

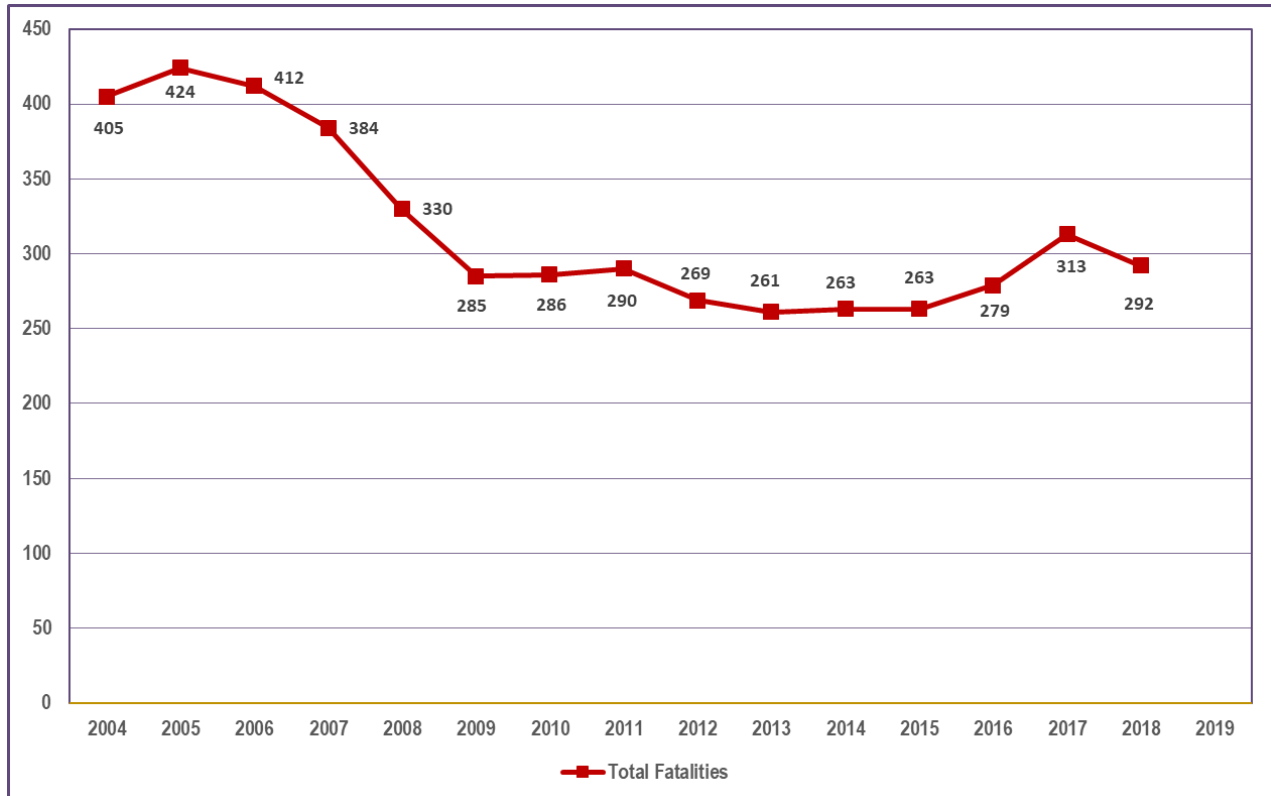


TPB Safety Activities Fact Sheet

BACKGROUND

Fatalities resulting from roadway crashes in metropolitan Washington have increased in recent years (see Figure 1). The Transportation Planning Board (TPB) is concerned about roadway safety in the region and has intensified efforts to improve safety outcomes.

FIGURE 1: Metropolitan Washington: Total Annual Roadway Fatalities 2004-2018



TPB SAFETY ACTIVITIES

Since 2002, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' [Street Smart](#) program has sought to raise awareness about pedestrian and bicycle safety. The region-wide public safety campaign educates drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists about safe use of roadways in the District of Columbia, suburban Maryland, and Northern Virginia. In addition to the Street Smart program, the TPB's Transportation Safety Subcommittee meets regularly to coordinate on safety issues with our local jurisdictions and state Department of Transportation partners

In 2019, the TPB invited the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia Departments of Transportation to share their efforts to reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries in the region and to solicit their ideas for what more the TPB can do to help.

In May 2019, the TPB commissioned a Regional Roadway Safety Study for the metropolitan Washington region to delve deeper into the issue.

REGIONAL SAFETY STUDY

The study is currently underway and is being advised by a panel of TPB staff and highway safety officials from the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia. All findings are being vetted through the TPB and various supporting committees. The study is expected to be released in Fall 2020.

