

Traffic Safety Facts

Crash•Stats

August 2005

A Brief Statistical Summary

DOT HS 809 904

Alcohol-Related Fatalities in 2004

Early results from the 2004 Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) show that the number of alcohol-related¹ fatalities in motor vehicle traffic crashes declined from 2003. This is the second consecutive year in which alcohol-related fatalities have declined, after reaching a recent high of 17,524 in 2002. With an expected increase in vehicle miles traveled (VMT), the alcohol-related fatality rate per 100 million VMT will be 0.57, the lowest recorded by the Department of Transportation. Also, fatalities in "high-alcohol" crashes, i.e., crashes where the highest blood alcohol concentration (BAC) was .08 grams per deciliter or above, also declined by 1.8 percent, to 14,409 fatalities.

Table 1 depicts fatalities in traffic crashes by the highest BAC in the crash. There were 411 fewer alcohol-related fatalities (BAC=.01+), a decline of 2.4 percent compared to 2003. In crashes where the highest BAC was .08+, there were 269 fewer fatalities, a decline of 1.8 percent.

Table 1
Fatalities in Traffic Crashes by Highest BAC in the Crash

Description	2003	2004	Change	% Change
BAC .01+	17,105	16,694	-411	-2.4%
BAC .08+	14,678	14,409	-269	-1.8%

Source: FARS 2003 [Final], 2004 [ARF].

Table 2 depicts the fatalities shown in Table 1 by the role of the person(s) who had alcohol and the highest BAC level in the crash. For example, *Drivers Only (Drv Only)* implies that driver(s) were the only people with alcohol, and *Driver + Nonoccupant (Drv + NO)* implies both a driver and a nonoccupant had alcohol.

Table 2
Alcohol-Related Fatalities by Role of Person with Alcohol

Role of Person w/ alcohol	BAC = .01+		BAC = .08+	
	2003	2004	2003	2004
Drv Only	13,519 (79%)	13,178 (79%)	11,604 (79%)	11,406 (79%)
McO Only	1,309 (8%)	1,327 (8%)	1,075 (7%)	1,101 (8%)
Drv + McO	99 (1%)	80 (0%)	52 (0%)	42 (0%)
Drv/McO + NO	498 (3%)	460 (3%)	366 (3%)	324 (2%)
Subtotal	15,423 (90%)	15,045 (90%)	13,096 (89%)	12,874 (89%)
NO Only	1,644 (10%)	1,614 (10%)	1,548 (11%)	1,502 (10%)
Others	38 (0%)	35 (0%)	35 (0%)	33 (0%)
Total	17,105 (100%)	16,694 (100%)	14,678 (100%)	14,409 (100%)

Drv = Driver NO = Nonoccupant McO = Motorcycle Operator
 Source: FARS 2003 [Final], 2004 [ARF]. Counts may not add up to totals due to independent rounding. Percents are based on unrounded estimates.

¹Fatalities that occur in a crash involving at least one driver, pedestrian, or pedalcyclist with a BAC of .01 or above.

As seen in Table 2, a majority (79 percent) of the alcohol-related fatalities occurred in crashes in which drivers were the only persons with alcohol. Additionally, about 8 percent of the alcohol-related fatalities occurred in crashes where the motorcycle operators were the only persons with alcohol. About 10 percent of alcohol-related fatalities occurred in crashes where nonoccupants were the only persons with alcohol.

Table 3 depicts the role of the people killed in alcohol-related crashes. About half of the fatalities occurred to drivers who had alcohol, and an additional 17 percent to passengers who were riding with them. About 12 percent of the fatalities occurred to nonoccupants and about 8 percent to motorcycle operators with alcohol. Thus, slightly more than 85 percent of the alcohol-related fatalities occurred to drivers/motorcycle operators or nonoccupants with alcohol, or to people riding with these drivers/motorcycle operators.

Table 3
Alcohol-Related Fatalities, by Role

Role	2003		2004	
	Num	% of Total	Num	% of Total
Driver w/ alcohol	8,402	49%	8,199	49%
↕ Passengers	2,916	17%	2,763	17%
Motorcycle Operators w/ alcohol	1,271	7%	1,264	8%
↕ Riders	111	1%	118	1%
Nonoccupant w/ alcohol	1,969	12%	1,969	12%
Subtotal	14,669	86%	14,313	87%
Driver w/ no alcohol	1,044	6%	986	6%
↕ Passengers	591	3%	646	4%
Motorcycle Operators w/ no alcohol	147	1%	156	1%
↕ Riders	17	0%	21	0%
Nonoccupant w/ no alcohol	574	3%	515	3%
Other/Unknown	65	0%	57	0%
Total	17,105	100%	16,694	100%

Source: FARS 2003 [Final], 2004 [ARF]. Counts may not add up to totals due to independent rounding.

