

SAFETY

Roadway Fatalities Projected to Decline According to NHTSA

Sept. 26, 2022

Hopefully the trend continues downward



[The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration \(NHTSA\)](#) projected a 4.9% decline in roadway crash fatalities for the second quarter of 2022 compared to the second quarter in 2021.

The agency noted that decline in traffic fatalities during the second quarter of 2022 is the first quarterly decline after seven consecutive quarters of year-to-year increases in fatalities that began in the third quarter of 2020.

The agency added that data reported by [the Federal Highway Administration \(FHWA\)](#) indicates vehicle miles traveled (VMT) during the first half of 2022 increased approximately 43.2 billion miles (about 2.8%). The fatality rate for the first half of 2022

decreased to 1.27 fatalities per 100 million VMT, down from the projected rate of 1.30 fatalities per 100 million VMT in the first half of 2021.

“Although it is heartening to see a projected decline in roadway deaths in recent months, the number of people dying on roads in this country remains a crisis,” stressed Ann Carlson, NHTSA’s acting administrator, in a [statement](#).

The NHTSA also noted that, during the COVID-19 pandemic, a marked increase in fatalities and in the fatality rate began in 2020 and did not let up until the second quarter of 2022.

According to research, speeding became a key factor driving that two-year spike in fatalities.

According to a [study](#) issued by [the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety \(IIHS\)](#) in July, speeding by motorists increased during the morning and afternoon commuting hours in the early months of the pandemic and never slowed down.

Those findings dovetailed with a report issued by [the national transportation research group TRIP](#) in late June, which noted that traffic fatalities in the U.S. surged by 19% from 2019 to 2021.

State departments of transportation all over the country recognized the negative safety implications of the speeding spiked early on in the COVID-19 pandemic and have sought ways to reverse it over the last two years.

Source: NHTSA