



Preview of Motor Vehicle Traffic Fatalities In 2019

Results from the 2019 Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) show that the number of motor vehicle traffic fatalities in the United States declined from 2018. This is the third consecutive year in which traffic fatalities have declined after reaching a recent high of 37,806 in 2016. The estimated vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in 2019 is based on June 2020 traffic volume trends (TVT) from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).¹ With an expected increase in volume of 28.8 billion VMT in 2019 (a 0.9% increase from 2018), the estimated

fatality rate per 100 million VMT in 2019 is 1.10 (Figure 1). This fatality rate declined by 3.5 percent from 1.14 in 2018. Results in Table 1 show a general decline in traffic fatalities by person type, except for SUV occupants (+3.4%), light-truck occupants (+0.2%), and large-truck² occupants (+0.2%). All data comparisons are based on the updated FARS 2018 Final File and the 2019 Annual Report File (ARF). These FARS files and alcohol files will be released later this fall.

Table 1
Traffic Fatalities, by Person Type, 2018-2019

Description	2018	2019	Change	Percentage Change
Total Fatalities	36,835	36,096	-739	-2.0%
Occupant Fatalities				
Total Occupant Fatalities*	24,332	23,744	-588	-2.4%
Passenger Vehicles	22,845	22,215	-630	-2.8%
Passenger Cars	12,888	12,239	-649	-5.0%
Light Trucks**	9,957	9,976	+19	+0.2%
—SUVs	4,554	4,709	+155	+3.4%
—Pickups	4,267	4,194	-73	-1.7%
—Vans	1,081	1,017	-64	-5.9%
Large Trucks	890	892	+2	+0.2%
Motorcyclist Fatalities				
Motorcyclists	5,038	5,014	-24	-0.5%
Nonoccupant Fatalities				
Total Nonoccupant Fatalities***	7,465	7,338	-127	-1.7%
Pedestrians	6,374	6,205	-169	-2.7%
Pedalcyclists	871	846	-25	-2.9%

Source: FARS 2018 Final File, 2019 ARF

*Includes occupant fatalities in buses and other/unknown vehicle types.

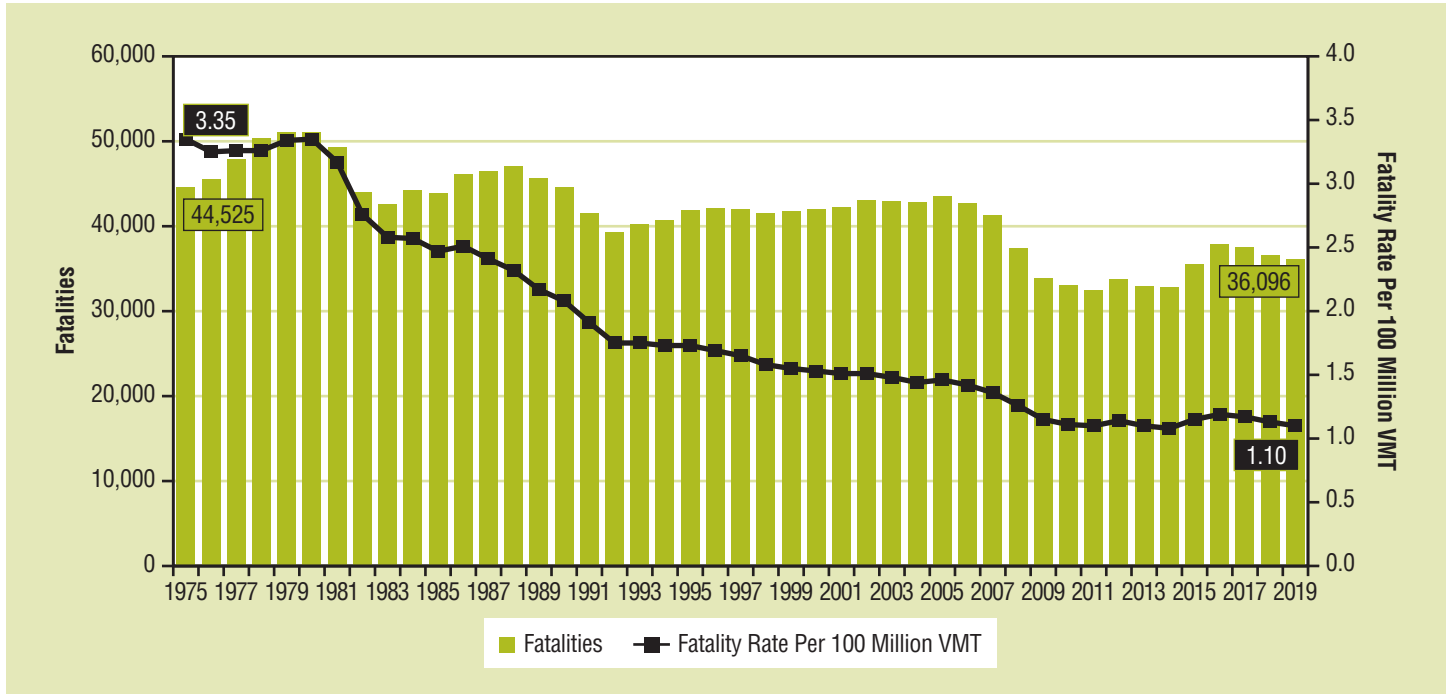
**Includes occupant fatalities in other/unknown light-truck vehicle types.