Table 4 (overleaf) shows, by State, the breakdown of total fatalities as well as fatalities in alcohol-related and high-alcohol crashes and the change in the fatalities and percent change from 2003 to 2004. A total of 32 States and the District of Columbia showed a decline in alcohol-related fatalities in 2004 from 2003 while 31 States and the District of Columbia showed a decline in fatalities that occur in high-alcohol crashes.

Table 4

Total Fatalities in Motor Vehicle Traffic Crashes, Alcohol-Related Fatalities, Fatalities in High-Alcohol (BAC=.08+) Crashes, Change and Percent Change, 2003-2004

State	2003					2004					2003 to 2004 Change		
	Total	Alcohol-Related		BAC=.08+		Total	Alcohol-Related		BAC=.08+		Total	Alcohol-Related	BAC=.08+
		Num	%	Num	%		Num	%	Num	%			
Alabama	1,004	414	41%	361	36%	1,154	442	38%	394	34%	150 (14.9%)	28 (6.8%)	33 (9.1%)
Alaska	98	37	38%	33	33%	101	31	31%	30	30%	3 (3.1%)	-6 (-16.2%)	-3 (-9.1%)
Arizona	1,118	471	42%	411	37%	1,150	435	38%	376	33%	32 (2.9%)	-36 (-7.6%)	-35 (-8.5%)
Arkansas	640	252	39%	201	31%	704	276	39%	236	33%	64 (10.0%)	24 (9.5%)	35 (17.4%)
California	4,224	1,629	39%	1,377	33%	4,120	1,643	40%	1,367	33%	-104 (-2.5%)	14 (0.9%)	-10 (-0.7%)
Colorado	642	252	39%	228	35%	665	259	39%	225	34%	23 (3.6%)	7 (2.8%)	-3 (-1.3%)
Connecticut	298	137	46%	119	40%	291	127	44%	112	38%	-7 (-2.3%)	-10 (-7.3%)	-7 (-5.9%)
Delaware	142	61	43%	51	36%	134	51	38%	48	36%	-8 (-5.6%)	-10 (-16.4%)	-3 (-5.9%)
Dist of Columbia	67	35	52%	31	47%	43	18	41%	12	28%	-24 (-36%)	-17 (-49%)	-19 (-61%)
Florida	3,169	1,287	41%	1,101	35%	3,244	1,222	38%	1,053	32%	75 (2.4%)	-65 (-5.1%)	-48 (-4.4%)
Georgia	1,603	483	30%	416	26%	1,634	525	32%	450	28%	31 (1.9%)	42 (8.7%)	34 (8.2%)
Hawaii	133	71	53%	52	39%	142	65	46%	52	37%	9 (6.8%)	-6 (-8.5%)	0 (-)
Idaho	293	106	36%	89	31%	260	93	36%	81	31%	-33 (-11.3%)	-13 (-12.3%)	-8 (-9.0%)
Illinois	1,454	637	44%	540	37%	1,356	604	45%	517	38%	-98 (-6.7%)	-33 (-5.2%)	-23 (-4.3%)
Indiana	833	261	31%	223	27%	947	299	32%	254	27%	114 (13.7%)	38 (14.6%)	31 (13.9%)
Iowa	443	145	33%	119	27%	390	110	28%	91	23%	-53 (-12.0%)	-35 (-24.1%)	-28 (-23.5%)
Kansas	469	199	42%	172	37%	461	148	32%	121	26%	-8 (-1.7%)	-51 (-25.6%)	-51 (-29.7%)
Kentucky	928	277	30%	242	26%	964	308	32%	269	28%	36 (3.9%)	31 (11.2%)	27 (11.2%)
Louisiana	940	410	44%	370	39%	904	414	46%	345	38%	-36 (-3.8%)	4 (1.0%)	-25 (-6.8%)
Maine	207	75	36%	69	33%	194	70	36%	58	30%	-13 (-6.3%)	-5 (-6.7%)	-11 (-15.9%)
Maryland	650	287	44%	215	33%	643	286	45%	231	36%	-7 (-1.1%)	-1 (-0.3%)	16 (7.4%)
Massachusetts	462	215	47%	172	37%	476	203	43%	181	38%	14 (3.0%)	-12 (-5.6%)	9 (5.2%)
Michigan	1,283	485	38%	396	31%	1,159	430	37%	367	32%	-124 (-9.7%)	-55 (-11.3%)	-29 (-7.3%)
