



Montana fatal crashes rise 32 percent since 2019, survivors speak out

Jennifer Rios ABC FOX Montana | Friday, July 8, 2022



MISSOULA, Mont. - Data from the [National Transportation Research](#) shows Montana as one of the leading states for fatal crashes, as they've risen 32 percent from 2019 to 2022. Now all eyes are on the proposed [Roadway Safety Strategy](#).

Driver Olivia Petruski shares her experience as a survivor of a car crash that happened on East Broadway Street in Missoula just a few months ago, ending with her car being toad leading to further

ramifications for herself.

Although no photos from the incident could be shared at this time due to ongoing court proceedings, she describes herself as one the lucky ones to survive.

"I'm very blessed to be alive today and I think with the implementations maybe others will look at it and reconsider getting behind the wheel after having a few drinks," said Petruski.

Rocky Moretti, the director of policy and research at TRIP, says research shows increased risky driving behavior including speeding, not wearing seatbelts being impaired by alcohol or drugs, or aggressive driving began at the start of the pandemic and continued at the least to 2021," said Moretti.

The plan is expected to focus on promoting safer drivers and vehicles on the road which could mean implementing slower speed limits and bigger penalties in certain areas. And prioritize post-crash treatment like Olivia's case.

"If lawmakers needed somewhere to start, I would say obviously target the states that have has the most amount of problems or if crashes are going up in certain times over the year that they would have priority," said Petruski.

There is no timeline as to when this will roll out or how much of this will apply to Montana state highways, but that decision should come down in the coming months.