

Traffic Safety Facts

2006 Data

DOT HS 810 812
(Updated March 2008)

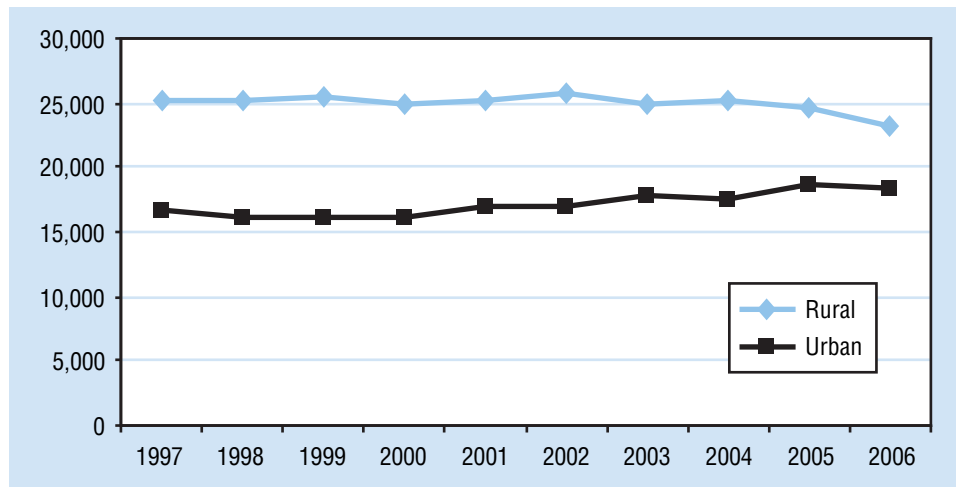
Rural/Urban Comparison

Overview

This fact sheet contains statistics on motor vehicle fatal crashes based on data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS). FARS is a census of fatal crashes within the 50 States, District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico (although Puerto Rico is not included in the national totals). Rural and urban boundaries are determined by the State highway departments and approved by the Federal Highway Administration.

In 2006, there were 38,588 fatal crashes resulting in 42,642 deaths. Rural areas accounted for 55 percent of the fatal crashes and 56 percent of the fatalities. Urban areas accounted for 45 percent of the fatal crashes and 44 percent of the fatalities.

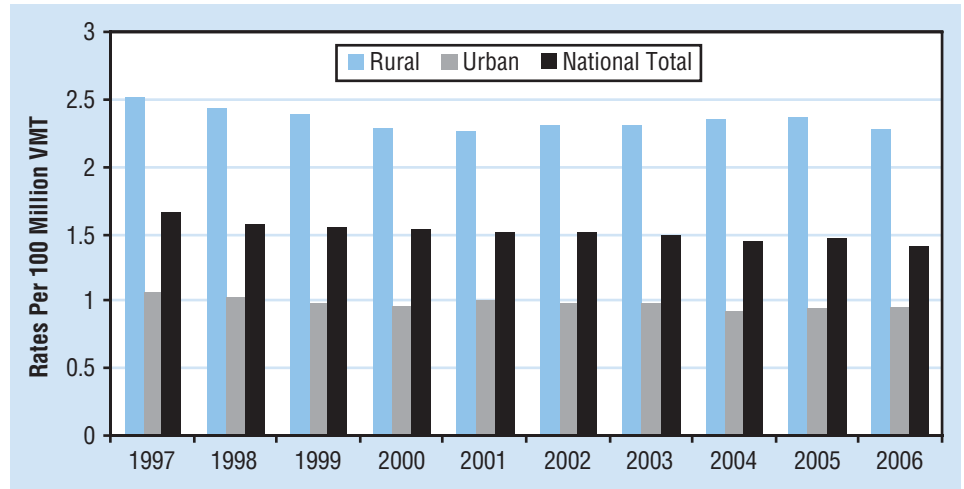
Figure 1
Motor Vehicle Traffic Fatalities by Year and Location 1997 to 2006



“Although 23 percent of the U.S. population lived in rural areas in 2006, rural fatal crashes accounted for 56 percent of all traffic fatalities in 2006. From 1997 to 2006, rural fatalities decreased 7 percent whereas urban fatalities increased by 9 percent.”