Minnesota	655	266	41%	223	34%	567	184	32%	170	30%	-88 (-13.4%)	-82 (-30.8%)	-53 (-23.8%)
Mississippi	872	321	37%	291	33%	900	341	38%	317	35%	28 (3.2%)	20 (6.2%)	26 (8.9%)
Missouri	1,232	493	40%	414	34%	1,130	449	40%	388	34%	-102 (-8.3%)	-44 (-8.9%)	-26 (-6.3%)
Montana	262	127	49%	108	41%	229	106	46%	100	43%	-33 (-12.6%)	-21 (-16.5%)	-8 (-7.4%)
Nebraska	293	121	41%	99	34%	254	92	36%	78	31%	-39 (-13.3%)	-29 (-24%)	-21 (-21.2%)
Nevada	368	180	49%	156	42%	395	152	39%	133	34%	27 (7.3%)	-28 (-15.6%)	-23 (-14.7%)
New Hampshire	127	51	40%	42	33%	171	59	35%	51	30%	44 (34.6%)	8 (15.7%)	9 (21.4%)
New Jersey	733	279	38%	238	32%	731	270	37%	227	31%	-2 (-0.3%)	-9 (-3.2%)	-11 (-4.6%)
New Mexico	439	206	47%	176	40%	521	211	40%	185	36%	82 (18.7%)	5 (2.4%)	9 (5.1%)
New York	1,493	540	36%	470	31%	1,493	587	39%	494	33%	0 (-)	47 (8.7%)	24 (5.1%)
North Carolina	1,553	528	34%	452	29%	1,557	553	35%	496	32%	4 (0.3%)	25 (4.7%)	44 (9.7%)
North Dakota	105	53	50%	46	44%	100	39	39%	35	35%	-5 (-4.8%)	-14 (-26.4%)	-11 (-23.9%)
Ohio	1,274	466	37%	401	31%	1,286	492	38%	418	32%	12 (0.9%)	26 (5.6%)	17 (4.2%)
Oklahoma	671	260	39%	223	33%	774	278	36%	245	32%	103 (15.4%)	18 (6.9%)	22 (9.9%)
Oregon	512	207	40%	176	34%	456	199	44%	159	35%	-56 (-10.9%)	-8 (-3.9%)	-17 (-9.7%)
Pennsylvania	1,577	621	39%	541	34%	1,490	614	41%	541	36%	-87 (-5.5%)	-7 (-1.1%)	0 (-)
Rhode Island	104	59	57%	54	52%	83	42	50%	41	49%	-21 (-20.2%)	-17 (-28.8%)	-13 (-24.1%)
South Carolina	969	490	51%	426	44%	1,046	464	44%	413	39%	77 (7.9%)	-26 (-5.3%)	-13 (-3.1%)
South Dakota	203	97	48%	89	44%	197	86	44%	76	39%	-6 (-3.0%)	-11 (-11.3%)	-13 (-14.6%)
Tennessee	1,193	443	37%	398	33%	1,288	519	40%	454	35%	95 (8.0%)	76 (17.2%)	56 (14.1%)
Texas	3,821	1,771	46%	1,551	41%	3,583	1,642	46%	1,417	40%	-238 (-6.2%)	-129 (-7.3%)	-134 (-8.6%)
Utah	309	47	15%	39	13%	296	72	24%	70	24%	-13 (-4.2%)	25 (53.2%)	31 (79.5%)
Vermont	69	29	42%	21	31%	98	32	32%	20	20%	29 (42.0%)	3 (10.3%)	-1 (-4.8%)
Virginia	943	367	39%	311	33%	925	359	39%	307	33%	-18 (-1.9%)	-8 (-2.2%)	-4 (-1.3%)
Washington	600	261	43%	226	38%	563	246	44%	223	40%	-37 (-6.2%)	-15 (-5.7%)	-3 (-1.3%)
West Virginia	394	148	38%	126	32%	411	136	33%	114	28%	17 (4.3%)	-12 (-8.1%)	-12 (-9.5%)
Wisconsin	848	388	46%	342	40%	792	358	45%	318	40%	-56 (-6.6%)	-30 (-7.7%)	-24 (-7.0%)
Wyoming	165	63	38%	50	31%	164	59	36%	54	33%	-1 (-0.6%)	-4 (-6.3%)	4 (8.0%)
National	42,884	17,105	40%	14,678	34%	42,636	16,694	39%	14,409	34%	-248 (-0.6%)	-411 (-2.4%)	-269 (-1.8%)
Puerto Rico	495	235	48%	185	37%	494	248	50%	221	45%	-1 (-0.2%)	13 (5.5%)	36 (19.5%)

This Crash*Stats and other general information on highway traffic safety may be accessed by Internet users at: www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/departments/nrd-30/nca/AvailInf.html