

# Fright on the Roads: Scary Stats and Facts About Virginia's Highway Fatalities

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Spooky Season is upon us and Halloween is just around the corner. As we prepare to watch out for ghosts, ghouls, goblins, and other spooky things, let's also remember that the road can be a scary place too if we don't do our part as drivers to keep them safe for everyone.

For too many Virginians, the most dangerous place to be is on the roadway – and, statistically speaking, too many do not make it back home at night.

The stats are staggering: Traffic fatalities in the Commonwealth saw a [24% increase over the period spanning 2013 to 2023](#), according to a report issued by TRIP, a non-profit national transportation research group.

The report notes that 54% of fatal accidents during the timeframe involved just one vehicle.

In addition to the tragic loss of life and the suffering of grieving families, the report says that fatal traffic accidents in Virginia in 2023 amounted to \$8.5 billion in economic costs (lost productivity, medical bills, legal bills, emergency services, property damage, and impacts from congestion), plus an additional estimated \$25.7 billion in quality-of-life costs (loss of remaining lifespan and physical pain or impairment).

It's terrifying. And it's continuing. The Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles data shows that, in 2024 through July 14, [more than 70 people were killed in traffic accidents on Virginia's interstates](#).

## Slow Down, Move Over, Pay Attention

The stats don't have to be so scary. By keeping in mind a few simple rules, a great deal of these tragedies can be avoided.

**Slow down.** The faster you go, the longer it takes to stop – and as speed increases, the distance required to come to a stop increases even more. It takes 125 feet to stop a standard-size vehicle traveling 50 mph, but it takes 320 feet to stop at 80 mph. Speed kills, so keep yours in check.

**Move over.** In 2023, Virginia instituted a [mandatory "Move Over" law](#) requiring drivers to move over one lane to the left – or, if not possible, to slow down – whenever a vehicle (emergency or not) is parked on the shoulder.

**Pay attention.** Many crashes, especially single-vehicle crashes, can be attributed to inattentive driving – talking on the phone, texting, fiddling with the radio or A/C. When you're behind the wheel, safe driving is your *only* priority. Your life and the lives of your passengers and fellow travelers are at stake.

**Buckle Up.** Wearing a seatbelt is one of the simplest yet most effective ways to protect yourself in case of an accident. Buckling up can reduce the risk of serious injury or death by nearly half. Make it a habit every time you get in the car—whether you're the driver or a passenger.

**Don't Drive Under the Influence.** Never drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Impaired driving diminishes your ability to make quick decisions, slows reaction times, and drastically raises the chances of a fatal accident. If you're planning to celebrate this season, make arrangements in advance by designating a sober driver or using a rideshare service. Safety begins with responsibility.

Safe driving means responsible driving—let's keep Virginia's roads safe for everyone.

The numbers can be terrifying, but don't let this Halloween be any scarier than it already is. Practice safe driving on Virginia's highways – and reach your destination safely.