Traffic Safety Facts
2019 Data

November 2021
DOT HS 813 206

NHTSA

Rural/Urban Comparison of Motor Vehicle Traffic Fatalities

In this fact sheet for 2019 the information is presented as follows.

For this fact sheet, urban boundaries are determined by the State highway departments and approved by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the areas outside of those boundaries are described as rural. The State highway departments use the boundaries decided by the Census Bureau.[1]

Key Findings

- Of the 36,096 motor vehicle traffic fatalities in 2019 there were 16,340 (45%) that occurred in rural areas, 19,595 (54%) in urban areas, and 161 (less than 0.5%) in areas of unknown land use.
- According to the Census Bureau's 2019 American Community Survey, an estimated 19 percent of the U.S. population lived in rural areas, and according to the Federal Highway Administration only 30 percent of the total vehicle miles traveled in 2019 were in rural areas. However, rural areas accounted for 45 percent of all traffic fatalities in 2019.
- Rural traffic fatalities decreased by 10 percent from 18,089 in 2010 to 16,340 in 2019, whereas urban traffic fatalities increased by 34 percent from 14,659 in 2010 to 19,595 in 2019.
- In 2019 the fatality rate per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT) was 1.9 times higher in rural areas than in urban areas (1.66 versus 0.86).
- Speeding-related fatalities in 2019 occurred in almost equal proportions in rural and urban areas. Of the 16,340 rural traffic fatalities in 2019, 4,359 (27%) were killed in speeding-related crashes. Of the 19,595 urban traffic fatalities, 5,079 (26%) were killed in speeding-related crashes.
- Rural alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities decreased by 16 percent from 5,491 in 2010 to 4,586 in 2019, while urban alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities increased by 21 percent from 4,564 in 2010 to 5,506 in 2019.
- The proportions of alcohol-impaired driving fatalities in rural areas decreased from 30 percent in 2010 to 28 percent in 2019 and in urban areas decreased from 31 percent in 2010 to 28 percent in 2019.
- The 2019 National Occupant Protection Use Survey (NOPUS) observed that the seat belt use rate among front-seat passenger vehicle occupants in urban areas was 90.8 percent, and rural occupants were observed to have a use rate of 90.4 percent.
- Based on known restraint use in fatal crashes, 48 percent of rural passenger vehicle occupants killed in 2019 were unrestrained as compared to 45 percent of urban passenger vehicle occupants killed.

[1] See the Census Bureau link to define urban and rural areas at census.gov/programs-surveys/geography/guidance/geo-areas/urban-rural.html.

U.S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

This fact sheet contains information on fatal motor vehicle traffic crashes based on data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS). Refer to the end of this publication for more information on FARS.

A motor vehicle traffic crash is defined as an incident that involved one or more motor vehicles in transport that originated on a public trafficway, such as a road or highway. Crashes that occurred on private property, including parking lots and driveways, are excluded. The terms "motor vehicle traffic crash" and "traffic crash" are used interchangeably.

Overview

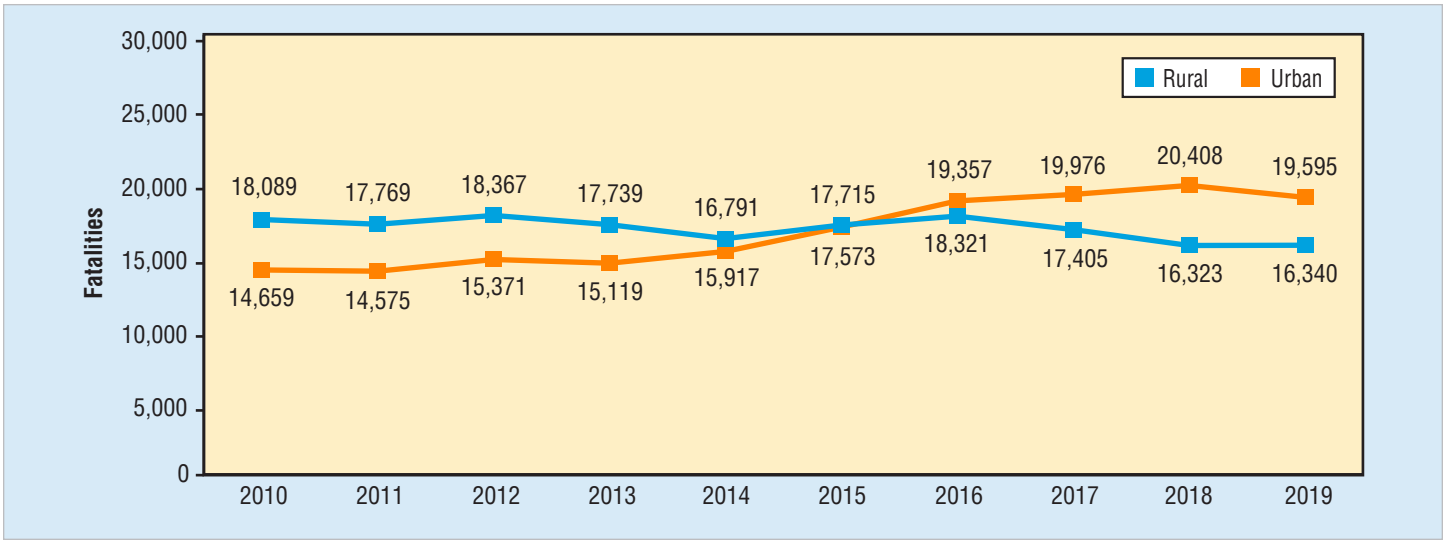
In 2019:

- There were 14,671 (44%) fatal traffic crashes in rural areas resulting in 16,340 (45%) traffic fatalities.
- There were 18,425 (55%) fatal traffic crashes in urban areas resulting in 19,595 (54%) traffic fatalities.
- The remaining 148 (less than 0.5%) fatal traffic crashes resulting in 161 (less than 0.5%) traffic fatalities occurred in areas of unknown land use (not enough information to determine if the crashes were inside the rural or urban boundaries).
- According to the 2019 American Community Survey from the Census Bureau, an estimated 19 percent of the U.S. population lived in rural areas, and according to FHWA only 30 percent of the total VMT in 2019 were in rural areas. However, rural areas accounted for 45 percent of all traffic fatalities in 2019.

Figure 1 presents the traffic fatality trends in the most recent 10-year period by land use:

- Rural fatalities decreased by 10 percent from 18,089 in 2010 to 16,340 in 2019.
- Urban fatalities increased by 34 percent from 14,659 in 2010 to 19,595 in 2019.

Figure 1
Fatalities, by Land Use, 2010–2019



Source: FARS 2010–2018 Final File, 2019 Annual Report File (ARF)
Note: Excludes fatalities of unknown land use.

