Carolina (-243), Florida (-235), Illinois (-205), and Virginia (-203) were the other States with more than 200 fewer fatalities in 2008. Alaska (-24%), District of Columbia (-23%), Hawaii (-22%), followed by Virginia and Wisconsin (-20%), had the greatest percentage reductions. Only four States saw increases in overall fatalities, each with an increase of 10 or fewer fatalities - New Hampshire (+10), Wyoming (+9), Vermont (+7) and Delaware (+4).

Nationwide, the percentage of alcohol-impaired driving fatalities remained the same at 32 percent. Forty-three States, DC, and Puerto Rico saw a decline in the number of alcohol-impaired driving fatalities. Only 7 States saw an increase (Kansas, Oklahoma, Wyoming, New Hampshire, Idaho, Colorado, and Rhode Island). Two States had more than 100 fewer alcohol-impaired driving fatalities in 2008 - Wisconsin (-106) and California (-103).

Additional State-level data is available at NCSA's State Traffic Safety Information (STSI) Web site, which can be accessed at: <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/departments/nrd-30/ncsa/STSI/USA%20WEB%20REPORT.HTM>

NHTSA's Fatality Analysis Reporting System is a census of all crashes of motor vehicles traveling on public roadways in which a person died within 30 days of the crash. Data for the National Automotive Sampling System (NASS) General Estimates System (GES) comes from a nationally representative sample of police-reported motor vehicle crashes of all types, from property-damage-only to fatal.

The information in this Crash•Stats represents only major findings from the 2008 FARS and GES files. Additional information and details will be available at a later date. Internet users may access this Crash•Stats and other general information on traffic safety at: www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/CATS/.



Table 8: Total and Alcohol-Impaired Driving Fatalities, 2007 and 2008, by State

State	2007			2008			2007 to 2008 Change			
	Total Fatalities	Alcohol-Impaired Driving Fatalities		Total Fatalities	Alcohol-Impaired Driving Fatalities		Total Fatalities		Alcohol-Impaired Driving Fatalities	
		#	%		#	%	Change	% Change	Change	% Change
Alabama	1,110	377	34%	966	315	33%	-144	-13%	-62	-16%
Alaska	82	25	30%	62	21	33%	-20	-24%	-4	-16%
Arizona	1,071	337	32%	937	266	28%	-134	-13%	-71	-21%
Arkansas	649	181	28%	600	171	28%	-49	-7.6%	-10	-5.5%
California	3,995	1,132	28%	3,434	1,029	30%	-561	-14%	-103	-9.1%
Colorado	554	167	30%	548	173	32%	-6	-1.1%	+6	+3.6%
Connecticut	296	111	37%	264	86	32%	-32	-11%	-25	-23%
Delaware	117	47	41%	121	45	37%	+4	+3.4%	-2	-4.3%
Dist of Columbia	44	16	37%	34	9	26%	-10	-23%	-7	-44%
Florida	3,213	917	29%	2,978	875	29%	-235	-7.3%	-42	-4.6%
Georgia	1,641	445	27%	1,493	416	28%	-148	-9.0%	-29	-6.5%
Hawaii	138	44	32%	107	42	39%	-31	-22%	-2	-4.5%
Idaho	252	71	28%	232	78	34%	-20	-7.9%	+7	+10%
Illinois	1,248	439	35%	1,043	362	35%	-205	-16%	-77	-18%
Indiana	898	224	25%	814	208	26%	-84	-9.4%	-16	-7.1%
Iowa	446	108	24%	412	89	22%	-34	-7.6%	-19	-18%
Kansas	416	109	26%	385	145	38%	-31	-7.5%	+36	+33%
Kentucky	864	212	25%	826	200	24%	-38	-4.4%	-12	-5.7%
Louisiana	993	375	38%	912	338	37%	-81	-8.2%	-37	-10%
Maine	183	66	36%	155	43	28%	-28	-15%	-23	-35%
Maryland	614	178	29%	591	152	26%	-23	-3.7%	-26	-15%
Massachusetts	434	155	36%	363	124	34%	-71	-16%	-31	-20%
Michigan	1,087	304	28%	980	282	29%	-107	-9.8%	-22	-7.2%
Minnesota	510	173	34%	456	135	30%	-54	-11%	-38	-22%
Mississippi	884	316	36%	783	266	34%	-101	-11%	-50	-16%
Missouri	992	333	34%	960	310	32%	-32	-3.2%	-23	-6.9%
Montana	277	105	38%	229	91	40%	-48	-17%	-14	-13%
Nebraska	256	77	30%	208	55	27%	-48	-19%	-22	-29%
Nevada	373	118	32%	324	107	33%	-49	-13%	-11	-9.3%
New Hampshire	129	34	26%	139	45	32%	+10	+7.8%	+11	+32%
New Jersey	724	201	28%	590	154	26%	-134	-19%	-47	-23%
New Mexico	413	132	32%	366	105	29%	-47	-11%	-27	-20%
New York	1,332	377	28%	1,231	341	28%	-101	-7.6%	-36	-9.5%
North Carolina	1,676	497	30%	1,433	423	30%	-243	-14%	-74	-15%
North Dakota	111	53	48%	104	47	46%	-7	-6.3%	-6	-11%
Ohio	1,255	389	31%	1,190	356	30%	-65	-5.2%	-33	-8.5%
Oklahoma	766	223	29%	749	244	33%	-17	-2.2%	+21	+9.4%
Oregon	455	148	33%	416	136	33%	-39	-8.6%	-12	-8.1%
Pennsylvania	1,491	504	34%	1,468	496	34%	-23	-1.5%	-8	-1.6%
Rhode Island	69	22	32%	65	25	38%	-4	-5.8%	+3	+14%
South Carolina	1,077	464	43%	920	403	44%	-157	-15%	-61	-13%
South Dakota	146	44	30%	119	34	29%	-27	-18%	-10	-23%
Tennessee	1,211	377	31%	1,035	327	32%	-176	-15%	-50	-13%
Texas	3,466	1,333	38%	3,382	1,269	38%	-84	-2.4%	-64	-4.8%
Utah	299	56	19%	275	46	17%	-24	-8.0%	-10	-18%
Vermont	66	22	34%	73	12	16%	+7	+11%	-10	-45%
Virginia	1,027	303	29%	824	294	36%	-203	-20%	-9	-3.0%
Washington	571	195	34%	521	182	35%	-50	-8.8%	-13	-6.7%
West Virginia	432	138	32%	380	128	34%	-52	-12%	-10	-7.2%
Wisconsin	756	314	42%	605	208	34%	-151	-20%	-106	-34%
Wyoming	150	50	33%	159	67	42%	+9	+6.0%	+17	+34%
National	41,259	13,041	32%	37,261	11,773	32%	-3,998	-9.7%	-1,268	-9.7%
Puerto Rico	452	142	31%	399	132	33%	-53	-12%	-10	-7.0%

Source: FARS 2007 (Final), 2008 Annual Report File (ARF)