According to the 2006 Census, 23 percent of the U.S. population lived in rural areas, however, rural fatalities accounted for 56 percent of all traffic fatalities in 2006. From 1997 to 2006, rural fatalities decreased 7 percent whereas urban fatalities increased by 9 percent.

Figure 2
Fatalities per 100 Million Vehicles Miles Traveled by Year and Location 1997 to 2006



Source: Vehicle Miles Traveled - Federal Highway Administration.

“The fatality rate per 100 million vehicle miles traveled was 2.4 times higher in rural areas than in urban areas (2.25 and 0.93 respectively).”

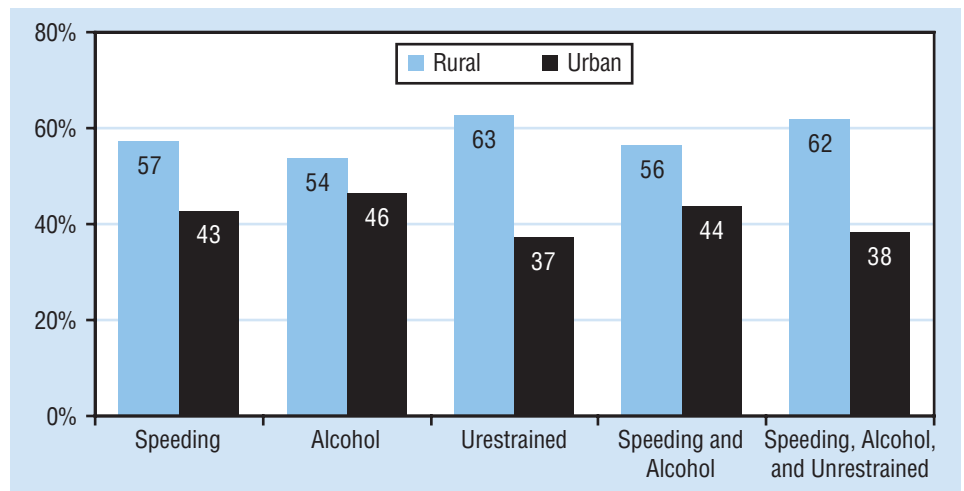
The fatality rate per 100 million vehicle miles traveled was 2.4 times higher in rural areas than in urban areas (2.25 and 0.93 respectively).

In rural areas, 52 percent of the fatal crashes occurred during the day, while 47 percent occurred at night. On the other hand, 56 percent of the urban crashes occurred during the night and 44 percent occurred at daytime. (Definition of Night: 6 p.m. to 5:59 a.m.; Day: 6 a.m. to 5:59 p.m.)

In 2006, 63 percent of all urban fatal crashes occurred on roadways where the posted speed limit was 50 mph or less. On rural roadways 68 percent of fatal crashes occurred when the posted speed limit was 55 mph or higher.

About 2 percent of rural fatal crashes are classified as hit-and-run, compared to 7 percent of urban fatal crashes.

Figure 3
Speeding, Alcohol Involvement, and Unrestrained Drivers Involved in Fatal Crashes by Location, 2006