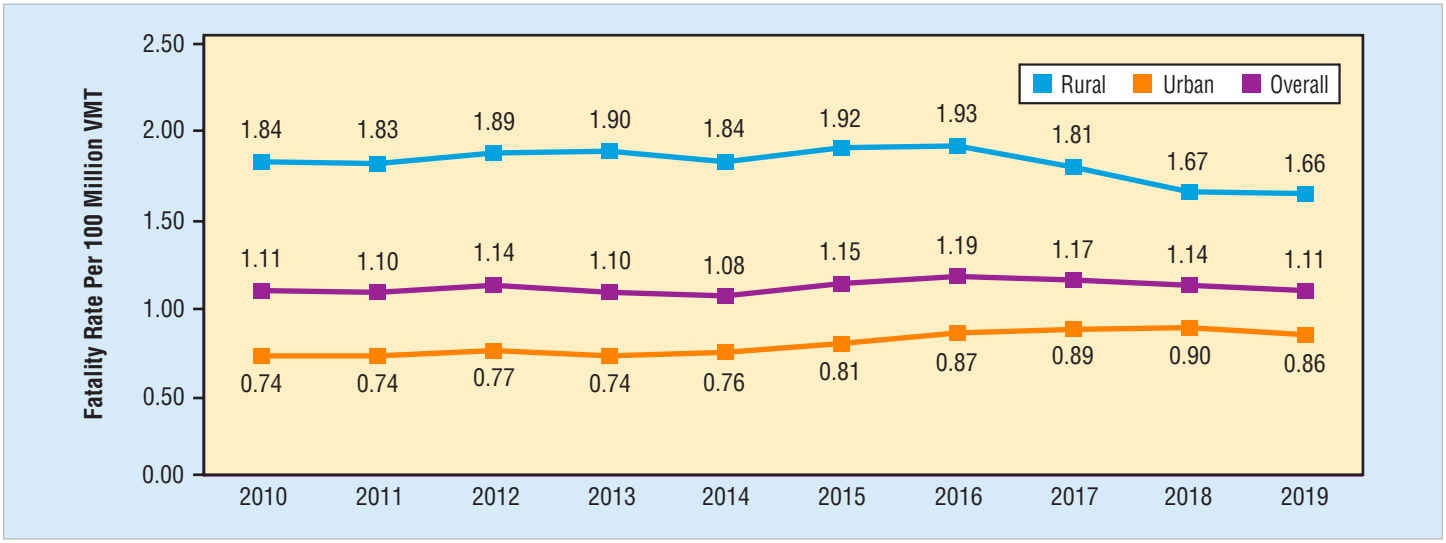
The number of urban fatalities has been larger than the number of rural fatalities since 2016. In years prior to 2016 rural fatalities were larger than urban fatalities. Below is a 10-year comparison of rural and urban characteristics:

- Urban VMT increased by 15 percent since 2010; rural VMT remained almost the same compared to 2010.
- According to the Census Bureau, urban population increased by 13 percent from 2010 to 2019, and rural population decreased by 15 percent.
- Passenger vehicle occupant fatalities in urban areas increased by 20 percent since 2010, rural areas decreased by 12 percent.
- Motorcyclist fatalities in urban areas increased by 36 percent since 2010; rural areas decreased by 14 percent.
- Pedestrian fatalities in urban areas increased by 62 percent since 2010; rural areas decreased by 4.8 percent.
- Pedalcyclist fatalities in urban areas increased by 49 percent since 2010; rural areas increased by 4.6 percent.

Figure 2 presents the fatality rates per 100 million VMT by land use (rural, urban, and overall) in the 10-year period from 2010 to 2019.

- The fatality rate in rural areas decreased by 10 percent from 1.84 in 2010 to 1.66 in 2019.
- The fatality rate in urban areas increased by 16 percent from 0.74 in 2010 to 0.86 in 2019.
- In 2019 the fatality rate was 1.9 times higher in rural areas than in urban areas (1.66 versus 0.86).

Figure 2
Fatality Rates per 100 Million VMT, by Land Use, 2010–2019



Sources: FARS 2010-2018 Final File, 2019 ARF; VMT – FHWA

Crash Characteristics

Time of Day

More rural traffic fatalities occurred during the day (6 a.m. to 5:59 p.m.) and more urban traffic fatalities occurred during the night (6 p.m. to 5:59 a.m.).

- Of the 16,340 rural traffic fatalities in 2019, there were 9,003 (55%) that occurred during the day, 7,150 (44%) occurred at night, and 187 (1%) occurred at unknown times.
- Of the 19,595 urban traffic fatalities in 2019, there were 8,304 (42%) that occurred during the day, 11,218 (57%) occurred at night, and 73 (<1%) occurred at unknown times.

Light Condition

Table 1 shows fatalities in 2019 by light condition and land use.

- Of the 16,340 fatalities in rural areas, 9,000 (55%) occurred during daylight and 6,415 (39%) occurred when the light conditions were dark; the remaining 925 (6%) fatalities occurred during dawn, dusk, or other/unknown light conditions.
- Of the 19,595 urban fatalities, 10,690 (55%) occurred when the light conditions were dark, 8,054 (41%) occurred during daylight conditions, and 851 (4%) during dawn, dusk, or other/unknown light conditions.

Table 1
Fatalities, by Light Condition and Land Use, 2019

Light Condition	Land Use						Total	
	Rural		Urban		Unknown			
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Daylight	9,000	55%	8,054	41%	81	50%	17,135	47%
Dark	6,415	39%	10,690	55%	50	31%	17,155	48%
Dark – Not Lighted	*5,746*	*35%*	*4,062*	*21%*	*25*	*16%*	*9,833*	*27%*
Dark – Lighted	*573*	*4%*	*6,459*	*33%*	*19*	*12%*	*7,051*	*20%*
Dark – Unknown Lighting	*96*	*1%*	*169*	*1%*	*6*	*4%*	*271*	*1%*
Dawn	375	2%	337	2%	4	2%	716	2%
Dusk	413	3%	416	2%	7	4%	836	2%
Other/Unknown	137	1%	98	1%	19	12%	254	1%
Total	**16,340**	**100%**	**19,595**	**100%**	**161**	**100%**	**36,096**	**100%**

Source: FARS 2019 ARF

Weather Condition

In 2019, in rural areas 80 percent of the fatalities were in crashes when the weather condition at the time of the crash was clear, 8 percent when it was raining, 2 percent when there was snow or sleet, and 10 percent during other weather conditions. In comparison, in urban areas 84 percent of fatalities were in crashes when the weather condition at the time of the crash was clear, 8 percent when it was raining, 1 percent when there was snow or sleet, and 8 percent during other weather conditions.

