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## Rough roads cost Buffalo drivers \$1,873 annually, group says

By [Tom Precious](#) | News Albany Bureau | [@TomPreciousALB](#)

ALBANY – Those bumps and potholes you hit during your morning commute today cost you far more than aggravation.



The poor condition of roads in the Buffalo area are to blame for the \$1,873 a year Buffalo drivers spend making up for wear and tear on their vehicles, a Washington group said in a report released Thursday morning. (Derek Gee/Buffalo News) Derek Gee/Buffalo

Bad road conditions are at least partly responsible for costing New Yorkers \$25 billion per year in vehicle costs, including damage to vehicles, lost time and extra fuel because of traffic delays, according to a transportation research group.

Drivers in the Buffalo area spend \$1,873 annually as the result of vehicle wear and tear and fuel attributed to the poor roads, according to TRIP, a Washington group funded by insurers, unions and various highway-related industry groups.

The group released its report Thursday morning at a AAA regional headquarters in Albany, but [its latest study has been posted online](#).

The report comes as state funding for roads and bridge repairs around the state is shaping up to be a major battle in this year's state budget negotiations. Upstate lawmakers say Gov. Andrew Cuomo's newly released budget does not provide "parity" for the infrastructure improvements he is seeking for the New York

City area's transit system.

Statewide, the conditions of New York's roads and bridges are costing motorists \$24.9 billion annually because they are either deficient, congested or do not have the right safety features, TRIP says.

It said 38 percent of the state-run and local roads in urban areas are in poor condition and that nearly three-fifths of bridges are "structurally deficient or functionally obsolete."

In the Buffalo area, 47 percent of major roads are in poor or mediocre condition, the TRIP report says.

The report confirms what lawmakers across party lines, as well as passenger vehicle and truck drivers, have complained about for years: New York State's road and bridge infrastructure is old, and maintenance has not kept up with the crumbling and decaying conditions.

When additional wear-and-tear costs for vehicles are considered, bad roads and bridges cost the average driver in Buffalo \$390 a year. That is up from the \$300 estimate the group had for Buffalo in a report issued a year ago.

The typical Buffalo driver pays more for wear-and-tear costs because of bad roads than drivers in Rochester, Utica and Binghamton, TRIP said, but less than drivers in Albany, Poughkeepsie, Syracuse and New York City.

Of the major urban area roads, TRIP says only 21 percent can be considered in good condition.

Many of the 200,000 flat tire calls AAA received last year are blamed on road conditions, including potholes, said John Corlett, legislative committee chairman at AAA, in a statement. "This is a symptom of the lack of adequate investment in roads," he said.

Bad road and bridge have a negative impact on the state's economy, noting that more than \$1 trillion in goods is transported to and from New York, mostly by trucks, TRIP said.

"Economic development does not happen without well-designed, well-maintained and well-funded infrastructure. The safe and efficient movement of goods, services and people is at the core of our economy," said Dottie Gallagher-Cohen, president of the Buffalo Niagara Partnership, in a written statement released by TRIP.

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