

NHTSA Early Estimates Show Overall Increase in Roadway Deaths in First Half of 2022, Second Quarter 2022 Projects First Decline Since 2020

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The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration today released its [early estimates of traffic fatalities for the first half of 2022](#). An estimated 20,175 people died in motor vehicle traffic crashes, an increase of about 0.5% as compared to 20,070 fatalities NHTSA projected for the first half of 2021. However, NHTSA projects that the second quarter of 2022, from April to June, had the first decline in fatalities after seven consecutive quarters of year-to-year increases in fatalities that began in the third quarter of 2020.

"Traffic deaths appear to be declining for the first time since 2020, but they are still at high levels that call for urgent and sustained action. These deaths are preventable, not inevitable, and we should act accordingly," said U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg. "Safety is our guiding mission at the Department of Transportation, and we will redouble our efforts to reduce the tragic number of deaths on our nation's roads."

In January, Secretary Buttigieg unveiled the [National Roadway Safety Strategy](#), which outlines the Department's comprehensive approach to significantly reducing serious injuries and deaths on highways, roads and streets. President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law provides unprecedented funding for safety to achieve the Department's ambitious, long-term goal of reaching zero roadway fatalities.

"Although it is heartening to see a projected decline in roadway deaths in recent months, the number of people dying on roads in this country remains a crisis," said Ann Carlson, NHTSA's Acting Administrator. "Now is the time for all stakeholders, including states, local transportation entities, industry, non-profits and others, to leverage the significant funding and tools provided under the President's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and join with USDOT in implementing the National Roadway Safety Strategy's safe system approach, so we can turn the tide on years of increasing deaths."

USDOT has begun work on a number of action items in the NRSS, including:

- In May, the Federal Highway Administration issued Complete Streets guidance and is encouraging States to develop complete streets using the formula funding delivered through the President's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.
- In March, NHTSA issued a request for comment to proposed significant upgrades to the New Car Assessment Program, in part by proposing to add four more advanced driver assistance system technologies to those NHTSA already recommends. These new technologies would include blind spot detection, blind spot intervention, lane keeping assistance and pedestrian automatic emergency braking. The notice also describes the roadmap of the Agency's plans to update NCAP in phases over the next 10 years, to potentially incorporate consideration of the vehicle's safety features for people walking or biking around the car.
- In June, NHTSA issued a final rulemaking on rear impact guards for trailers and semitrailers.
- USDOT issued a notice of funding opportunity for \$1 billion for the first year of the brand-new Safe Streets and Roads for All program funded by the President's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

Additionally, NHTSA has issued a Standing General Order to collect more data about crashes that occur when automated driving systems and advanced driver assistance systems are engaged.

The preliminary data from the USDOT's FHWA shows vehicle miles traveled in the first half of 2022 increased by about 43.2 billion miles, a 2.8% increase from the same time period last year. The fatality rate for the first half of 2022 decreased to 1.27 fatalities per 100 million VMT, down from the projected rate of 1.30 fatalities per 100 million VMT in the first half of 2021.

NHTSA also [announced today](#) that the projections for two of the regions (NHTSA Regions 3 and 9) were revised. Projected deaths during the first quarter of 2022 for Region 3 were revised lower, while projections for Region 9 were revised higher. There were minor changes to the projections for the other regions. This did not result in a revision of the projected fatalities for the Nation as a whole.

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