

# South Carolina remains dangerous for motorists and pedestrians, studies confirm

By T.A. DeFeo | The Center Square contributor | June 22, 2023



(The Center Square) — South Carolina’s roads continue to be dangerous for motorists, with the fatality rate higher than before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Between 2019 and 2022, traffic fatalities in South Carolina increased by 8%, according to a new analysis from TRIP, a national transportation research nonprofit. Additionally, the vehicle miles of travel increased by 4%, while the fatality rate per 100 million VMT increased by 7%.

In 2019, the Palmetto State [had](#) 1.73 fatalities per 100 million VMT, a rate that increased to 1.97 in 2020 and 2.07 in 2021 before decreasing to 1.84 in 2022. South Carolina’s fatality rate was higher than

neighboring North Carolina (1.47) and Georgia (1.41).

Using the traffic crash cost methodology from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, TRIP estimated that serious and fatal traffic crashes in South Carolina in 2022 caused a total of \$32 billion in “societal harm” — \$8 billion in “economic costs” and \$24 billion in “quality-of-life costs.”

Drivers appear to be driving more recklessly following the COVID-19 pandemic, an assertion partly backed up by NHTSA’s Office of Behavioral Safety Research, which in October 2021 [said](#), “driving patterns and behaviors in the United States changed significantly” following the March 2020 public health emergency.

Additionally, in December, AAA announced a new study that revealed a rise in risky behaviors, including drowsy driving, red-light running, speeding and driving while impaired by alcohol or cannabis.

Meanwhile, a new [analysis](#) from the Governors Highway Safety Association revealed that Palmetto State is also dangerous for pedestrians.

South Carolina motorists are killing pedestrians at a higher rate now than before the pandemic. The state’s pedestrian fatality rate per 100,000 residents was 3.29 in 2022, up from 3.17 in 2019.