***Includes other/unknown nonoccupant fatalities.

¹ VMT will be updated when FHWA releases the 2019 Annual Highway Statistics later this year.

² Large trucks include both commercial and non-commercial trucks over 10,000 pounds.

Figure 1
Fatalities and Fatality Rate per 100 Million VMT, 1975-2019



Sources: FARS 1975-2018 Final File, 2019 ARF; 1975-2018 VMT – FHWA's Annual Highway Statistics; 2019 VMT – FHWA's June 2020 TVT

Table 2 presents a summary of changes in traffic fatalities by crash characteristics from 2018 to 2019. Of these characteristics, the only increases were found in intersection fatalities (by 0.3%) and rural fatalities (by 0.1%).

Urban fatalities declined by 4.0 percent, roadway departure fatalities declined by 3.7 percent, and speeding-related fatalities also declined by 1.1 percent.

Table 2
Traffic Fatalities, by Crash Characteristics, 2018-2019

Description	2018	2019	Change	Percentage Change
Fatalities by Land Use*				
Rural Fatalities	16,323	16,340	+17	+0.1%
Urban Fatalities	20,408	19,595	-813	-4.0%
Fatalities in Large-Truck Crashes				
Large-Truck Crash Fatalities	5,006	5,005	-1	-0.0%
Fatalities in Speeding-Related Crashes				
Speeding-Related Fatalities	9,579	9,478	-101	-1.1%
Fatalities in Intersection** Crashes				
Intersection Fatalities	10,148	10,180	+32	+0.3%
Fatalities in Roadway Departure*** Crashes				
Roadway Departure Fatalities	18,632	17,939	-693	-3.7%

Source: FARS 2018 Final File, 2019 ARF

*Land use was unknown for 104 fatalities in 2018 and 161 fatalities in 2019.

**Intersection as defined by FHWA: Intersection or intersection-related; driveway access or driveway-access-related.

***Roadway departure as defined by FHWA: A crash in which a vehicle crosses an edge line, a centerline, or leaves the traveled way.

Table 3 presents the number of passenger vehicle occupant fatalities by restraint use from 2018 to 2019. Passenger vehicles include passenger cars and light trucks. Based on known restraint use, the percentage

of unrestrained passenger vehicle occupant fatalities stayed the same at 47 percent in both years, even though the number of fatalities by restraint use declined from 2018 to 2019.

Table 3
Passenger Vehicle Occupant Fatalities, by Restraint Use, 2018-2019

Year	Restraint Use						Total		Percent Restrained Based on Known Use	Percent Unrestrained Based on Known Use
	Restrained		Unrestrained		Unknown					
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent		
2018	11,055	48%	9,845	43%	1,945	9%	22,845	100%	53%	47%
2019	10,815	49%	9,466	43%	1,934	9%	22,215	100%	53%	47%

