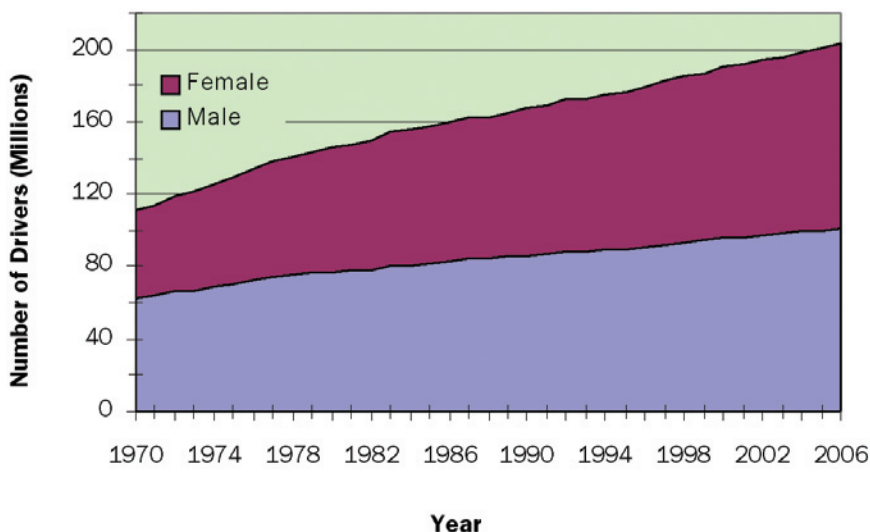


4 DRIVERS

The 2000 Census revealed that the United States had 281.4 million people, an increase of 33 million people in 10 years. By 2010, the population is projected to approach 310 million. The growth in numbers of licensed drivers is following the trend of population growth very closely. The illustrations in this section provide a brief overview of licensed drivers by State, age, sex, and rate per population.

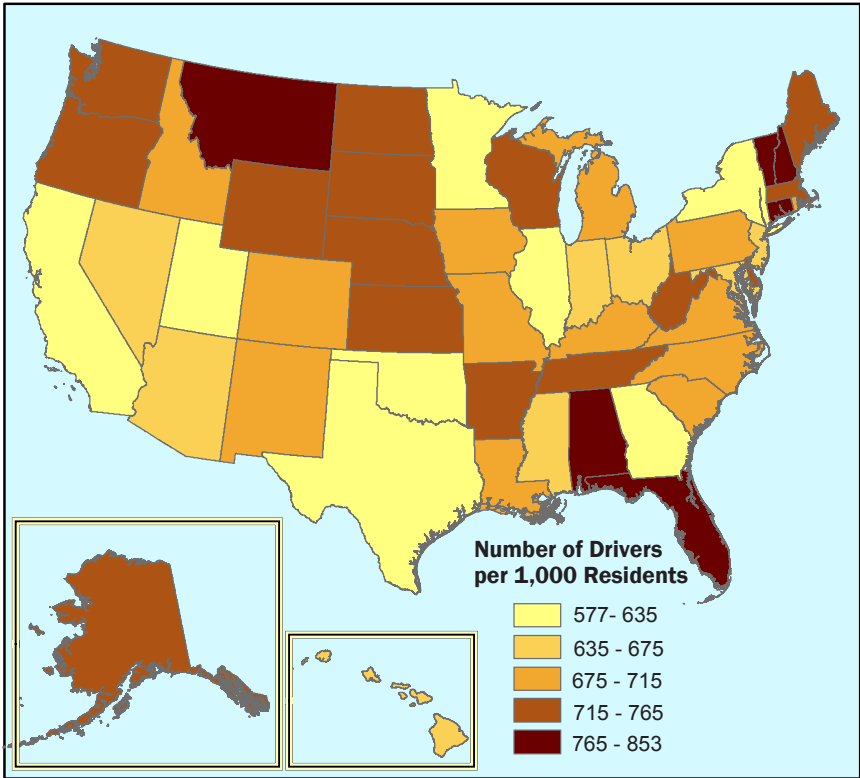
Figure 4-1. Increase in Number of Licensed Drivers by Gender, 1970-2006



IN 2006, 87 percent of the driving-age population was licensed to drive a motor vehicle as compared to 57 percent in 1950. In 2005, for the first time, the number of licensed female drivers surpassed male drivers.