Roadway Departure and Intersection

In 2019 there were 17,939 fatalities in roadway departure crashes, 50 percent of total fatalities. Of these roadway departure fatalities, 59 percent occurred in rural areas and 40 percent in urban areas. Roadway departure, as defined by FHWA occurs when a vehicle in the crash crosses an edge line, a centerline, or leaves the traveled way.

In 2019 there were 10,180 fatalities in intersection crashes. Of these, 29 percent occurred in rural areas and 70 percent in urban areas. Intersection crashes, as defined by FHWA include crashes at intersection, intersection-related, driveway access, and driveway-access-related.

Table 2
Roadway Departure and Intersection Fatalities, by Land Use, 2019

	Land Use						Total	
	Rural		Urban		Unknown			
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Roadway Departure*	10,631	59%	7,241	40%	67	0%	17,939	100%
Intersection**	2,978	29%	7,173	70%	29	0%	10,180	100%

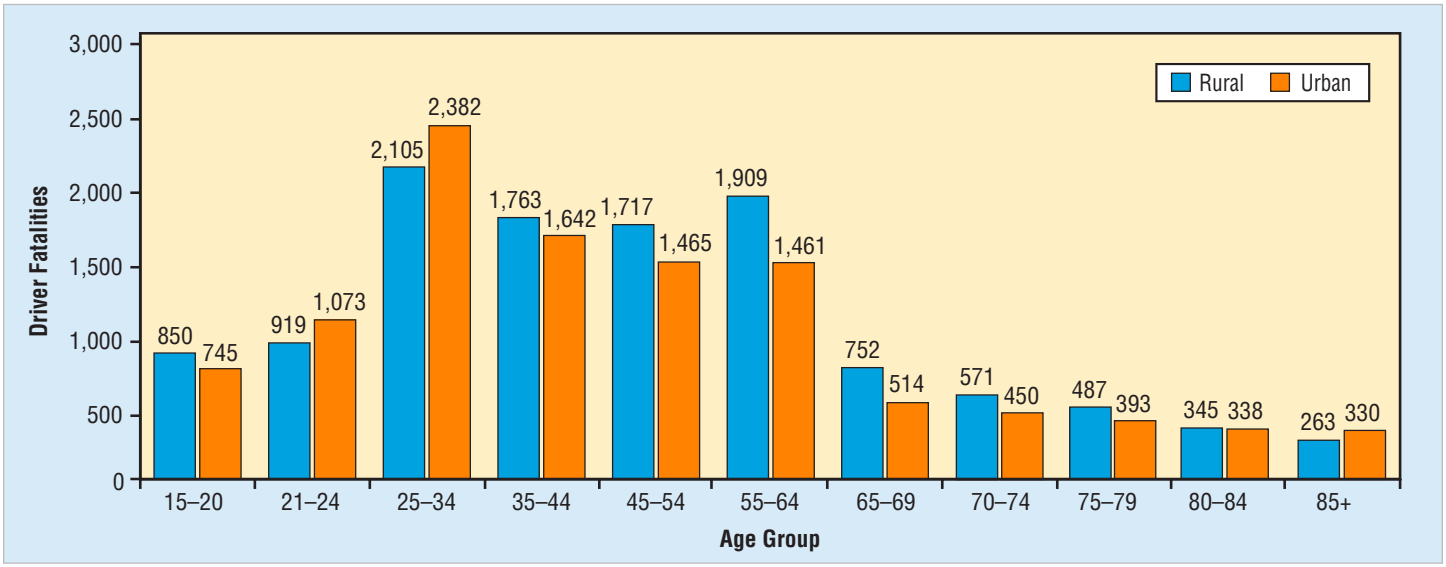
Source: FARS 2019 ARF
*Roadway departure as defined by FHWA: A crash in which a vehicle crosses an edge line, a centerline, or leaves the traveled way.
**Intersection as defined by FHWA: Intersection or intersection-related; driveway access or driveway-access-related.

Drivers

Figure 3 shows drivers killed in traffic crashes in 2019 by land use and age group. Driver fatalities in 2019 were higher in rural areas when compared to urban areas for almost all age groups except the 21-to-24, 25-to-34, and 85+ age groups. Drivers involved in fatal crashes in 2019 in rural areas were found to have a higher percentage of valid driver licenses than urban drivers (87% to 82%).

There were 22,613 drivers killed in traffic crashes in 2019. Sixty-seven percent of drivers killed in rural areas died at the scene of the crash, compared to 49 percent of drivers killed in urban areas. Data also shows that 41 percent of all drivers killed were transported to hospitals and 2 percent of those drivers died en route. Of the drivers who were transported to hospitals and died en route, 57 percent were in rural areas and 42 percent were in urban areas.

Figure 3
Driver Fatalities, by Land Use and Age Group, 2019



Source: FARS 2019 ARF
Note: Excludes driver fatalities of unknown land use and drivers under 15 years old.

Speeding

NHTSA considers a crash to be speeding-related if the driver was charged with a speeding-related offense or if an officer indicated that racing, driving too fast for conditions, or exceeding the posted speed limit was a contributing factor in the crash.

In 2019:

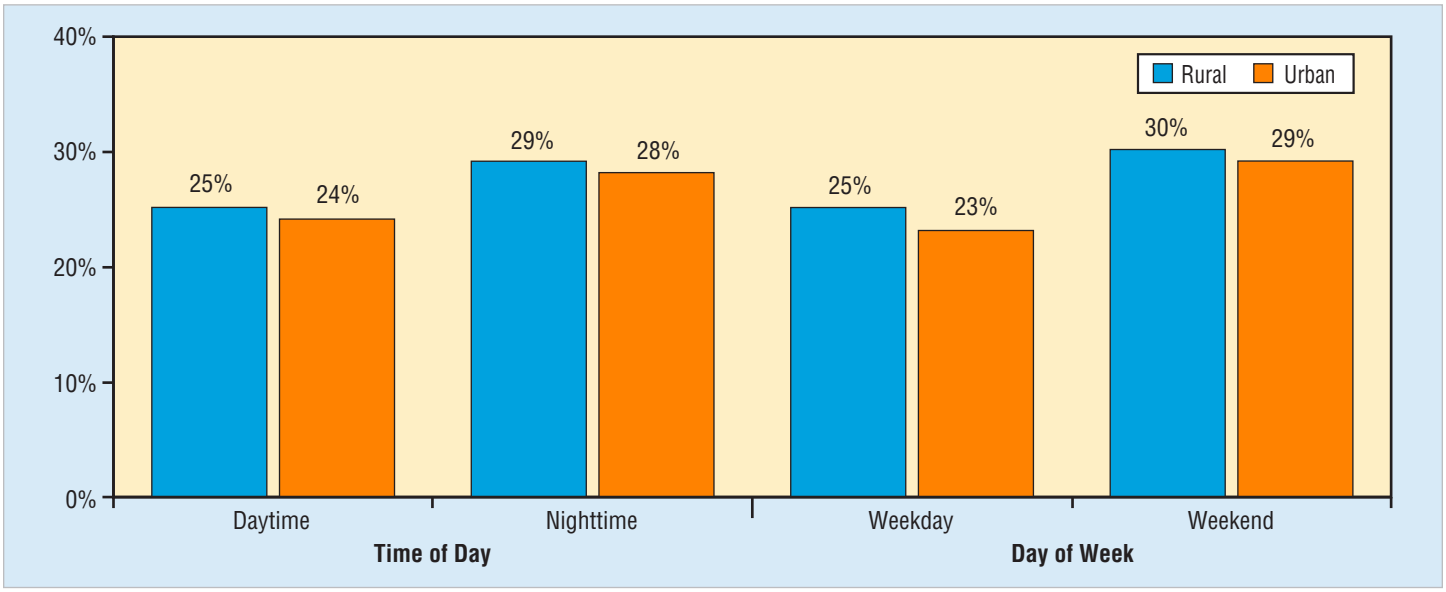
- Of the 36,096 traffic fatalities, 9,478 (26%) were killed in speeding-related crashes.
- Of the 16,340 rural traffic fatalities, 4,359 (27%) were killed in speeding-related crashes.
- Of the 19,595 urban traffic fatalities, there were 5,079 (26%) who were killed in speeding-related crashes, the same percentage as all fatalities.

