

Research group claims Illinois traffic deaths rose by 34% during COVID pandemic



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By [Jim Gudas](#) | June 29, 2022



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A new report suggests roads in Illinois have become more dangerous during the COVID pandemic.

The transportation research group TRIP released the study on Wednesday. In it, TRIP claimed the number of traffic deaths in Illinois rose by 34% from 2019 through last year — despite there being fewer cars on the road.

TRIP's Director of Policy and Research, Rocky Moretti, said there's one big reason why.

“When the pandemic started, we saw an increase in impairment, either through alcohol or drugs, we saw a reduced use of safety belts, and greater speeding,” Moretti said. “All of those obviously contribute to more serious, and oftentimes fatal, crashes.”

Moretti said the rising number of fatal crashes shows the need for several improvements to Illinois roads.

“There are improvements that are very cost-effective, like adding rumble strips, paving shoulders, improving lighting and lane markings, and also adding turn lanes at intersections,” Moretti said.

“We can also make further improvements in pedestrian and bicycle facilities, which account for one-fifth of all traffic fatalities,” Moretti added.

Find the [full report here](#).