
MINNESOTA MOTOR VEHICLE CRASH FACTS 2006, OVERVIEW

Minnesota Department of Public Safety Office of Traffic Safety

- In 2006 in Minnesota, there were 78,745 reported traffic crashes, 494 people killed, and more than 35,000 injured at an estimated \$1.5 billion economic cost to Minnesota. Traffic fatalities comprised:
 - 373 motorists, of which 194 (52 percent) were not wearing seat belts
 - 70 motorcyclists
 - 38 pedestrians
 - Eight bicyclists
 - Two ATV riders
 - Three snowmobilers
- Nearly 40 percent of those killed in crashes (196 out of 494) were people under age 30, yet persons under age 30 comprise only 25 percent of the state's licensed drivers.
- In fatal crashes, illegal or unsafe speed is cited most often as the contributing factor. Driver behavior cited most often as contributing factors for all crashes are, in order, driver inattention or distraction, failure to yield right-of-way, and illegal or unsafe speed.
- Traffic fatalities decreased for a third year in a row — a nearly 12 percent drop from 2005. Road deaths have decreased nearly one-quarter since 655 deaths in 2003. The 494 traffic fatalities in 2006 were the fewest since the end of World War II in 1945.
- The *Toward Zero Deaths* (TZD) goal of fewer than 500 traffic deaths was met two years earlier than the 2008 goal. The new TZD goal is 400 or fewer deaths by 2010.
- There were 3.8 million licensed drivers, 4.7 million registered vehicles, and nearly 57 billion miles of travel on state roads.
- The fatality rate in Minnesota per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT) decreased to less than one person (0.87) — one of the lowest rates in the nation. Fifty years ago in 1966, Minnesota's VMT rate was 5.52.
- There were 166 alcohol-related traffic deaths — the lowest since 1984 and a drop from 177 in 2005. However, impaired crashes contributed to fully one-third of all fatal crashes. The estimated economic cost of impaired crashes, deaths and injuries is nearly \$278 million.
- Of the 95 impaired drivers killed in crashes, nearly 70 percent were unbuckled.
- A record-high of nearly 42,000 motorists were arrested for DWI in Minnesota last year.
- Motorcycles represented 4 percent of registered vehicles, but the 70 rider deaths comprised 14 percent of the state's traffic fatalities, continuing a disturbing 10-year rise. Older and returning riders figure prominently among those killed.
- Geographically, 141 traffic fatalities (29 percent) occurred in the Twin Cities' seven-county metro which has 54 percent of the state's population while 353 deaths (71 percent) occurred in the 80 counties of greater Minnesota.