Figure 4 shows the rural and urban percentages of speeding-related fatalities in traffic crashes in 2019 by time of day and day of week (weekday – Monday 6 a.m. to Friday 5:59 p.m.; weekend – Friday 6 p.m. to Monday 5:59 a.m.):

- Of the fatalities in crashes at nighttime, 29 percent were speeding-related in rural areas compared to 28 percent in urban areas.
- Of the fatalities in crashes during weekends, 30 percent were speeding-related in rural areas compared to 29 percent in urban areas.

Figure 4

Percentages of Speeding-Related Fatalities in Traffic Crashes, by Land Use, Time of Day, and Day of Week, 2019



Source: FARS 2019 ARF
Note: Daytime – 6 a.m. to 5:59 p.m.
Nighttime – 6 p.m. to 5:59 a.m.
Weekday – Monday 6 a.m. to Friday 5:59 p.m.
Weekend – Friday 6 p.m. to Monday 5:59 a.m.

Sixty-six percent of drivers involved in urban fatal crashes in 2019 were on roadways where the posted speed limits were 50 mph or less. In rural fatal crashes, 72 percent of drivers involved were on roadways where the posted speed limit was 55 mph or higher. On roadways where the posted speed limit was 50 mph or less, 24 percent of the drivers involved in fatal crashes in rural areas were speeding compared to 17 percent of drivers in urban areas. On roadways where the posted speed limit was 55 mph or higher, 16 percent of the drivers were speeding in both rural and urban areas.

Alcohol

Drivers are considered to be alcohol-impaired when their blood alcohol concentrations (BACs) are .08 grams per deciliter (g/dL) or higher. Thus, any fatality that occurred in a crash involving a driver with a BAC of .08 g/dL or higher is considered to be an alcohol-impaired-driving fatality. Table 3 presents the number of traffic fatalities and alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities by land use.

- In 2019 the proportion of alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities in both rural and urban areas was 28 percent, in rural areas decreasing from 30 percent in 2010 to 28 percent in 2019 and in urban areas decreasing from 31 percent in 2010 to 28 percent in 2019.
- Of the 10,142 alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities in 2019, there were 4,586 (45%) that occurred in rural areas, 5,506 (54%) that occurred in urban areas, and 50 (0.5%) were unknowns.
- Alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities slightly increased from 10,136 in 2010 to 10,142 in 2019.
  - Rural alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities decreased by 16 percent from 5,491 in 2010 to 4,586 in 2019.
  - Urban alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities increased by 21 percent from 4,564 in 2010 to 5,506 in 2019.

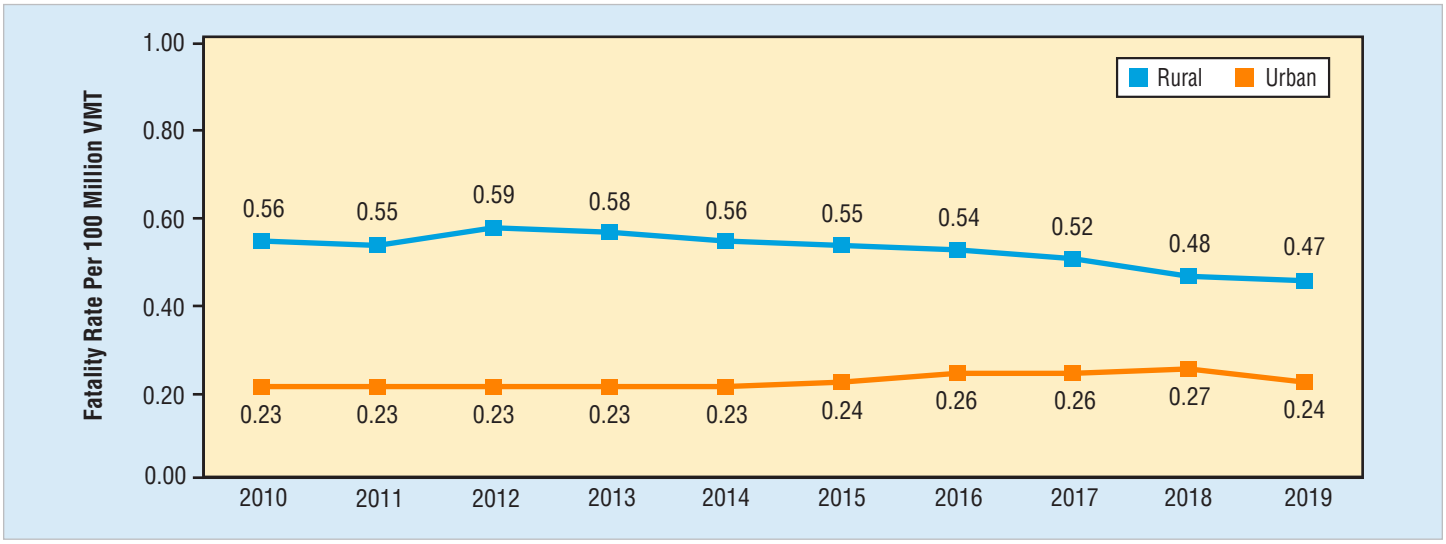
Table 3
Total Fatalities and Alcohol-Impaired-Driving Fatalities, by Land Use, 2010 and 2019

	2010			2019		
		Alcohol-Impaired-Driving Fatalities (BAC=.08+ g/dL)			Alcohol-Impaired-Driving Fatalities (BAC=.08+ g/dL)	
Land Use	Total Fatalities	Number	Percent	Total Fatalities	Number	Percent
Rural	18,089	5,491	30%	16,340	4,586	28%
Urban	14,659	4,564	31%	19,595	5,506	28%
Total*	**32,999**	**10,136**	**31%**	**36,096**	**10,142**	**28%**

Source: FARS 2010 Final File, 2019 ARF
*Includes fatalities where land use was unknown.

