

Road conditions, traffic congestion in Md. costs drivers thousands, report finds

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A new report found the condition of the roads in Maryland's D.C. suburbs is costing residents over \$3,500 annually.

This includes increased wear and tear on vehicles as well as depreciation, wasted fuel, wasted time and the cost of traffic accidents.

Rocky Moretti is the director of development and research at TRIP, a national transportation research nonprofit. During a news conference Wednesday, he said the average driver in Maryland's D.C. suburbs is spending an additional 90 hours per year stuck in traffic and wasting an additional 26 gallons of gas.

Statewide, 30% of Maryland roads are in "poor" condition, which Moretti said is significantly higher than the national average. The D.C. suburbs fare somewhat better, with 27% in poor condition, according to TRIP. Another 24% of Maryland's roads in D.C. suburbs are rated in "mediocre" condition, compared with 21% statewide, the report found.

"I'm sad to say, you know, a lot of that stuff just rings true with me. For a long time, I was a local commissioner back about 20 years ago, in the early 2000s. And we were constantly wrestling with the need to put more money in our traffic infrastructure and just struggling to find the funding for that, as we saw state and federal dollars continue to drop," said Jim Kercheval, executive director of the greater Hagerstown committee.

The report said the federal transportation program that was last reauthorized in 2021 was a significant boost to Maryland, increasing federal funding for roadways by 29%. Highway construction inflation since that bill was passed, however, has increased 47%. At the same time, the state is seeing decreasing revenues from gas taxes because of electric and more fuel efficient vehicles.



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