



Traffic fatalities up 23% in New York despite decrease in road usage

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 [Staff Report](#)

A recent report by transportation research group TRIP reveals a concerning 23% increase in traffic fatalities in New York state from 2019 to 2022, rising from 931 to 1,148 deaths despite a decrease in road usage.

This increase parallels the national trend, where traffic fatalities rose by 19% from 36,096 in 2019 to 42,795 in 2022. However, there was a slight decrease in both national and New York fatalities in 2022 compared to 2021.

Federal safety experts link this surge to riskier driving behaviors such as speeding, driving under the influence, and neglecting seat belts, behaviors that reportedly intensified since the beginning of the pandemic in 2020. A 2022 AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety report suggests that individuals who chose to travel despite pandemic health risks were likely predisposed to take other risks, too. Consequently, between 2019 and 2022, alcohol-related crash fatalities increased by 22% and deaths of unbelted passengers rose by 20%.

Despite traffic volume falling 1% nationally and 9% in New York compared to pre-pandemic 2019 levels, the rate of fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles has escalated. Nationally, this rate increased from 1.11 in 2019 to 1.35 in 2022, with New York witnessing a 39% spike from 0.75 to 1.04 in the same period. Vehicle miles in New York state fell from 124 billion in 2019 to 112 billion in 2022.