

# Traffic fatalities up nationwide, new study shows

Tisha Lewis | Wednesday, July 23, 2025



## The Brief

- A new study indicates that traffic fatalities are up nationwide.
- According to the study, the increase is due—in part—to post-pandemic driving behaviors.
- A researcher at TRIP says Virginia and Maryland are following the national trend of increased traffic fatalities, and the data for D.C. is even worse.

**WASHINGTON** - Traffic deaths are up nationwide, including in the DMV, according to a new study by TRIP—a non-profit organization that researches and evaluates transportation issues.

TRIP conducts [the study](#) every year. Researchers say driving behavior post-pandemic is partly to blame.

**What we know:** TRIP says traffic fatalities are up across the country compared to more than a decade ago in 2014.

While U.S. traffic fatalities fell in 2024 for the third straight year, TRIP says traffic fatalities in 2024 remained significantly higher than a decade ago.

The study indicates that traffic fatalities surged in 2020 and 2021 as the nation grappled with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and that the uptick in deadly vehicle crashes is changed driver behavior post-pandemic, including speeding, impaired driving and distracted driving.

A researcher at TRIP says Virginia and Maryland are following the national trend of increased traffic fatalities. The data for D.C. is worse—reportedly double the amount of traffic fatalities compared to a decade ago.

**What they're saying:** TRIP researchers describe this most recent data as a crisis. FOX 5 spoke with one of the researchers who conducted the study.

"While traffic fatalities have decreased somewhat in the last several years, over the last decade they've climbed exponentially in Virginia. The number of traffic fatalities in the last decade has increased to 29% in Virginia and 31% in Maryland. That's the bad news," said Carolyn Kelly, Director of Research and Communication for TRIP.

Kelly says the good news — in the last few years the number of fatalities has begun to trend downward, while still being higher than it was a decade ago.

Kelly says the most important solution is addressing driving behavior.

That includes drivers being attentive, wearing seatbelts and not driving distracted or impaired.