

Report: Oklahoma's traffic deaths surpass national average

by Kimberly Query-Thompson | Thursday, April 2, 2026

OKLAHOMA CITY (KOKH) — A new report is taking a closer look at traffic fatalities across Oklahoma

TRIP, a national transportation research nonprofit, released the report "Getting Home Safely: Examining traffic safety in Oklahoma and further steps needed to improve traffic safety in the Sooner State."

According to the report, 4,127 people were killed in traffic crashes in Oklahoma from 2020 to 2025.

During that period, crashes also resulted in 76,661 people being injured.

Officials say Oklahoma's fatality rate per 100 million vehicle miles traveled remains consistently above the national average. In 2025, Oklahoma's traffic fatality rate was 19 percent higher than the national average.

The report states that a disproportionate share of fatalities take place on Oklahoma's rural roads. In fact, the traffic fatality rate on Oklahoma's rural non-Interstate routes is 62 percent higher than on all other roadways in the state.

Also, pedestrians and bicyclists account for a significant portion of traffic fatalities. In the last five years, 520 pedestrians and 77 bicyclists were killed in traffic crashes.

"Data drives everything we do at the Oklahoma Highway Patrol," said Lt. Mark Southall, public affairs officer for the Oklahoma Highway Patrol. "By analyzing trends and identifying risk factors, we're able to focus our efforts where they matter most. But we know this mission cannot be accomplished alone. Through strong partnerships with our local, state, and federal agencies, we are committed to protecting not only Oklahomans, but everyone traveling to and through our state."

Crashes in work zones also are a big concern for researchers.

In the past five years, crashes in Oklahoma work zones resulted in 141 deaths and most were the result of unsafe speeds. In fact, the Oklahoma Department of Transportation has found average vehicle speeds in several major work zones were approximately one-third higher than posted limits.

"Reducing the number of traffic fatalities in Oklahoma, including in work zones, will require further investment by ODOT, coordinated enforcement and education efforts and a comprehensive commitment to roadway safety," said Dave Kearby, TRIP's executive director.