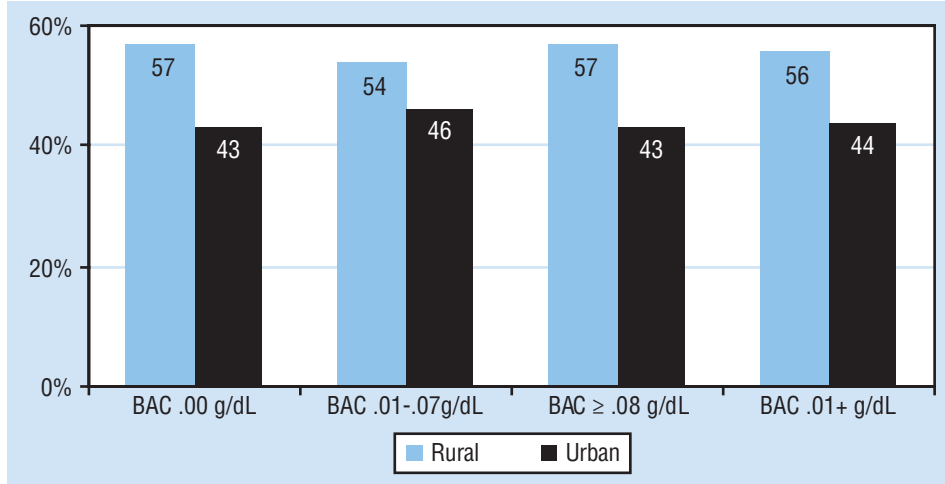


Note: Percent known land use.

In 2006, there were 12,190 drivers involved in fatal crashes who were speeding of which 57 percent were drivers in rural areas. Of these speeding drivers in rural areas 47 percent were drinking. Nevertheless, rural drivers made up 62 percent of total drivers found to have been drinking, speeding, and unrestrained. (See figure 3).

“In 2006, rural drivers accounted for 62 percent of drivers discovered to have been unrestrained, speeding, and drinking.”

Figure 4.
Percentage of Speeding Drivers Involved in Fatal Crashes by Location, 2006



Note: Percent known land use

In 2006, 14,840 drivers involved in fatal crashes had been drinking (blood alcohol concentration [BAC] = .01+ g/dL) and of these drivers 39 percent were cited for speeding. Rural drivers involved in fatal crashes represented 56 percent of drivers speeding and drinking. In both rural and urban areas sober drivers (BAC .00) were found speeding 14 percent or more of the time, but drivers with a BAC of .08 g/dL or higher were found speeding 41 percent of the time or more.

“The seat belt use rate among occupants of vehicles in urban areas was 84 percent and rural occupants were observed to have a rate of 78 percent (2007 NOPUS).”

The 2007 National Occupant Protection Use Survey (NOPUS) shows that the seat belt use rate among occupants of vehicles in urban areas was 84 percent and rural occupants were observed to have a rate of 78 percent, see D. Glassbrenner Ph.D., National Occupant Protection Use Survey in 2006, NHTSA Research Note, DOT HS 810 841 (September 2007).

Table 1
Passenger Vehicle Occupants Killed by Location, Ejection, and Restraint Use, 2006

Location and Ejection	Used		Not Used		Unknown		Total		
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Rural	Not Ejected	7,040	55	4,859	38	836	7	12,735	100
	Ejected	502	9	4,977	87	269	5	5,748	100
	Unknown	7	9	26	33	46	58	79	100
	Total	7,549	41	9,862	53	1,151	6	18,562	100
Urban	Not Ejected	4,649	53	3,202	37	915	10	8,766	100
	Ejected	221	8	2,164	83	218	8	2,603	100
	Unknown	7	15	13	28	27	57	47	100
	Total	4,877	43	5,379	47	1,160	10	11,416	100
Total	12,618	41	15,523	51	2,380	8	*30,521	100	

*Total includes 192 unknown fatalities

“In 2006, 57 percent of the passenger vehicle occupants killed in rural areas were unrestrained compared to 52 percent of those in urban areas with known restraint use.”

For more information:

Information on traffic fatalities is available from the National Center for Statistics and Analysis, NVS-421, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20590. NCSA can be contacted on 800-934-8517. Fax messages should be sent to 202-366-7078. General information on highway traffic safety can be accessed by Internet users at www.nhtsa.gov/portal/site/nhtsa/ncsa. To report a safety-related problem or to inquire about motor vehicle safety information, contact the Vehicle Safety Hotline at 888-327-4236.