Source: FARS 2018 Final File, 2019 ARF

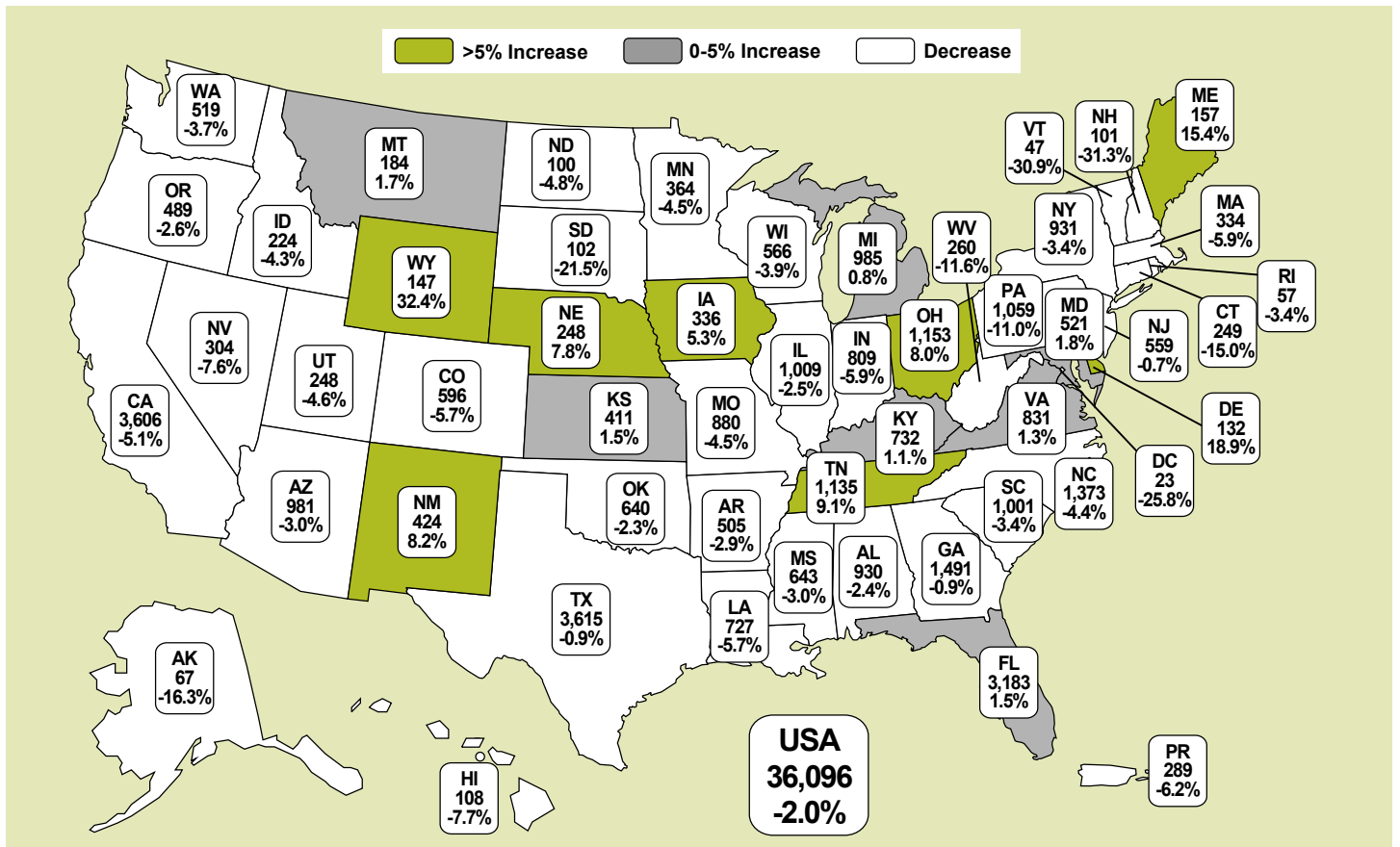
Figure 2 displays a map of 2019 traffic fatalities by State and the percentage changes from 2018. Table 4 contains the 2018 and 2019 total number of traffic fatalities, the change in the number of fatalities from 2018 to 2019, and the respective percentage change for each State, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico (Puerto Rico is not included in the U.S. total). Table 4 also contains the total number of fatalities for 2018 and 2019 by State and person type.

In summary for 2019:

■ Fatalities decreased in 35 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico from 2018.

- ◆ States with largest reduction of fatalities: California (-192) and Pennsylvania (-131)
- ◆ States with largest percentage reduction: New Hampshire (-31.3%) and Vermont (-30.9%)
- Fatalities increased in 15 States from 2018.
- ◆ States with largest increase of fatalities: Tennessee (95) and Ohio (85)
- ◆ States with largest percentage increase: Wyoming (32.4%) and Delaware (18.9%)

Figure 2
2019 Traffic Fatalities and Percentage Changes from 2018, by State



Source: FARS 2018 Final File, 2019 ARF
 Note: Puerto Rico is not included in the USA total.