Data Source: U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Office of Highway Policy Information, Highway Statistics

Figure 4-2. Licensed Drivers per 1,000 Residents by State, 2006

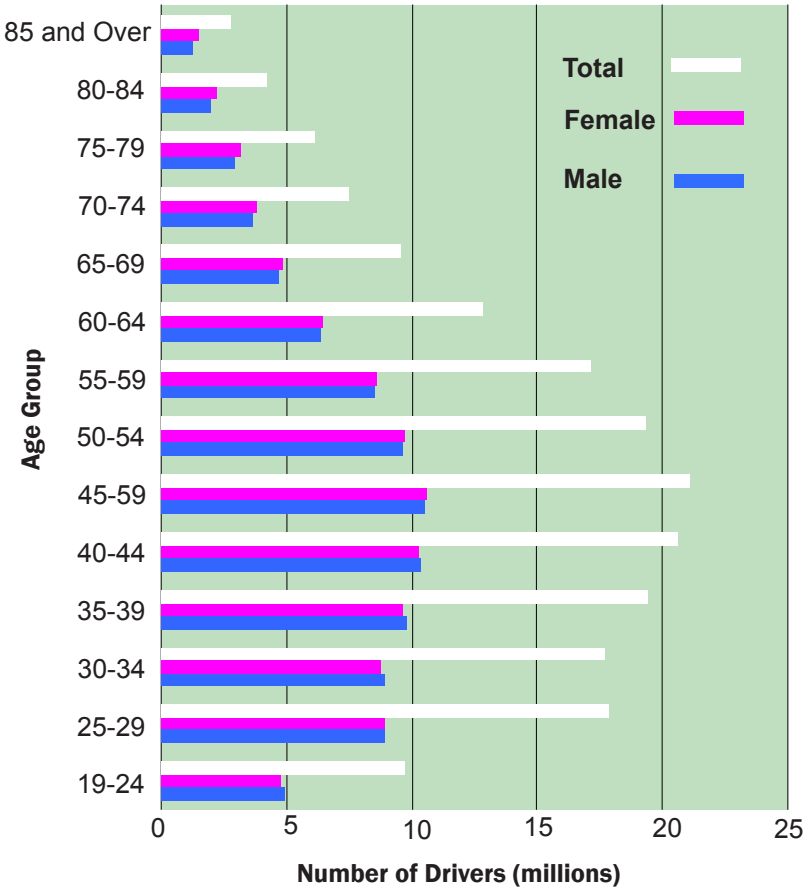


THE NUMBER OF licensed drivers per 1,000 residents differs significantly from State to State. The average percentage of residents who are licensed drivers ranges from a low of 58 percent to more than 85 percent of State residents.

Data Source: U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Office of Highway Policy Information, Highway Statistics

DRIVERS

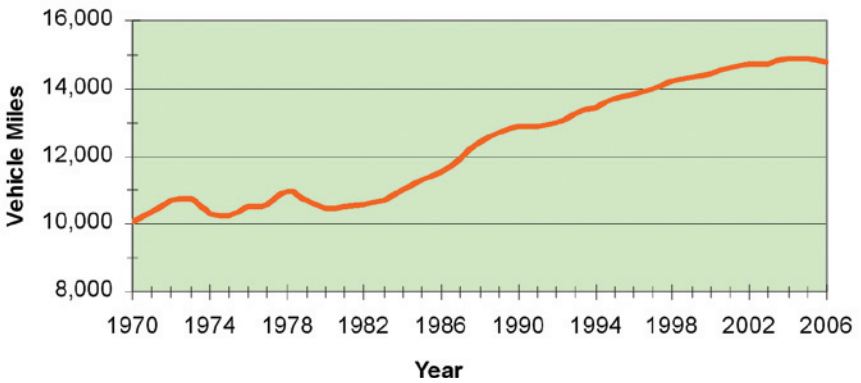
Figure 4-3. Licensed Drivers by Age and Gender, 2006



IN 2006, THERE were nearly 203 million licensed drivers in the United States. As the average age of the U.S. population shifts upward with the “baby boom” bulge, the trend in licensed drivers follows. In 2006, the 40–44 and 45–49 age groups contained the largest share of drivers.