Other fact sheets available from the National Center for Statistics and Analysis are *Overview, Alcohol, African American, Bicyclists and Other Cyclists (formerly titled Pedalcyclists), Children, Hispanic, Large Trucks, Motorcycles, Occupant Protection, Older Population, Pedestrians, Race and Ethnicity, School Transportation-Related Crashes, Speeding, State Alcohol Estimates, State Traffic Data, and Young Drivers*. Detailed data on motor vehicle traffic crashes are published annually in *Traffic Safety Facts: A Compilation of Motor Vehicle Crash Data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System and the General Estimates System*. The fact sheets and annual Traffic Safety Facts report can be accessed online at www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/CMSWeb/index.aspx.

Of the 30,521 passenger vehicle occupant fatalities in 2006, 57 percent of rural occupants were unrestrained and 31 percent were ejected; compared to 52 percent of urban occupants unrestrained and 23 percent ejected. (See Table 1)

In 2006, sport utility vehicles involved in rural fatal crashes experienced the highest rollover percentage of 45 percent. Other vehicle rollover percentages included: 34 percent for pickups, 25 percent for vans, 24 percent for passenger cars, and 18 percent for large trucks. The rollover rates for vehicles in urban areas were much lower: 24 percent for sport utility vehicles, 18 percent for pickups, 9 percent for vans, 10 percent for passenger cars, and 9 percent for large trucks.

In 2006, 61 percent of passenger vehicle occupant fatalities occurred in rural areas. Of the 18,562 passenger vehicle occupants killed in rural areas, 41 percent involved rollover. In urban areas, where 37 percent of the passenger vehicle occupant fatalities occurred, 26 percent involved rollover.

Rural drivers involved in fatal crashes are slightly more likely to have a valid driver license than urban drivers, (86 percent versus 83 percent, respectively.)

In 2006, 27,323 total drivers were killed in fatal crashes. Of those, 66 percent of rural and 51 percent of urban drivers died at the scene. From the total drivers killed, 40 percent (10,720) were transported to the hospital and 2 percent of these drivers died en route. Unfortunately, rural drivers represented 72 percent compared to 27 percent of urban drivers who died en route to the hospital.

Figure 5
Distribution of Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) of Drivers Involved in Fatal Crashes, by Location 2006

