

New Orleans' crumbling roads cost drivers \$2,159 per year, study shows

They're also directly responsible for hundreds of deaths from vehicle crashes

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From the latest round of hurricane snacks to the guy who bets he can tell you where you got your shoes, it often feels like New Orleans is set on nickel-and-diming every last one of its residents. Especially when you hit a pothole on the way to work and end up with a flat tire or broken axle.

It's not cheap to live in city that care forgot. In fact, according to [a new study](#) by [TRIP](#), a Washington, D.C.-based national transportation research nonprofit, crumbling roads cost New Orleans drivers \$2,159 per year.

"In the New Orleans area, 59 percent of roads are in poor or mediocre condition," said report author Carolyn Bonifas Kelly, associate director of research and communication at TRIP. "That takes a toll on your vehicle—as it gets beat up, the value depreciates, and there's also the tire wear and additional fuel consumption that comes from driving on a road that's not as good as it could be."

The second factor in that figure is the cost of wasted time and fuel due to congestion. According to the Texas Transportation Institute, New Orleans drivers spend about 58 hours a year in traffic—the equivalent of a week and a half of work.

"Anecdotaly, people know roads are congested, but this quantifies it and puts a number to it," Kelly said.

The problem stems from Louisiana's swampy, flood-prone topography and a lack of transportation funding at the local, state, and federal level, Kelly said. Worst of all, this funding shortage leads to unsafe conditions for drivers. From 2013 to 2017, 737 Louisiana motorists died each year on average from vehicle crashes—the fifth-highest traffic fatality rate in the nation.

Inadequate roadway features were a factor in one-third of these deaths, the report says.

"If there's not funding for things like left-hand turn lanes, rumble strips, clear signage, or adequate lighting, that has an impact on safety," Kelly said. "One-third of these crashes can be attributed to the roadway itself. Safety features can make roadways more forgiving, so drivers don't pay for a mistake with their life."

Read the [Louisiana Transportation Report here](#).



Via TRIP