



## Is risky driving the new norm?

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NORFOLK, Va. — You may have already noticed it, but statistics now back it up: the pandemic has changed the way we drive and it has fatal consequences.

According to the [Insurance Institute for Highway Safety](#), the chances that a Virginia driver was going at least 10 mph over the speed limit, over a four-month time period between March and June of 2020, jumped by more than 50%.

This statistic shouldn't come as a surprise because there were fewer drivers on the road and pandemic stress likely fueled a heavier foot behind the wheel. But brand-new data suggests riskier driving like this never stopped, even when traffic picked up again.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration issued a statement saying, "after the declaration of the public health emergency in March 2020, driving patterns and behaviors in the United States changed significantly."

According to a nonprofit transportation research group, TRIP, deadly traffic crashes surged 19% from 2019 to 2021.

Deadly crashes involving speed and no seatbelt also jumped 16% and 18%. In 2021, we also saw 42,915 traffic fatalities - the highest number since 2005.

Risky driving has become a safety crisis nationwide, but we may be taking steps to make things safer on the roads.

The recent infrastructure bill approved in November provides a big boost to road improvement funding.

The U.S. Department of Transportation also adopted the National Roadway Safety Strategy, a plan that tackles the issue through education, road design, and improved vehicle technology.

For more information on this new initiative, [click here](#).