

## Rural Roads in Kansas: Do They Need Work?



Washington, D.C. – How do Kansas' rural roads stack up?

A new report issued by TRIP says America's rural transportation system is in need of repairs and modernization.

The report, *Rural Connections: Challenges and Opportunities in America's Heartland*, evaluates the safety and condition of the nation's rural roads and bridges. TRIP is a national non-profit transportation research group based in Washington, D.C.

The report finds that the rate of traffic fatalities on Kansas' non-Interstate, rural roads – 2.24 fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles of travel – is the 20th highest in the nation, and four-and-a-half times higher than the fatality rate on all other roads in the state. South Carolina had the highest fatality rate on rural roads.

9% of Kansas' rural roads are rated in poor condition, and 23% are rated in mediocre condition. Oklahoma had 22% of its rural roads in poor condition, the 10th-worst in the nation, followed by Missouri at 11th-worst (21%). Rhode Island recorded the nation's highest rate of rural roads in poor condition, at 41%.

9% of Kansas' rural bridges are rated as structurally deficient, the 24th-highest rate in the nation. Faring worse than Kansas were Missouri (11th-worst, 14%), Oklahoma (7th-worst, 16%), Nebraska (6th-worst, 16%), and the nation's worst was again, Rhode Island (22%).

"Rural roads are far too often overlooked. With fatality rates rising, repairing and maintaining the nation's roads must be a top priority for legislators," said Jennifer Haugh, AAA Kansas. "By investing in improvements for today and tomorrow, we can deliver safer experiences for motorists and save tens of thousands of lives."