Figure 5 shows alcohol-impaired-driving fatality rate per 100 million VMT from 2010 to 2019. In rural areas, the alcohol-impaired driving fatality rate declined from 0.56 in 2010 to 0.47 in 2019, but in urban areas the alcohol-impaired-driving fatality rate has increased slightly from 0.23 in 2010 to 0.24 in 2019.

Figure 5
Alcohol-Impaired-Driving Fatality Rate per 100 Million VMT, by Land Use, 2010–2019



Sources: FARS 2010-2018 Final File, 2019 ARF; VMT – FHWA

Of the 50,930 drivers involved in fatal traffic crashes in 2019, there were 9,598 (19%) who were alcohol-impaired. Of these alcohol-impaired drivers, 4,231 (44%) were driving in rural areas at the time of the crash and 5,323 (55%) were driving in urban areas.

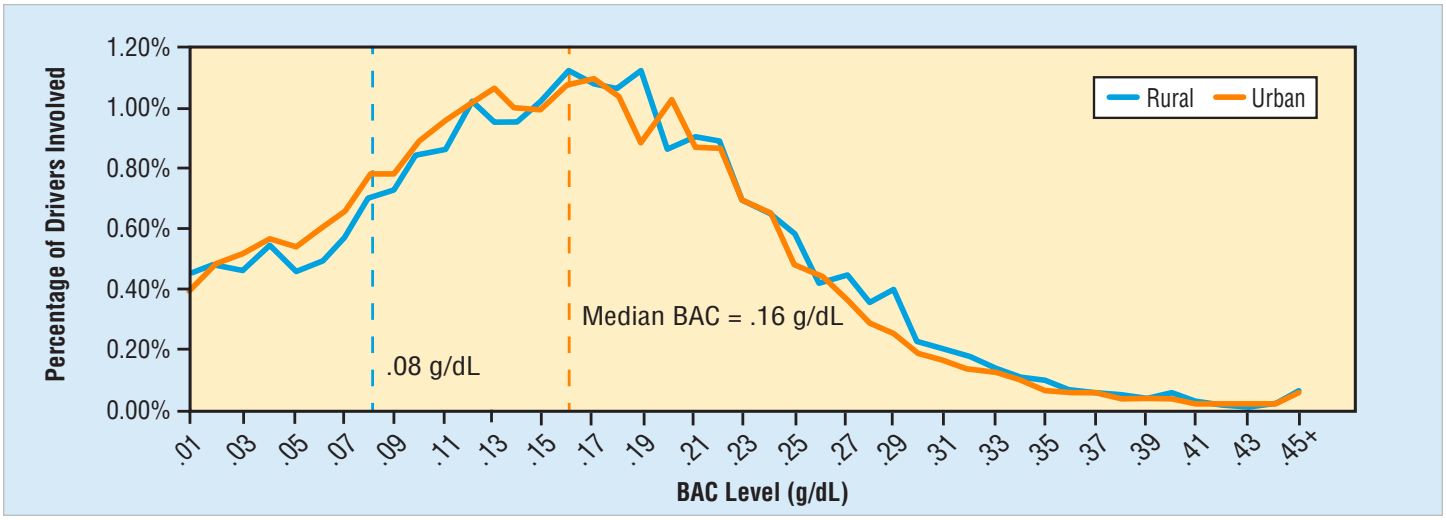
The highest percentage of alcohol-impaired drivers involved in fatal crashes by age group in 2019 was the 21-to-24 age group (27%), followed by the 25-to-34 age group (25%) and the 35-to-44 age group (22%). Rural alcohol-impaired drivers followed the same trend with the 21-to-24 age group (26%), followed by the 25-to-34 age group (25%) and the 35-to-44 age group (23%). Similarly, in urban areas the highest percentage of alcohol-impaired drivers was the 21-to-24 age group (27%), followed by the 25-to-34 age group (25%) and the 35-to-44 age group (21%).

Among drivers involved in fatal crashes in 2019 who had one or more previous convictions for driving while intoxicated, 51 percent of rural drivers were alcohol-impaired and 50 percent of urban drivers were alcohol-impaired. Note that FARS records drivers' previous DWI records that occurred within 5 years from the crash date.

As shown in Figure 6, the most frequently recorded BAC among drinking drivers involved in fatal crashes in rural areas was .19 g/dL and in urban areas was .17 g/dL. The median BAC for drivers with BACs of .01 or higher in both rural and urban areas was .16 g/dL.

Figure 6

Distribution of BACs for Drivers With BACs of .01 g/dL or Higher Involved in Fatal Crashes, by Land Use, 2019



Source: FARS 2019 ARF

Of the all drivers involved in fatal crashes in 2019, in rural areas the proportion of alcohol-impaired drivers (BAC=.08+ g/dL) was highest for motorcycle operators (28%), followed by drivers of pickups (23%), passenger cars (21%), SUVs (19%), vans (12%), and large trucks (2%). In urban areas the proportion of alcohol-impaired (BAC=.08+ g/dL) was highest among motorcycle riders (29%), followed by passenger cars (20%), pickups (19%), SUVs (18%), vans (11%), and large trucks (2%).

Table 4

Total Drivers and Alcohol-Impaired Drivers Involved, by Vehicle Type and Land Use, 2019

Vehicle Type	Rural			Urban			Total*		
	Total Drivers	Alcohol-Impaired (BAC =.08+ g/dL)		Total Drivers	Alcohol-Impaired (BAC =.08+ g/dL)		Total Drivers	Alcohol-Impaired (BAC =.08+ g/dL)	
		Number	Percent		Number	Percent		Number	Percent
Passenger Car	7,301	1,514	21%	12,134	2,449	20%	19,469	3,975	20%
Light Truck**	9,374	1,917	20%	10,270	1,803	18%	19,704	3,731	19%
– Pickup	*4,676*	*1,092*	*23%*	*3,823*	*731*	*19%*	*8,519*	*1,828*	*21%*
– SUV	*3,764*	*704*	*19%*	*5,235*	*927*	*18%*	*9,033*	*1,637*	*18%*
– Van	*890*	*109*	*12%*	*1,124*	*129*	*11%*	*2,018*	*238*	*12%*
Large Truck	2,854	57	2%	2,085	40	2%	4,949	98	2%
Motorcycle	1,968	551	28%	3,118	907	29%	5,111	1,466	29%
Total* **	**22,205**	**4,231**	**19%**	**28,556**	**5,323**	**19%**	**50,930**	**9,598**	**19%**

Source: FARS 2019 ARF
*Includes drivers involved when land use was unknown.
**Includes other/unknown light-truck vehicle types.
***Includes buses and other/unknown vehicle types.