Table 4
Traffic Fatalities, by State and Person Type, 2018-2019

State	Total Fatalities		Change from 2018 to 2019		Passenger Car Occupants		Light-Truck Occupants		Other/Unknown Vehicle Occupants*	
	2018	2019	Number	Percentage	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019
Alabama	953	930	-23	-2.4%	411	362	305	311	36	38
Alaska	80	67	-13	-16.3%	15	17	30	31	8	5
Arizona	1,011	981	-30	-3.0%	284	236	228	230	74	90
Arkansas	520	505	-15	-2.9%	166	165	186	185	35	24
California	3,798	3,606	-192	-5.1%	1,291	1,189	732	711	71	76
Colorado	632	596	-36	-5.7%	177	168	225	202	15	27
Connecticut	293	249	-44	-15.0%	123	84	49	53	11	8
Delaware	111	132	21	18.9%	35	45	27	27	2	2
District of Columbia	31	23	-8	-25.8%	7	7	1	3	0	0
Florida	3,135	3,183	48	1.5%	995	974	586	611	83	95
Georgia	1,505	1,491	-14	-0.9%	541	549	453	440	60	60
Hawaii	117	108	-9	-7.7%	16	21	21	25	0	1
Idaho	234	224	-10	-4.3%	73	66	79	100	23	15
Illinois	1,035	1,009	-26	-2.5%	405	380	263	263	54	38
Indiana	860	809	-51	-5.9%	331	302	230	251	38	30
Iowa	319	336	17	5.3%	117	102	107	135	23	24
Kansas	405	411	6	1.5%	136	148	141	167	29	29
Kentucky	724	732	8	1.1%	288	306	226	220	29	33
Louisiana	771	727	-44	-5.7%	242	238	226	220	29	36
Maine	136	157	21	15.4%	53	53	48	50	4	8
Maryland	512	521	9	1.8%	197	203	101	95	12	13
Massachusetts	355	334	-21	-5.9%	135	116	68	82	12	8
Michigan	977	985	8	0.8%	369	370	274	274	23	33
Minnesota	381	364	-17	-4.5%	135	134	117	104	16	19
Mississippi	663	643	-20	-3.0%	261	288	230	216	35	24
Missouri	921	880	-41	-4.5%	350	304	305	270	53	54
Montana	181	184	3	1.7%	43	51	89	65	11	24
Nebraska	230	248	18	7.8%	87	90	78	101	18	10
Nevada	329	304	-25	-7.6%	101	91	71	67	7	12
New Hampshire	147	101	-46	-31.3%	54	36	44	25	7	0
New Jersey	563	559	-4	-0.7%	201	189	96	71	20	19
New Mexico	392	424	32	8.2%	109	107	113	140	29	30
New York	964	931	-33	-3.4%	302	256	175	182	33	35
North Carolina	1,436	1,373	-63	-4.4%	560	520	398	373	42	40
North Dakota	105	100	-5	-4.8%	22	24	54	45	5	12
Ohio	1,068	1,153	85	8.0%	458	446	270	334	38	53
Oklahoma	655	640	-15	-2.3%	230	210	215	225	38	35
Oregon	502	489	-13	-2.6%	156	167	155	148	18	22
Pennsylvania	1,190	1,059	-131	-11.0%	460	384	288	281	56	49
Rhode Island	59	57	-2	-3.4%	18	26	12	9	2	0
South Carolina	1,036	1,001	-35	-3.4%	373	346	304	282	27	31
South Dakota	130	102	-28	-21.5%	43	28	51	44	9	7
Tennessee	1,040	1,135	95	9.1%	392	440	291	337	42	44
Texas	3,648	3,615	-33	-0.9%	1,132	1,097	1,214	1,182	173	174
Utah	260	248	-12	-4.6%	84	76	72	73	16	16
Vermont	68	47	-21	-30.9%	34	22	18	10	3	4
Virginia	820	831	11	1.3%	333	328	220	231	32	32
Washington	539	519	-20	-3.7%	184	171	143	132	13	12
West Virginia	294	260	-34	-11.6%	104	78	93	91	29	29
Wisconsin	589	566	-23	-3.9%	230	194	184	184	30	31
Wyoming	111	147	36	32.4%	25	35	51	68	14	18
U.S. Total**	36,835	36,096	-739	-2.0%	12,888	12,239	9,957	9,976	1,487	1,529
Puerto Rico	308	289	-19	-6.2%	90	98	44	40	4	5

Source: FARS 2018 Final File, 2019 ARF

*Includes occupant fatalities in large trucks and buses.

