

# New report shows drivers in mid-Missouri are losing money while driving on roads

By Kyreon Lee



*According to TRIP, driving on Missouri roads that are deteriorated, congested and that lack some desirable safety features costs Missouri drivers a total of \$7.8 billion each year. (Kyreon Lee/KRCG 13)*

JEFFERSON CITY — The average driver in the Columbia-Jefferson City area loses nearly \$1,500 annually as a result of driving on roads that are deteriorated, congested, and lack some desirable safety features, according to a [new report](#) by The Road Information Program, a national transportation research group based out of Washington, D.C.

Carolyn Kelly, the TRIP Associate Director of Research and Communication and the author of the report, said the goal of the research is to be transparent.

"Our goal as an organization is to make sure that the public and drivers and elected officials understand the condition of their transportation system and the impact it has on their daily lives," she said.

TRIP has calculated the cost to the average motorist in the state's largest urban areas.

According to the report, driving on Missouri roads that are in bad condition costs Missouri drivers a total of \$7.8 billion each year. Drivers in Columbia-Jefferson City spend \$702 on average in vehicle operating costs as a result of driving on rough roads, \$498 on average in the financial cost of traffic crashes and \$277 on average on the cost of lost time and wasted fuel due to congestion, as a result of driving. People in the St. Louis area lose the most money on average due to bad road conditions.

Due to inadequate state and local funding, 52 percent of major roads and highways in Missouri are in poor or mediocre condition. In Columbia-Jefferson City, 28 percent of the roads are in poor condition, 32 percent are mediocre, 12 percent are fair and 28 percent are in good condition. Statewide, more than half of Missouri's major roads are in poor or mediocre condition.

There are 93 structurally deficient bridges in Columbia-Jefferson City area. The Kansas City area leads Missouri with

155 deficient bridges. The report shows most bridges are designed to last 50 years before major overhaul or replacement, although many newer bridges are being designed to last 75 years or longer. In Missouri, 40 percent of the state's bridges were built in 1969 or earlier.

Drivers in the Columbia-Jefferson City area lose about 13 hours on average due to congestion on roads. The report said congested roads choke commuting and commerce and cost Missouri drivers \$2.4 billion each year in the form of lost time and wasted fuel. In the most congested urban areas, drivers lose up to \$1,080 and nearly two full days each year in congestion.

The report also details the average amount of traffic fatalities between 2014 and 2016. In the Columbia-Jefferson City area there have been 39 fatalities on average between 2014 and 2016. Overall, Missouri's traffic fatalities are higher than the national average.

The trends in the [report](#) show Missouri is on the right track in cutting highway deaths, but much more needs to be done to ensure safe driving and protecting motorists and their families. During the last decade, the Missouri Department of Transportation has deployed innovative safety measures that have saved an estimated total of 488 lives on state roads.

Kelly said this report is not to shame public organizations over roadways in Missouri.

"The state DOT and local municipalities are doing a tremendous job with the funds they have available, but the reality is there's simply not enough transportation funding to make all the improvements we would like to see," she said. Kelly said MoDOT does not have the resources it needs.

SaferMO is campaigning in support of [Proposition D](#), which is will be on the November ballot. SaferMO Communications Director, Scott Charton said Proposition D will fund Missouri state law enforcement and maintenance for highways, bridges, roads and streets.

"We need to work with MoDOT to get the funds that they need," Charton said. He said a yes vote on Proposition D will provide the funding necessary to expand these safety innovations across the state.

TRIP will meet with local speakers on Wednesday afternoon to highlight the report's findings and discuss possible solutions. Those speakers include [Jefferson City Mayor Carrie Tergin](#), [SaferMO Communications Director Scott Charton](#), [Associated General Contractors of Missouri President Len Toenjes](#) and [TRIP Associate Director of Research and Communication Carolyn Bonifas Kelly](#).