

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this publication is to provide the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT), the Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles and Public Safety (DMV/PS), and other State and local authorities with information on Nevada's traffic crash problems. It is one in a series to be provided annually. The data has been extracted from NDOT's Crash Analysis System (CAS). The fatal crash data represented within may not be consistent with data produced from the Fatal Analysis Reporting System (FARS). The two systems were developed independently and are used for different purposes.

Each year changes and improvements are incorporated into this document. The 1999 Nevada Traffic Crashes was solely produced from NDOT's Crash Analysis System. Due to change in the National Maximum Speed Limit in December of 1995 and the safety issues surrounding it, we have included statistics depicting speed related crashes, percentages and rates.

This document was prepared by personnel of the Safety Engineering Division of NDOT; however, the publication and the statistics therein would not be possible if it were not for the dedicated men and women of Nevada's State and local law enforcement agencies who respond to the scene of the 59,000 plus traffic crashes annually on Nevada's streets and highways. After they treat the injured and secure the scene, they methodically and professionally record the facts on a traffic crash report form.

The culmination of their efforts then become the facts and statistics you see reflected in this publication. We appreciate and respect their work. In addition to recording the facts, they provide information necessary for problem identification. Problem identification drives the planning of specific enforcement, engineering and education efforts, which can be applied to decrease the number and severity of crashes on our streets and highways. Subsequently, lives can be saved, injuries prevented, and property damage and economic loss can be significantly reduced.



STATE OF NEVADA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

KENNY C. GUINN
Governor

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Dear Reader:

It is my pleasure to present this document, which has been developed by the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) with the support of law enforcement officials statewide. The information contained within provides valuable insight into the safety conditions of the state's roadways. With this material, the state can enhance and improve the various educational enforcement, and engineering programs to make our roads safer for the millions of people who use them each year.

For instance, the Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles and Public Safety (DMV&PS) will be able to improve its operations including the testing and licensing of drivers, the enforcement of traffic laws and motor carrier safety regulations, and the training of law enforcement personnel.

The Nevada Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) within DMV&PS utilizes this document to develop programs through federal grants targeting such things as speeding and drunk driving. Not only does the crash data highlight the need for these programs, it also helps evaluate their effectiveness.

The NDOT uses the data to improve roadway design and eliminate crash problems. Crash location information helps identify areas that may require modification and provide information for the design of future state highways.

In addition, local public and private agencies and organizations use the document to monitor the success of their efforts.

I hope you find this material as valuable as I do. It is an excellent example of the coordination necessary between state and local government working together to make Nevada's roads safer.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kenny C. Guinn".

Kenny C. Guinn
Governor

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Although Nevada's crash rates per 100 million vehicle miles has been reduced in the past 10 years, unfortunately Nevada still ranks among the top ten states in the nation with the highest crash rates. Nevada is the seventh largest state in size and 35th in population. More than 1.8 million people reside in our state with 90.2% located in urban areas and 9.8% living in rural communities. The growing population in Nevada and heavy tourism traffic are reflected in the trends and statistics presented herein.

The 1999 calendar year ended with approx. 1,400,000 licensed drivers in the state of Nevada an increase of 6.1% over 1998. During that same time frame, there was a total of 59,075 traffic crashes, of which 39,904 were property damage only, 18,862 were injury producing, and 309 were fatal traffic crashes. This reflects a 1.0 % decrease in overall crashes from the total 59,726 recorded in 1998. However, fatal crashes decreased only 1.9%, but injury crashes gained 2.0 % (18,862 crashes). The number of fatal crashes decreased, as well as the number of deaths by nine, from 361 in 1998 to 352 in 1999. Alcohol related fatal crashes also decreased in 1999 with 37.2 % of the fatalities attributed to alcohol involvement.

Nevada's crash rate per 100 million vehicle miles for fatal, injury, and total crashes continues to decrease. In 1985 the fatal crash rate was 2.94, and in 1999 only 1.78. Nevada's injury crashes followed a similar pattern with a 1985 rate of 148.87 and a 1999 rate of 108.69, a drop of 27%.

In November 1995 the federally mandated National Maximum Speed Limit was repealed. Replacement of posted speed limit signs began in December of 1995 The effects of the speed limit change are still being analyzed.

The four counties with the most crashes in 1999 were Clark with 74.6% of the total, Washoe with 15.1%, Elko with 2.0%, and Carson City with 1.9%. The county with the least crashes was Esmeralda, with only 72 crashes for the entire year. Clark County led the state in fatal, injury, and property damage crashes with 56%, 73%, and 73% respectively. Washoe County experienced the next highest numbers with 12%, 13%, and 16% respectively. Clark county fatalities declined from the previous year from 203 to 174 traffic deaths. Washoe County's fatalities rose from the previous year from 38 to 41 traffic deaths.

