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## New Jersey's highways really, really stink, study finds



Of the 6,657 bridges in the state, 557 of them are considered structurally deficient, meaning the bridge needs significant repair, rehabilitation or replacement. The average age of the state's bridges is 51-years-old, older than the national average of 43 years. The average service life of a bridge is age 50. However, bridges in the state meet federal requirements that 90 percent of them are considered to be in acceptable condition. (NJ Alliance for Action) [Larry Higgs | NJ Advance Media for NJ.com](#)



By [Larry Higgs | NJ Advance Media for NJ.com](#)

A national report confirms what commuters experience daily, that New Jersey's interstate highways are among those with the worst traffic and roughest pavement in the country.

New Jersey ranked ninth for having 19 percent of interstate highway pavement rated in poor or mediocre condition, according to TRIP, a national transportation research group. Hawaii and California were ranked numbers one and two on the list of states with the worst pavement.

TRIP's findings are based on [Federal Highway Administration](#) data for 2014.

The report, which comes as [the interstate highway system turns 60](#), was released Monday. That's four days from a deadline for when the state's Transportation Trust Fund runs out of money to do anything except pay off debt.

[A 23 cent per-gallon increase in the state gas tax has been proposed](#) to replenish the fund.



Of the 39,000 miles of roads and highways in the state, 42 percent is considered to be in deficient condition and 28 percent is rated in good condition. Vehicle miles traveled has increased by 26 percent between 1990 to 2012, hitting 74 billion miles in 2012, resulting in more highway congestion. (Larry Higgs | NJ Advance Media for NJ.com)

What's driving the bad news? New Jersey's interstates are taking a beating from traffic and the [state is ranked among the 10 states with the highest congestion rates and the highest traffic volumes](#).

New Jersey ranked third for the amount of urban interstate congestion, with 73 percent of those highways considered congested, and for where drivers experience traffic delays during peak commuting periods.

The state saw a 21 percent increase in the amount of vehicle miles traveled between 2000 and 2014, ranking New Jersey tenth. The interstates carry an average traffic volume of 14,000 vehicles per mile each day, ranking it ninth for states with the most daily travel.

The good news is that New Jersey isn't among the states with the highest fatality rates on interstates, [after a drop in fatal crashes between 2013 and 2014](#).

*Larry Higgs may be reached at [lhiggs@njadvancemedia.com](mailto:lhiggs@njadvancemedia.com). Follow him on Twitter [@commutinglarry](#). Find [NJ.com on Facebook](#).*