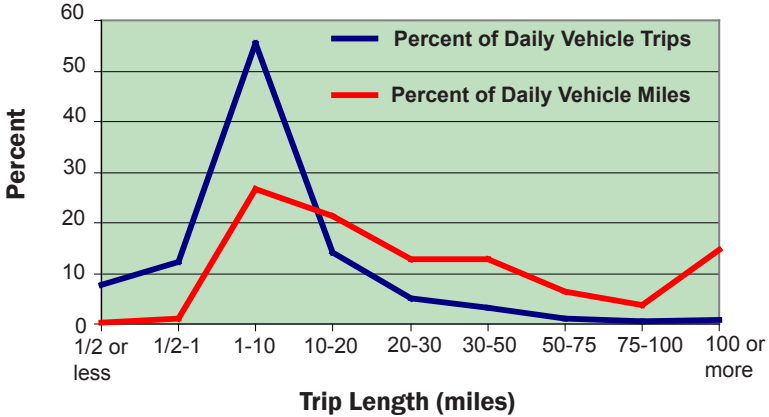
Data Source: U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Office of Highway Policy Information, Highway Statistics

Figure 4-4. Annual Vehicle Miles Traveled per Licensed Driver, 1970–2006



TOGETHER, AMERICANS DROVE nearly 3 trillion miles in 2006. As indicated in this graph, the average annual VMT per licensed driver had been increasing since 1970. However, this trend switched in 2005. We now see the annual VMT per licensed driver decreasing.

Figure 4-5. Percent of Trips and Vehicle Miles by Trip Length

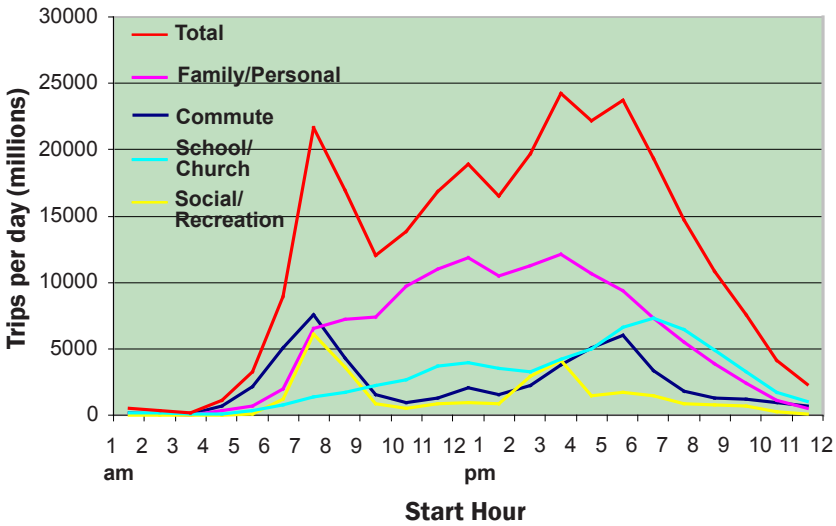


FOR HOUSEHOLD-BASED TRAVEL, short trips account for the vast majority of trips. Over half of all vehicle trips are between 1 and 10 miles. However, these short trips account for less than one-third (28.3 percent) of all household-based vehicle miles travelled.

Conversely, trips of 100 miles or more account for less than one percent of all vehicle trips, but nearly 15 percent of all household-based vehicle miles.

Data Source: U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Office of Highway Policy Information, National Household Travel Survey

Figure 4-6. Start Time for Trips by Purpose



NATIONAL DATA ON travel by U.S. households shows that peak commute periods also include high levels of non-work travel for purposes such as family and personal, school and church, and social activities. Including trips by all modes of transportation, the number of non-work trips occurring in midday actually exceeds the number of commuting trips in peak travel periods. As most of the trips throughout the midday are local, short trips, they potentially have a greater impact on energy use and air quality than on highway congestion.

Data Source: U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Office of Highway Policy Information, National Household Travel Survey