



Traffic fatalities, reactor making, American cars: Down in Alabama

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Road risks

Traffic fatalities are up in Alabama, [reports AL.com's Lee Roop](#), and like so many other things, you can look at the difference as pre-pandemic and post-pandemic.

The National Transportation Research Nonprofit, TRIP, released a report this week that showed Alabama wasn't the only state in which traffic fatalities rose from 2019 to 2022. Indeed, nationally fatalities rose 19 percent during that time while statewide they rose 6 percent.

In 2022 in Alabama, 989 people died in traffic incidents. That was pretty flat year-over-year but a noteworthy increase over the 934 in 2020 and 930 in 2019.

So what's to blame? According to TRIP's research, it looks like increased risky behavior such as "distracted driving, failure to wear seat belts and driving under the influence of alcohol and drugs" as well as cellphone distractions.

Across the nation, the research showed a 26-percent rise in bicyclists killed and a 20-percent rise in motorcycle deaths, which the report said happened alongside a rise in the number of motorcyclists admitting they don't wear a helmet.

Building reactors

A micro-modular reactor assembly plant will go up in Gadsden, Alabama, [reports AL.com's William Thornton](#).

The company is Ultra Safe Nuclear Corp. out of Seattle. The cost is estimated to be \$232 million, and work is supposed to begin some time next year. The company says it'll be up and running by 2027 and employ around 250 people.

The company also says that no radioactive material will be used or kept in Gadsden. The plant will be used to manufacture, assemble, test and inspect non-radiological modules that will be used to build reactors.

How American?

In the modern global economy, the question isn't whether your car is American. The question is *how* American.

Names and corporate headquarters can be deceiving. So [Cars.com](#) puts together its annual American-Made Index, which is based on assembly location, parts content, engine origin, transmission origin and U.S. manufacturing workforce.

Four Alabama-based automakers placed a total of 12 models in the top 100, [reports AL.com's William Thornton](#). And three of those models -- all made at Honda's plant in Lincoln -- placed in the list's top 10: the No. 5 Honda Passport SUV, No. 7 Honda Odyssey minivan and No. 9 Honda Ridgeline pickup.

The Passport SUV actually slipped a spot since last year. The top four places are all held by Tesla models that are made in Texas and California.

Numbers

\$967: [That was the average ticket price](#), according to NBC Sports, in the days leading up to the 2022 Field of Dreams baseball game in Dyersville, Iowa. Next year's game will be held at Birmingham's Rickwood Field.