

# Travelers gearing up for holiday weekend should be aware of rural road dangers

by Marissa Olid | Thursday, May 23rd 2019



JACKSON COUNTY, Ore. — As many prepare to [travel for the holiday](#) weekend there is one thing travelers should be aware of.

## Driving on Rural Roads

Traveling on rural roads comes at great risks.

According to a non-profit traffic research group, [Trip](#), ranks Oregon as 10th in the nation for traffic fatalities on rural roads. Oregon's traffic fatality rank on rural roads is more than 3.5 times higher than the fatality rate on all other roads in the state.

In Jackson County similar to across the state and nation, rural roads tend to have [a higher fatality](#) rate than highways because of the nature of the road. However-- that does not take away from the dangers of highways.

Speed is the number one issue followed by distracted driving.

John Vial, Director with Jackson County says many of the roads are not built up to standard.

"The county network, for the most part, is built to an older standard where the curvature of the road and the width of the road and the width of the shoulders is not built to standards as we would build roads today," said Vial.

According to study, 28% of Oregon's rural roads are rated poor or structurally deficient.

"We are working to upgrade these but it takes time and money," said Vial.

Driving on rural roads comes at risks because the road can be unforgiving. The road can be unforgiving because if a mistake is made while driving, there is no wide shoulder to prevent drivers from falling into a ditch or tree.

Traveling on rural roads requires drivers to drive them differently and with more care.