

Traffic deaths up in Maine despite being down nationwide

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PORTLAND (WGME) -- Traffic deaths nationwide are down for the fourth straight year, but that's not the case in Maine.

According to a report from the transportation group "TRIP," since 2020, the number of traffic-related deaths in Maine has gone up by 6 percent, with a total of 987 deaths.

The director of TRIP says multiple factors could be behind why Maine's numbers are higher than the national average, including the state's large number of rural roads, where deadly crashes are more likely.

He did add that this troubling trend does not have to continue, and Maine drivers can help bring that number down.

"It really starts with the motorists themselves," TRIP Director Rocky Moretti said. "Obviously, they can't be impaired, we can't be speeding and we have to be aware of surroundings. We can't be distracted by cell phones or fiddling with different features on a vehicle, we have to understand the responsibility we have as a motorist that not only are we safe but so are other motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists."

He also says more can be done to improve infrastructure, including making roads wider, adding lane markings and improving intersection designs.