The objectives of this study are:

- to understand the factors contributing to fatal and serious injury crashes;
- to determine where crashes on the roadway transportation network are over-represented;
- to identify and recommend proven effective solutions;
- to provide the TPB and member jurisdictions specific suggestions to improve safety; and
- to inform TPB staff's future efforts on roadway safety.

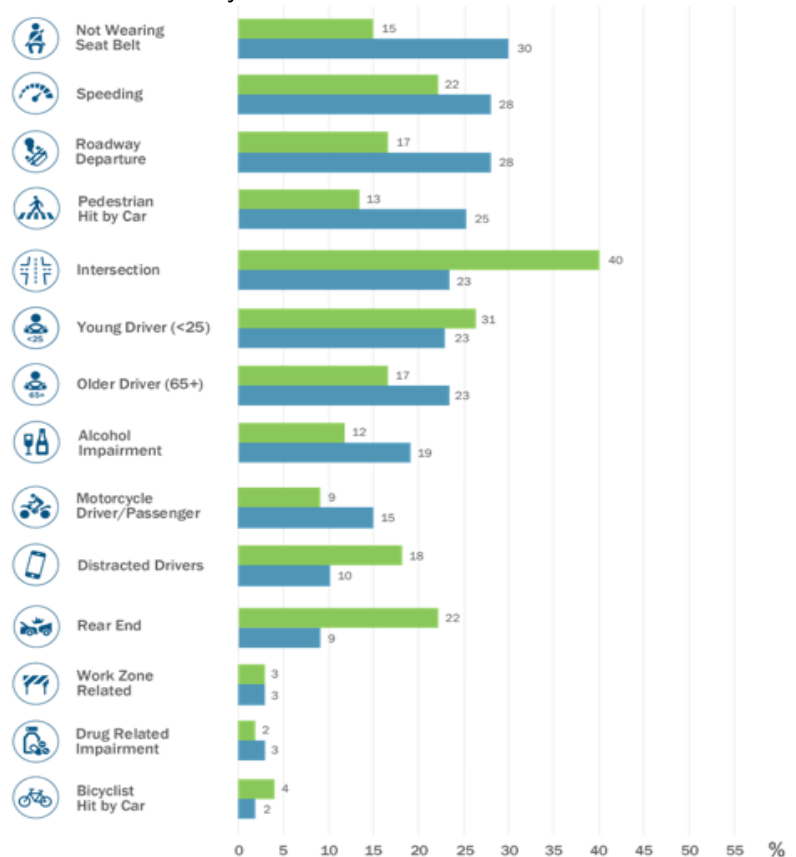
FACTORS AFFECTING ROADWAY CRASHES

Analysis of the data¹ show that people not wearing seat belts is the number one contributing factor in fatal crashes. In fact, 30 percent of fatal crashes involve someone not wearing their seat belt. The second most common factor in fatal crashes is tied between excessive speed and roadway departure. Twenty-eight percent of fatal crashes in the region involve someone speeding and 28 percent of fatal crashes involve a vehicle leaving the roadway. This is an example of two factors being related in that someone driving too fast is more likely to run off the road. The third most

Factors Affecting Roadway Crashes (2013-2017)

Note: the percentages do not add up to 100 because most crashes are affected by multiple factors - for example speeding, impairment, and not wearing a seat belt can all be factors in a single fatal crash.

■ Serious Injuries ■ Fatalities



¹ The crash data were acquired from the Maryland State Highway Administration, The Virginia Department of Transportation, the District Department of Transportation, and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

common type of fatal crash occurs when a driver hits a pedestrian – this is a factor in 25 percent of fatal crashes in the region.

HOW YOU CAN HELP – TRAFFIC SAFETY TIPS

Everyone in our region can do something to save lives. The following are traffic safety tips from the Street Smart campaign.

If you're driving,

- Slow down and obey the speed limit.
- Stop for pedestrians at crosswalks.
- Be careful when passing buses or stopped vehicles.
- When turning, yield to people walking and biking.
- Look for bicyclists before opening your door.
- Allow at least 3 feet when passing bikes.
- Avoid using your cell phone and never text while driving.

If you're walking,

- Cross the street at the corner and use marked crosswalks when they're available.
- Use the pushbuttons.
- Wait for the walk signal to cross the street.
- Watch for turning vehicles.
- Before crossing, look left, right, and left again.
- Be visible. Wear something light or reflective after dark.
- Watch out for blind spots around trucks and buses.
- Avoid using your cell phone while you're crossing the street.
- On an off-street trail, obey all posted signage and approach intersections with caution.

If you're biking,

- Obey signs and signals.
- Never ride against traffic.
- Ride in a straight line at least 3 feet from parked cars.
- Use hand signals to tell drivers what you intend to do.
- Wear a helmet.
- Use lights at night and when visibility is poor.
- On an off-street trail, obey all posted signs and approach intersections with caution.