Restraint Use

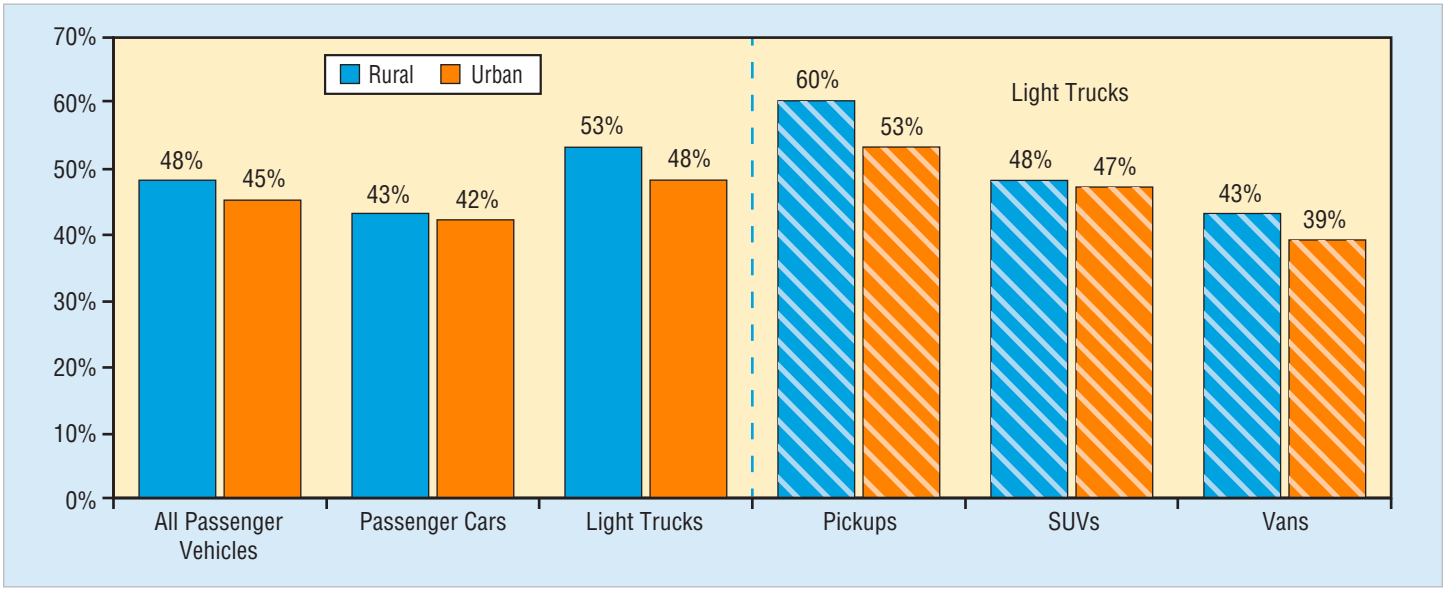
The 2019 NOPUS observed that the seat belt use rate among front seat passenger vehicle (defined as passenger cars and light trucks) occupants in urban areas was 90.8 percent, and rural occupants were observed to have a use rate of 90.4 percent (see the NHTSA Research Note, Seat Belt Use in 2019 – Overall Results, Report No. DOT HS 812 875, at https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/812875).

Of the 22,215 passenger vehicle occupants killed in 2019, there were 11,971 (54%) killed in rural areas and 10,187 (46%) in urban areas. Figure 7 presents the 2019 rural and urban percentages (based on known restraint use) of unrestrained passenger vehicle occupant fatalities by vehicle type (passenger cars and light trucks including pickups, SUVs, and vans).

In 2019 (based on known restraint use):

- Forty-eight percent of passenger vehicle occupants killed in rural areas were unrestrained as compared to 45 percent of the passenger vehicle occupants killed in urban areas.
- Sixty percent of rural pickup occupants killed were unrestrained – the highest percentage of any passenger vehicle occupants killed among both rural and urban areas.

Figure 7
Percentages of Unrestrained* Passenger Vehicle Occupant Fatalities, by Land Use and Vehicle Type, 2019



Source: FARS 2019 ARF
*Based on known restraint use

Rollover

Of the 11,971 passenger vehicle occupants killed in rural areas in 2019, there were 4,117 (34%) killed in vehicles that rolled over. Of the 10,187 passenger vehicle occupants killed in urban areas, 2,155 (21%) were in vehicles that rolled over. Data further show that of those killed in rollover vehicles, 66 percent passenger vehicle occupants in rural areas and 63 percent of passenger vehicle occupants in urban areas were unrestrained (based on known restraint use).

SUVs in rural fatal crashes in 2019 experienced the highest rollover percentage at 32 percent. Other rural rollover percentages were 28 percent for pickups, 20 percent for vans, 19 percent for passenger cars, and 15 percent for large trucks. In urban areas, vehicles experienced lower rollover percentages: 14 percent for SUVs, 12 percent for pickups, 8 percent each for both passenger cars and large trucks, and 7 percent for vans.

Of the vehicles involved in 2019 in single-vehicle fatal crashes, 48 percent of the vehicles in rural areas and 17 percent in urban areas rolled over, whereas in multi-vehicle fatal crashes, 10 percent of the vehicles in rural areas and 6 percent in urban areas rolled over.

Nonoccupants

Nonoccupants are defined as pedestrians, pedalcyclists, or other nonoccupants. In 2019:

- Of the 6,205 pedestrians killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes, 1,091 (18%) died in rural areas, 5,070 (82%) died in urban areas, and 44 (1%) died in unknown areas.
- Of the 846 pedalcyclists killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes, 183 (22%) died in rural areas, 661 (78%) died in urban areas, and 2 (less than 0.5%) died in unknown areas.

State

Table 5 presents the number and percentage of rural and urban traffic fatalities, VMT, and fatality rate per 100 million VMT for each State and the District of Columbia in 2019. Puerto Rico is included in this table, but not included in the overall U.S. total. In 2019 fatality rates per 100 million VMT among States (excluding the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico) in rural areas ranged from 0.22 in Rhode Island to 2.81 in Delaware, and in urban areas ranged from 0.24 in Vermont to 1.62 in New Mexico.

