

Report suggests rural RI roads among worst in nation



By: [Miles Montgomery](#)

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (WPRI) --- A new report by TRIP, a national transportation research group, discovered Rhode Island has the highest rate of rural roads in poor condition nationwide.

According to the report, 39% of Rhode Island's rural roads are in poor condition and 31% are in mediocre condition based on data from all 50 states. In addition, 23% of Rhode Island's rural bridges are rated as poor/structurally deficient, the highest in the United States.

"Rural roads play a critical role in supporting the transportation needs of millions of Americans every day," Kathleen Bower, AAA senior vice president of public affairs and international relations said. "Damaged and deteriorating roadways too often result in deadly crashes, and it is time to act. Making critical safety improvements to rural roads will save thousands of lives each year and help move our economy forward."

Officials say the report discovered the United States needs to implement transportation improvements that prioritize safety, provide communities with safe and efficient access to support high quality of life and boost economic productivity.

The report found that the rate of traffic fatalities on Rhode Island's non-Interstate, rural roads is the fourth highest in the nation. It is also nearly three times higher than the fatality rate on all other roads in the state.

In response to the report, Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) spokesperson Charles St. Martin said Governor Gina Raimondo's

RhodeWorks program has helped the state move forward with repairing the state's roads and bridges.

"Already, RIDOT has preserved or reconstructed 191 bridges and paved 100 miles of roadway under RhodeWorks," St. Martin said in a statement. "This year will be one of our busiest construction seasons ever, with more than \$715 million of active construction in 2019."

In April, RIDOT Director Peter Alviti told Eyewitness News [there will be 77 active construction projects](#) statewide the entire season.

RANK	STATE	Rural Pavements in Poor Condition	STATE	Rural Bridges Poor/Structurally Deficient	STATE	Fatality Rate per 100M VMT on Rural Non-Interstate Roads	Fatality Rate per 100M VMT on All Other Roads
1	Rhode Island	39%	Rhode Island	23%	South Carolina	3.60	0.98
2	California	32%	Iowa	21%	California	3.16	0.77
3	New Mexico	30%	West Virginia	20%	Arizona	2.94	1.31
4	West Virginia	30%	Pennsylvania	18%	Rhode Island	2.57	0.92
5	Hawaii	30%	South Dakota	18%	West Virginia	2.55	0.97
6	Oklahoma	30%	Louisiana	15%	Tennessee	2.55	0.93
7	Mississippi	27%	Maine	14%	Kentucky	2.54	1.02
8	Alaska	22%	New York	12%	Louisiana	2.48	1.21
9	Maine	22%	North Carolina	12%	Kansas	2.47	0.85
10	New Hampshire	21%	Oklahoma	12%	Oregon	2.44	0.68
11	Washington	21%	Michigan	12%	North Carolina	2.43	0.70
12	Pennsylvania	21%	North Dakota	11%	Texas	2.38	1.11
13	Missouri	21%	Mississippi	10%	Alabama	2.38	0.87
14	Connecticut	20%	Alaska	10%	Georgia	2.36	1.00
15	Louisiana	19%	Nebraska	9%	Virginia	2.34	0.57
16	Wisconsin	19%	Missouri	9%	Delaware	2.33	0.74
17	Texas	18%	New Hampshire	9%	Indiana	2.32	0.68
18	Massachusetts	17%	Massachusetts	9%	Oklahoma	2.24	0.86
19	Michigan	16%	New Jersey	9%	Florida	2.23	1.32
20	Vermont	16%	California	9%	Pennsylvania	2.18	0.79
US AVERAGE		15%	US AVERAGE	9%	US AVERAGE	2.14	0.88