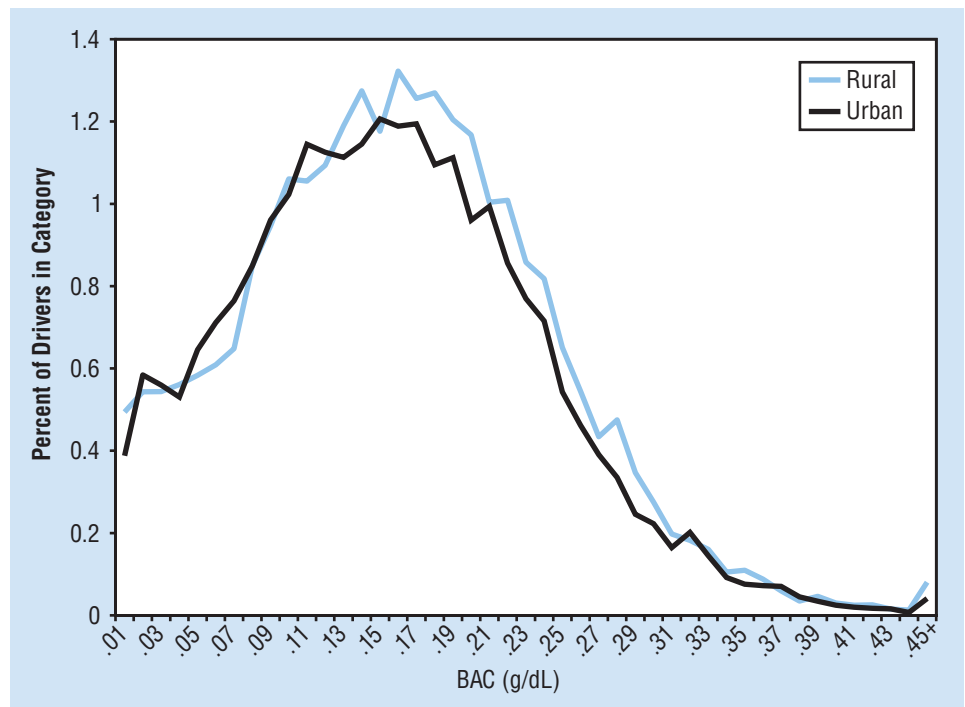


Table 2
Total Fatalities by State and Location, 2006

State	Location						Total	
	Rural		Urban		Unknown			
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Alabama	785	65	406	34	17	1	1,208	100
Alaska	43	58	29	39	2	3	74	100
Arizona	644	50	641	50	3	0	1,288	100
Arkansas	504	76	161	24	-	-	665	100
California	1,576	37	2,659	63	1	0	4,236	100
Colorado	306	57	229	43	-	-	535	100
Connecticut	49	16	252	84	-	-	301	100
Delaware	83	56	65	44	-	-	148	100
Dist of Columbia	-	-	37	100	-	-	37	100
Florida	1,284	38	1,899	56	191	6	3,374	100
Georgia	740	44	725	43	228	13	1,693	100
Hawaii	65	40	96	60	-	-	161	100
Idaho	200	75	67	25	-	-	267	100
Illinois	480	38	773	62	1	0	1,254	100
Indiana	539	60	360	40	-	-	899	100
Iowa	340	77	99	23	-	-	439	100
Kansas	365	78	103	22	-	-	468	100
Kentucky	688	75	225	25	-	-	913	100
Louisiana	472	48	510	52	-	-	982	100
Maine	161	86	25	13	2	1	188	100
Maryland	285	44	363	56	3	0	651	100
Massachusetts	48	11	382	89	-	-	430	100
Michigan	664	61	420	39	1	0	1,085	100
Minnesota	346	70	148	30	-	-	494	100
Mississippi	673	74	238	26	-	-	911	100
Missouri	751	69	345	31	-	-	1,096	100
Montana	249	95	14	5	-	-	263	100
Nebraska	209	78	60	22	-	-	269	100
Nevada	158	37	274	63	-	-	432	100
New Hampshire	75	59	52	41	-	-	127	100
New Jersey	89	12	526	68	157	20	772	100
New Mexico	363	75	120	25	1	0	484	100
New York	611	42	845	58	-	-	1,456	100
North Carolina	1,089	70	470	30	-	-	1,559	100
North Dakota	107	96	4	4	-	-	111	100
Ohio	846	68	392	32	-	-	1,238	100
Oklahoma	586	77	179	23	-	-	765	100
Oregon	332	70	145	30	-	-	477	100
Pennsylvania	753	49	766	50	6	0	1,525	100
Rhode Island	9	11	72	89	-	-	81	100
South Carolina	894	86	143	14	-	-	1,037	100
South Dakota	164	86	27	14	-	-	191	100
Tennessee	589	46	434	34	264	21	1,287	100
Texas	1,986	57	1,488	43	1	0	3,475	100
Utah	175	61	112	39	-	-	287	100
Vermont	82	94	5	6	-	-	87	100
Virginia	563	58	397	41	3	0	963	100
Washington	360	57	270	43	-	-	630	100
West Virginia	299	73	48	12	63	15	410	100
Wisconsin	486	67	238	33	-	-	724	100
Wyoming	174	89	21	11	-	-	195	100
National	23,339	55	18,359	43	944	2	42,642	100
Puerto Rico	249	49	258	51	-	-	507	100