

New report says rough roads cost local drivers hundreds each year

By: [Ryan Fish](#) | Wednesday, August 15, 2018



SANTA BARBARA, Calif. - A Washington DC-based non-profit research organization known as TRIP released a report Wednesday morning that shows just how much local drivers may be hurting from rough road conditions.

The report says driving on crumbling roads in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties costs the average driver \$1,419 annually, when accounting for extra accident and maintenance repairs, as well as wasted fuel due to traffic congestion. According to the report, \$655 of that annual cost is just from the extra repairs needed to account for rough road surfaces.

Delip Singh, owner of Big Brand Tire and Service on Milpas Street in Santa Barbara knows all too well about how rough roads can be tough on cars. He says the roads in Santa Barbara especially are a problem.

“The roads are terrible,” says Singh. “They got a lot of potholes. I get so many people come in here with the nice cars, sometimes they hit a pothole. The rims get damaged, the tires get damaged. I get so many customers from the road, you know.”

Singh guesses that more than half of his daily customers come in with issues caused by rough road conditions. He says he thinks that local drivers are spending even more than the report claims each year.

“People are always complaining,” Singh says. “They’re buying tires twice a year from me.”

Scott McGolpin, the Public Works Director for Santa Barbara County, says the numbers from the report sound accurate. He calls road maintenance a state-wide and nationwide problem, and is working with other counties from around to county to get federal road maintenance funding, in addition to the state and local funds currently available.

“The lack of transportation funding has a big issue for us in the public works world, and something we’ve been working to correct for a long time,” McGolpin says.

McGolpin says local roads maintained by the county are slightly below the state’s average pavement quality, but that he’s confident the funding that the department has—and could have—will help them catch up. He hopes to repair local roads to a point where drivers are satisfied with the infrastructure.

“In our world, if [drivers] think about us, something’s probably not going right,” McGolpin says. “So in our world right now, we’re trying to get more funding to come our way for transportation, for road maintenance. Hopefully the community will do a lot less thinking about us once we get adequate funding to take care of the roads.”

The report says that the lack of safety features on state roads and bridges costs California drivers a total of \$61 billion each year.