**Excludes Puerto Rico.

Table 4
Traffic Fatalities, by State and Person Type, 2018-2019 (continued)

State	Motorcyclists		Pedestrians		Pedalcyclists		Other/Unknown Nonoccupants	
	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019
Alabama	82	93	107	119	9	6	3	1
Alaska	12	6	14	6	0	2	1	0
Arizona	156	175	236	212	24	30	9	8
Arkansas	66	64	62	61	4	3	1	3
California	523	474	978	972	165	133	38	51
Colorado	103	103	89	73	22	20	1	3
Connecticut	49	46	59	54	1	3	1	1
Delaware	17	18	23	32	6	7	1	1
District of Columbia	8	3	11	9	3	1	1	0
Florida	575	591	706	713	161	161	29	38
Georgia	154	170	262	236	30	21	5	15
Hawaii	34	20	42	36	2	4	2	1
Idaho	38	25	17	12	2	4	2	2
Illinois	119	138	166	173	24	12	4	5
Indiana	117	127	114	73	22	16	8	10
Iowa	43	44	22	21	7	9	0	1
Kansas	65	41	28	16	5	8	1	2
Kentucky	95	92	73	73	10	5	3	3
Louisiana	79	87	164	118	29	22	2	6
Maine	23	27	6	16	2	2	0	1
Maryland	62	75	131	123	6	10	3	2
Massachusetts	58	46	77	77	4	5	1	0
Michigan	143	134	142	141	21	21	5	12
Minnesota	59	46	42	47	7	11	5	3
Mississippi	41	40	89	65	6	8	1	2
Missouri	113	123	95	109	2	14	3	6
Montana	21	23	15	17	2	3	0	1
Nebraska	23	25	24	20	0	1	0	1
Nevada	58	56	79	62	8	8	5	8
New Hampshire	28	30	9	10	2	0	3	0
New Jersey	53	85	173	175	18	13	2	7
New Mexico	46	55	83	83	11	9	1	0
New York	152	136	268	268	30	46	4	8
North Carolina	191	208	224	209	18	17	3	6
North Dakota	16	11	6	5	2	2	0	1
Ohio	145	162	127	124	22	25	8	9
Oklahoma	91	68	60	85	16	13	5	4
Oregon	85	57	77	81	9	12	2	2
Pennsylvania	165	176	197	147	18	14	6	8
Rhode Island	18	13	7	8	1	0	1	1
South Carolina	141	153	165	160	23	26	3	3
South Dakota	16	14	10	7	0	1	1	1
Tennessee	168	155	136	149	8	7	3	3
Texas	416	416	616	649	69	66	28	31
Utah	47	34	36	38	3	6	2	5
Vermont	7	8	6	3	0	0	0	0
Virginia	100	102	118	123	12	13	5	2
Washington	80	91	99	97	16	9	4	7
West Virginia	39	28	22	31	5	3	2	0
Wisconsin	83	85	56	56	4	14	2	2
Wyoming	15	15	6	11	0	0	0	0
U.S. Total**	5,038	5,014	6,374	6,205	871	846	220	287
Puerto Rico	44	34	116	100	9	9	1	3

Source: FARS 2018 Final File, 2019 ARF

**Excludes Puerto Rico.

Fatality Analysis Reporting System

The 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 crash must involve a motor vehicle traveling on a public trafficway 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 about a year later. The final version of the file is aptly 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.

The updated final counts for a given previous calendar year will be reflected with the release of the recent year’s ARF. For example, along with the release of the 2019 ARF, the 2018 Final File was also released to replace the previous year’s 2018 ARF. The final fatality count in motor vehicle crashes for 2018 was 36,835, which was updated from 36,560 from the 2018 ARF. These FARS files and alcohol files will be released later this fall.

The suggested APA format citation for this document is:

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This research note and other general information on highway traffic safety may be found at:
<https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/#/>.



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