Table 5

Fatalities, VMT, and Fatality Rate per 100 Million VMT, by State and Land Use, 2019

State	Land Use						Total Fatalities	VMT (million)		Fatality Rate Per 100 Million VMT		
	Rural		Urban		Unknown							
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Total
Alabama	535	58%	395	42%	0	0%	930	29,011	42,723	1.84	0.92	1.30
Alaska	37	55%	29	43%	1	1%	67	2,590	3,291	1.43	0.88	1.14
Arizona	339	35%	595	61%	47	5%	981	16,690	53,591	2.03	1.11	1.40
Arkansas	342	68%	163	32%	0	0%	505	17,945	19,154	1.91	0.85	1.36
California	1,135	31%	2,463	68%	8	0%	3,606	56,480	284,356	2.01	0.87	1.06
Colorado	242	41%	351	59%	3	1%	596	16,216	38,418	1.49	0.91	1.09
Connecticut	47	19%	199	80%	3	1%	249	3,189	28,412	1.47	0.70	0.79
Delaware	71	54%	61	46%	0	0%	132	2,527	7,718	2.81	0.79	1.29
Dist of Columbia	0	0%	23	100%	0	0%	23	0	3,756	0.00	0.61	0.61
Florida	838	26%	2,343	74%	2	0%	3,183	37,531	188,983	2.23	1.24	1.41
Georgia	520	35%	971	65%	0	0%	1,491	31,810	101,318	1.63	0.96	1.12
Hawaii	21	19%	86	80%	1	1%	108	1,877	9,147	1.12	0.94	0.98
Idaho	169	75%	54	24%	1	0%	224	10,109	7,949	1.67	0.68	1.24
Illinois	357	35%	645	64%	7	1%	1,009	25,376	82,149	1.41	0.79	0.94
Indiana	492	61%	314	39%	3	0%	809	30,106	52,613	1.63	0.60	0.98
Iowa	244	73%	92	27%	0	0%	336	19,956	13,581	1.22	0.68	1.00
Kansas	300	73%	110	27%	1	0%	411	15,230	16,612	1.97	0.66	1.29
Kentucky	503	69%	229	31%	0	0%	732	26,597	22,813	1.89	1.00	1.48
Louisiana	375	52%	352	48%	0	0%	727	19,798	31,562	1.89	1.12	1.42
Maine	124	79%	30	19%	3	2%	157	10,251	4,620	1.21	0.65	1.06
Maryland	113	22%	402	77%	6	1%	521	10,712	49,503	1.05	0.81	0.87
Massachusetts	24	7%	310	93%	0	0%	334	3,052	61,837	0.79	0.50	0.51
Michigan	401	41%	578	59%	6	1%	985	31,282	70,891	1.28	0.82	0.96
Minnesota	213	59%	150	41%	1	0%	364	24,827	35,904	0.86	0.42	0.60
Mississippi	450	70%	193	30%	0	0%	643	23,996	17,095	1.88	1.13	1.56
Missouri	462	53%	418	48%	0	0%	880	34,510	44,659	1.34	0.94	1.11
Montana	159	86%	25	14%	0	0%	184	8,941	3,951	1.78	0.63	1.43
Nebraska	178	72%	70	28%	0	0%	248	11,663	9,579	1.53	0.73	1.17
Nevada	111	37%	191	63%	2	1%	304	5,639	23,155	1.97	0.82	1.06
New Hampshire	58	57%	42	42%	1	1%	101	5,554	8,274	1.04	0.51	0.73
New Jersey	62	11%	490	88%	7	1%	559	4,967	73,238	1.25	0.67	0.71
New Mexico	240	57%	184	43%	0	0%	424	16,423	11,349	1.46	1.62	1.53
New York	330	35%	600	64%	1	0%	931	25,487	98,499	1.29	0.61	0.75
North Carolina	745	54%	626	46%	2	0%	1,373	41,618	80,857	1.79	0.77	1.12
North Dakota	81	81%	16	16%	3	3%	100	6,876	2,950	1.18	0.54	1.02
Ohio	530	46%	611	53%	12	1%	1,153	35,022	79,672	1.51	0.77	1.01
Oklahoma	422	66%	217	34%	1	0%	640	22,020	22,628	1.92	0.96	1.43
Oregon	282	58%	207	42%	0	0%	489	13,608	22,200	2.07	0.93	1.37
Pennsylvania	501	47%	552	52%	6	1%	1,059	34,505	68,359	1.45	0.81	1.03
Rhode Island	2	4%	55	96%	0	0%	57	918	6,663	0.22	0.83	0.75
South Carolina	685	68%	316	32%	0	0%	1,001	26,015	31,925	2.63	0.99	1.73
South Dakota	84	82%	18	18%	0	0%	102	6,934	2,989	1.21	0.60	1.03
Tennessee	513	45%	621	55%	1	0%	1,135	26,184	56,708	1.96	1.10	1.37
Texas	1,455	40%	2,153	60%	7	0%	3,615	78,625	209,602	1.85	1.03	1.25
Utah	115	46%	131	53%	2	1%	248	8,888	24,023	1.29	0.55	0.75
Vermont	42	89%	5	11%	0	0%	47	5,221	2,124	0.80	0.24	0.64
Virginia	499	60%	328	39%	4	0%	831	29,392	56,040	1.70	0.59	0.97
Washington	232	45%	283	55%	4	1%	519	17,497	45,033	1.33	0.63	0.83
West Virginia	167	64%	87	33%	6	2%	260	9,610	9,466	1.74	0.92	1.36
Wisconsin	369	65%	191	34%	6	1%	566	33,386	32,962	1.11	0.58	0.85
Wyoming	124	84%	20	14%	3	2%	147	7,190	3,018	1.72	0.66	1.44
U.S. Total	**16,340**	**45%**	**19,595**	**54%**	**161**	**0%**	**36,096**	**983,853**	**2,277,919**	**1.66**	**0.86**	**1.11**
Puerto Rico	163	56%	126	44%	0	0%	289	1,082	13,628	15.06	0.92	1.96