The three major types of fatal crashes are, pedestrian, ran off roadway-overturned, and angle collision. For injury crashes: rear-end collision, angle collision, and left turn collision.

The major factors contributing to the incidence of crash risk are for fatal crashes: Pedestrian in Roadway, D.U.I. alcohol, and inattentive driving and failure to yield. For injury crashes: Failure to yield failure to reduce speed and inattentive driving. For property damage only crashes: failure to yield, failure to reduce speed, and inattentive driving.

From 1997 through 1999, the Nevada Day was the deadliest holiday period with a total of 19 fatalities. New Years and Thanksgiving Days followed with a recorded 16 fatalities. Memorial Day was the third deadliest with 15 persons killed.

In 1997, there were 60 pedestrian deaths and 1,015 pedestrians injured. Then in 1998, a total of 47 pedestrian lives were claimed with 1,012 injured. In 1999, Nevada experienced another increase to 71 pedestrian fatalities and 1,086 injuries. Pedestrian fatalities in Washoe County increased from 9 in 1998 to 10 in 1999. By comparison, Clark County's pedestrian fatalities experienced an increase from 31 in 1998 to 48 in 1999. There were 8 bicycle fatalities in 1999, 7 occurred in Clark County and 1 occurring in Washoe County.

The economic loss associated with highway deaths and injuries in Nevada is staggering. The total estimated economic loss (based on national figures) resulting from traffic crashes in Nevada for 1999 is \$1,228,285,200.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Crash Analysis Unit of the Nevada Department of Transportation would not be able to produce this report without the fine work of the following individuals who were responsible for the coding and analysis of all our crash data for this publication. We wish to express our heartfelt thanks to each of you and keep up the good work!

Data Input Staff

Dave Clark
Larry Kelly
Jeri Casey
Dianna Marshall
Paige Clyde

Crash Analysis Staff

Theresa Pacheco

Special Gratitude to our other providers of data and information including:

The Nevada Department of Transportation – Planning Division
The Nevada Department of Transportation – Multimedia Division
The Nevada Department of Transportation – Imagery Division

In addition, we wish to acknowledge the men and women working in law enforcement and public safety agencies that are responsible for the production of all crash data in the field. We rely on their accurate completion of crash reports and without their attention to detail we would be unable to maintain a meaningful database.

1999 NEVADA HIGHWAY CRASH QUICK FACTS

	1997	1998	1999
TRAFFIC CRASHES			
FATAL CRASHES	322	315	309
INJURY CRASHES	17,228	18,487	18,862
PROPERTY DAMAGE CRASHES	41,420	40,924	39,904
TOTAL CRASHES	58,970	59,726	59,075
ALCOHOL CRASHES			
FATAL ALCOHOL CRASHES	116	126	114
INJURY ALCOHOL CRASHES	1,681	1,711	1,826
PERCENT OF TOTAL FATAL CRASHES ALCOHOL INVOLVED	36.0%	40.0%	36.9%
PERCENT OF TOTAL INJURY CRASHES ALCOHOL INVOLVED	9.76%	9.26%	9.7%
TRAFFIC CASUALTIES			
TOTAL FATALITIES	347	361	352
TOTAL INJURIES	27,075	28,400	29,020
TOTAL ALCOHOL FATALITIES	124	146	131
TOTAL ALCOHOL INJURIES	2,747	2,696	2,906
PERCENT OF TOTAL FATALITIES ALCOHOL INVOLVED	35.7%	40.4%	37.2%
PERCENT OF TOTAL INJURIES ALCOHOL INVOLVED	10.1%	9.5%	10.0%
OCCUPANTS			
DRIVERS KILLED	191	189	160
PASSENGERS KILLED	88	120	113
NON-OCCUPANTS			
PEDESTRIANS KILLED	60	47	71
PEDESTRIANS INJURED	1,015	1,018	1,086
BICYCLISTS KILLED	8	5	8
BICYCLISTS INJURED	794	754	788
DEMOGRAPHICS			
POPULATION	1,779,850	1,855,790	1,967,650
VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED (IN MILLIONS)	16,000	16,400	17,400
NEVADA'S FATAL CRASH RATE PER 100 MILLION VMT	1.97	1.92	1.78
NATIONAL FATAL CRASHES RATE PER 100 MILLION VMT	1.47	1.41	***1.38

*** Early Assessment of 1999 Crash Data