

Study shows Kentucky with high traffic fatality rates on rural roads

By: [MIKE PICKETT](#) | May 22, 2019



A new study shows Kentucky has one of the highest rates of deaths in accidents on rural roads.

They're the type of roads many western Kentucky drivers rely on every day.

"I feel like they're pretty safe," says Jordan Sosh of Calhoun. "As long as you're paying attention to other drivers and you're maintaining a defensive driving."

But a study released by TRIP, a non-profit transportation research group, shows Kentucky in the top 10 in the nation for fatality rates for accidents on rural roads -- with a rate of more than 2.5 fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled. That's seventh highest. Indiana's rate is just over 2.3, making it 17th in the country.

Carolyn Kelly, Associate Dir. of Research and Communication for TRIP says one major factor is the lack of safety features like rumble strips on rural roads, which she says should be installed on more roads.

"It makes the driving environment more forgiving so that if a driver does make a mistake on the road, that driver doesn't pay with his or her own life. In many of these rural roads, we do see a lack of those safety features," says Kelly.

The study also shows 27% of Kentucky's rural roads are in poor or mediocre condition. Major Will Coursey of the Hopkins County Sheriff's Office says while road condition is a potential factor, so can speed and other driving conditions, such as the weather.

"If you're driving in a faster than posted speed down that way and you come across something that's deteriorated rather quickly and don't know it, then that cause you a problem," he says.

Major Coursey adds drivers should watch their speed, wear seatbelts, and watch for driving conditions to stay safe.

"Just watch other drivers, stay within the speed limit. Keep an eye on the road," says Sosh.