Sources: FARS 2019 ARF; VMT – FHWA

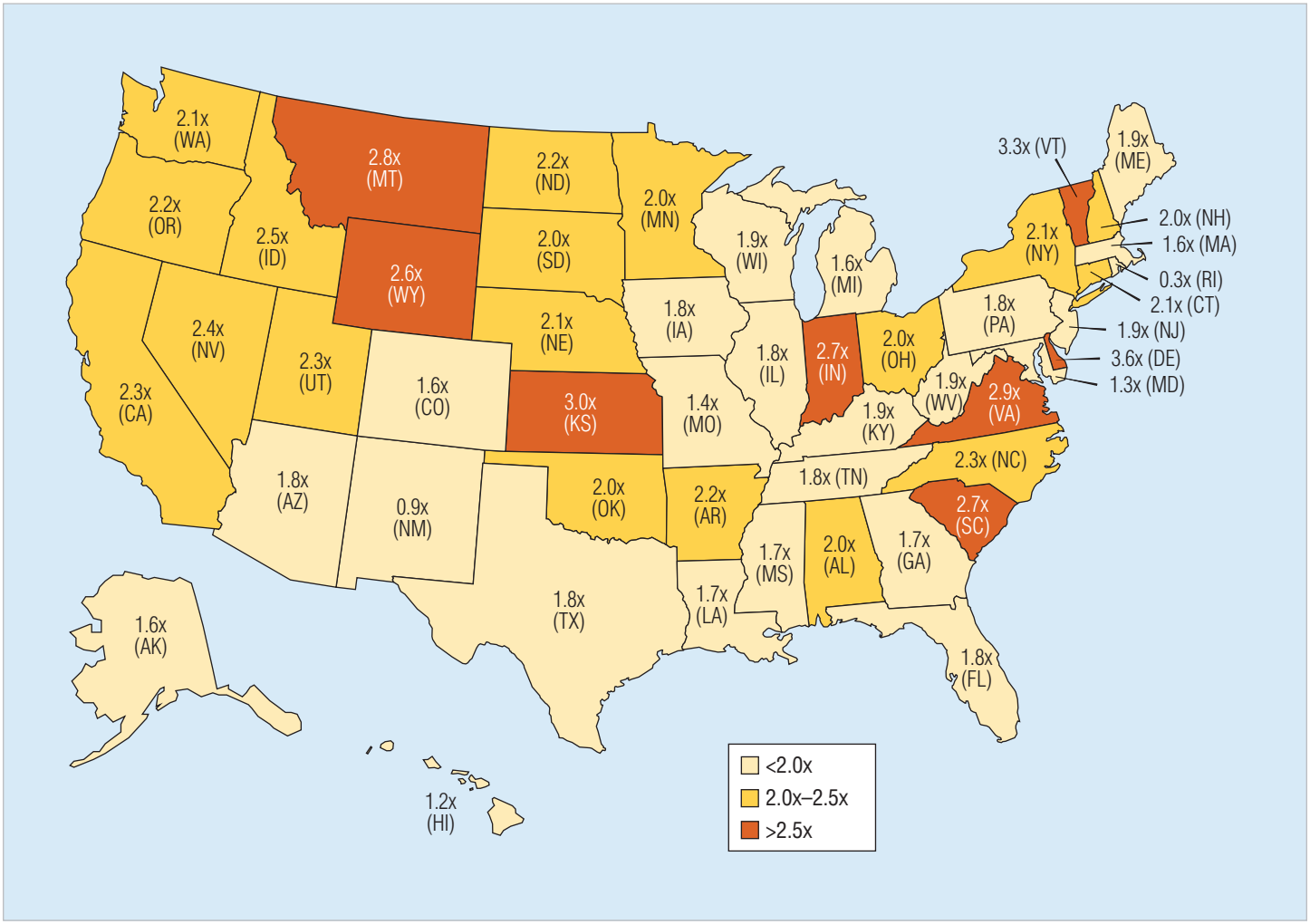
Note: Some States contain high proportions of unknown land use; many of these will be resolved when the file is finalized.

In 2019 the rural fatality rate per 100 million VMT was 1.9 times higher in rural areas compared to urban areas (1.66 and 0.86, respectively). The columns on the right side of Table 5 show fatality rates per 100 million VMT (rural, urban, and total), by State.

The ratios of rural to urban fatality rates by State are shown in Figure 8. The ratios of rural to urban fatality rates by State ranged from a high of 3.6 times in Delaware to a low of 0.3 times in Rhode Island. Not shown in Figure 8 are the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. The District of Columbia does not have any rural area and the rural fatality rate for Puerto Rico (16.4) is too high when compared to other States.

Additional data visualization tools for fact sheets can be found at https://cdan.dot.gov/DataVisualization/DataVisualization.htm#

Figure 8
Ratio of Rural to Urban Fatality Rate per 100 Million VMT, by State, 2019



Sources: FARS 2019 ARF; VMT – FHWA

Fatality Analysis Reporting System

FARS contains data on every fatal motor vehicle traffic crash within the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. To be included in FARS, a traffic crash must involve a motor vehicle traveling on a public trafficway that results in the death of a vehicle occupant or a nonoccupant within 30 days of the crash. The Annual Report File (ARF) is the FARS data file associated with the most recent available year, which is subject to change when it is finalized the following year to the final version known as the Final File. The additional time between the ARF and the Final File provides the opportunity for submission of important variable data requiring outside sources, which may lead to changes in the final counts. More information on FARS can be found at www.nhtsa.gov/crash-data-systems/fatality-analysis-reporting-system.

The updated final counts for the previous data year will be reflected with the release of the recent year's ARF. For example, along with the release of the 2019 ARF, the 2018 Final File was released to replace the 2018 ARF. The final fatality count in motor vehicle traffic crashes for 2018 was 36,835, which was updated from 36,560 in the 2018 ARF. The number of rural fatalities from the 2018 Final file was 16,323, which was updated from 16,411 from the 2018 ARF and the number of urban fatalities from the 2018 Final file was 20,408, which was updated from 19,498 from the 2018 ARF.

The 2016 and 2017 Final Files have been amended, but this amendment did not change the overall number of fatal crashes or fatalities.

A technical report on geospatial summary of crash fatalities can be found at https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/812607, Webb, C. N. (2020, May). Geospatial summary of crash fatalities (Report No. DOT HS 812 607). National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

The suggested APA format citation for this document is:

National Center for Statistics and Analysis. (2021, November). *Rural/urban comparison of motor vehicle traffic fatalities: 2019 data* (*Traffic Safety Facts.* Report No. DOT HS 813 206). National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

For More Information:

Motor vehicle traffic crash data are available from the National Center for Statistics and Analysis (NCSA), NSA-230. NCSA can be contacted at NCSARequests@dot.gov or 800-934-8517. NCSA programs can be found at www.nhtsa.gov/data. Additional data tools, such as the State Traffic Safety Information (STSI), Fatality and Injury Reporting System Tool (FIRST), and more can be found at https://cdan.nhtsa.gov/. To report a motor vehicle safety-related problem or to inquire about safety information, contact the Vehicle Safety Hotline at 888-327-4236 or www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/VehicleComplaint/.

Other fact sheets available from NCSA are *Alcohol-Impaired Driving, Bicyclists and Other Cyclists, Children, Large Trucks, Motorcycles, Occupant Protection in Passenger Vehicles, Older Population, Passenger Vehicles, Pedestrians, School-Transportation-Related Crashes, Speeding, State Alcohol-Impaired-Driving Estimates, State Traffic Data, Summary of Motor Vehicle Crashes,* and *Young Drivers.* Detailed data on motor vehicle traffic crashes are published annually in *Traffic Safety Facts: A Compilation of Motor Vehicle Crash Data.* The fact sheets and Traffic Safety Facts annual report can be found at https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/

U.S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration