DOT HS 809 480

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

Traffic Safety Facts 2001

Speeding

NHTSA People Saving People
http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov

NCSA National Center for Statistics & Analysis of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

A Public Information Fact Sheet on Motor Vehicle and Traffic Safety Published by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's National Center for Statistics and Analysis

*NHTSA has revised the definition of a **speeding-related crash**. A crash is considered 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.*

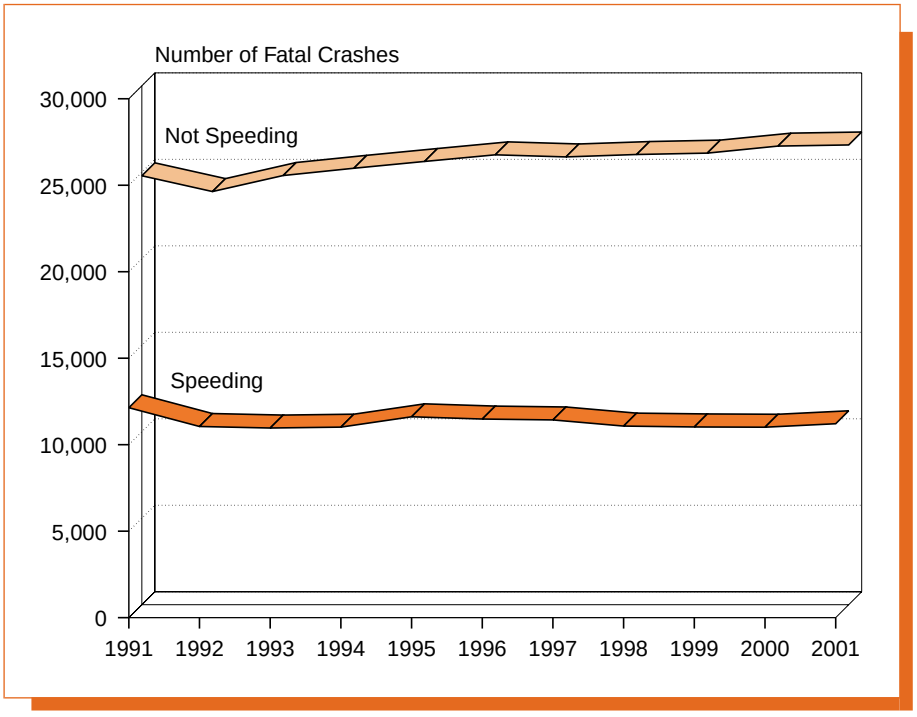
Speeding is one of the most prevalent factors contributing to traffic crashes. The economic cost to society of speeding-related crashes is estimated by NHTSA to be $40.4 billion per year. In 2001, speeding was a contributing factor in 30 percent of all fatal crashes, and 12,850 lives were lost in speeding-related crashes.

Motor vehicle crashes cost society an estimated $7,300 per second. The total economic cost of crashes was estimated at $230.6 billion in 2000. The 2001 costs of **speeding-related crashes** were estimated to be $40.4 billion — $76,865 per minute or $1,281 per second.

"The economic cost of speeding-related crashes is estimated to be $40.4 billion each year."

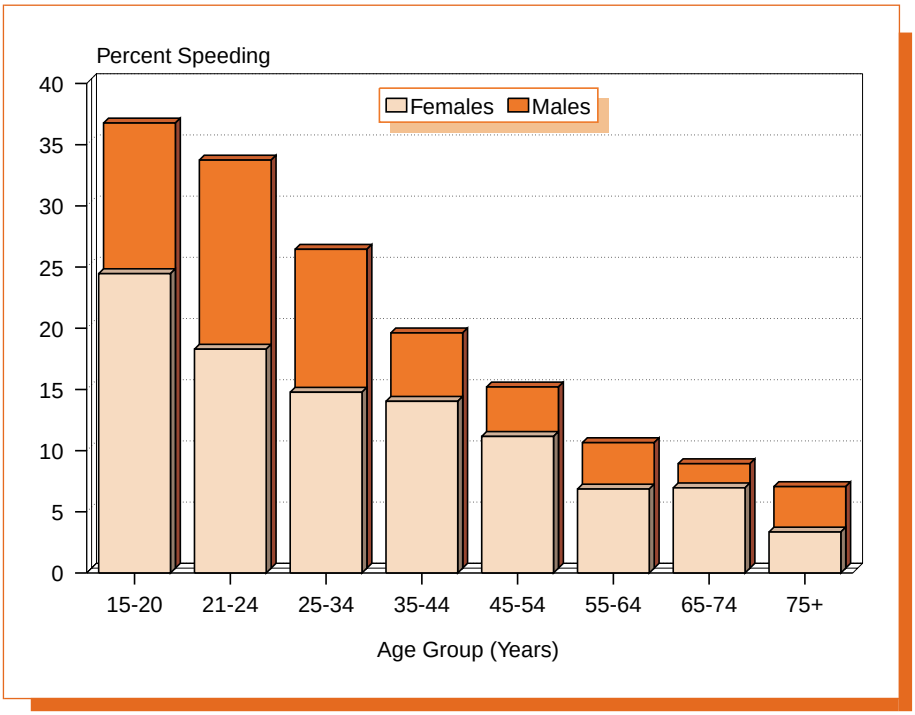
Speeding reduces a driver's ability to steer safely around curves or objects in the roadway, extends the distance necessary to stop a vehicle, and increases the distance a vehicle travels while the driver reacts to a dangerous situation.

Figure 1. Fatal Crashes by Speeding Status, 1991-2001



For drivers involved in fatal crashes, young males are the most likely to be speeding. The relative proportion of speeding-related crashes to all crashes decreases with increasing driver age. In 2001, 36 percent of the male drivers 15 to 20 years old who were involved in fatal crashes were speeding at the time of the crash.

Figure 2. Speeding Drivers in Fatal Crashes by Age and Sex, 2001



"In 2001, 36 percent of male drivers 15 to 20 years old involved in fatal crashes were speeding."

*In 2001, NHTSA began using a revised method — **multiple imputation** — to estimate missing information about blood alcohol concentration (BAC) levels for persons involved in fatal crashes. The alcohol estimates in this fact sheet are based on the new imputation method. More information on the new multiple imputation method, including detailed tabulations of alcohol involvement in various categories (age, sex, time of day, etc.), is available in NHTSA Technical Report DOT HS 809 403,* Transitioning to Multiple Imputation: A New Method to Estimate Missing Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) Values in FARS.

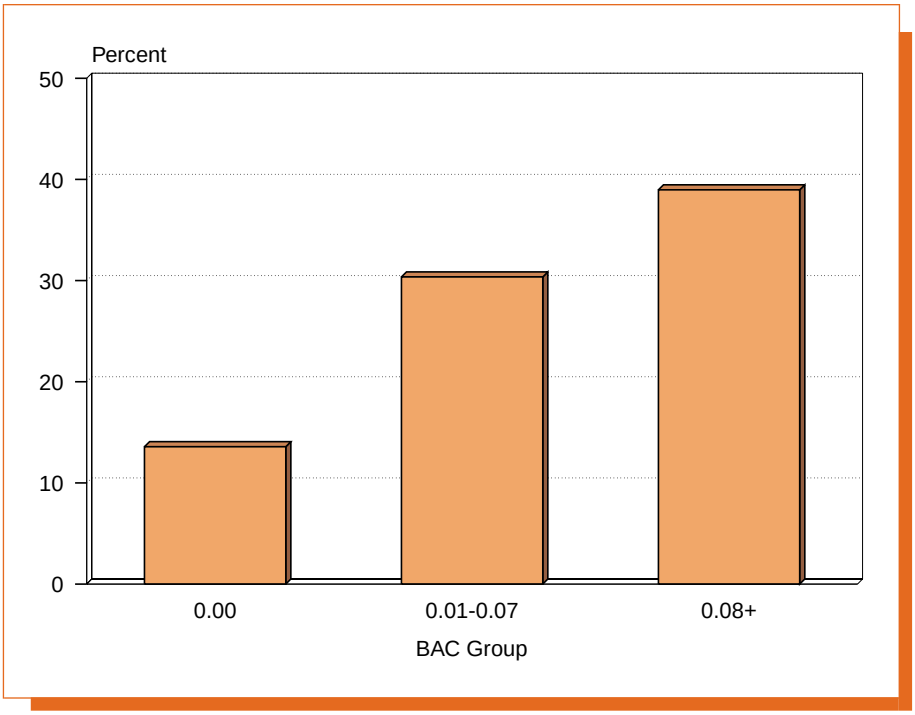
Alcohol and speeding are clearly a deadly combination. Alcohol involvement is prevalent for drivers involved in speeding-related crashes. In 2001, 39 percent of the **intoxicated** drivers (BAC = 0.08 or higher) involved in fatal crashes were speeding, compared with only 14 percent of the **sober** drivers (BAC = 0.00) involved in fatal crashes.

Alcohol and speeding seem to go hand in hand. In 2001, 29 percent of the **speeding** drivers under 21 years old who were involved in fatal crashes were also intoxicated, with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of 0.08 (grams per deciliter [g/dl]) or greater. In contrast, only 12 percent of the **nonspeeding** drivers under age 21 involved in fatal crashes in 2001 were intoxicated.

For drivers between 21 and 24 years of age who were involved in fatal crashes in 2001, 51 percent of **speeding** drivers were intoxicated, compared with only 25 percent of **nonspeeding** drivers.

In 2001, 39 percent of the intoxicated drivers involved in fatal crashes were speeding, compared with only 14 percent of sober drivers involved in fatal crashes.

Figure 3. Percentage of All Drivers Involved in Fatal Crashes That Were Speeding, by BAC Level, 2001



For both speeding and nonspeeding drivers involved in fatal crashes, the percentage of those who had been drinking, with BAC 0.01 or greater, at the time the crash occurred was higher at night than during the day. Between midnight and 3 am, 78 percent of **speeding** drivers involved in fatal crashes had been drinking.

"Between midnight and 3 am, 78 percent of speeding drivers involved in fatal crashes had been drinking."

Figure 4. Drivers in Fatal Crashes by Alcohol Involvement, Speeding Status, and Time of Day, 2001

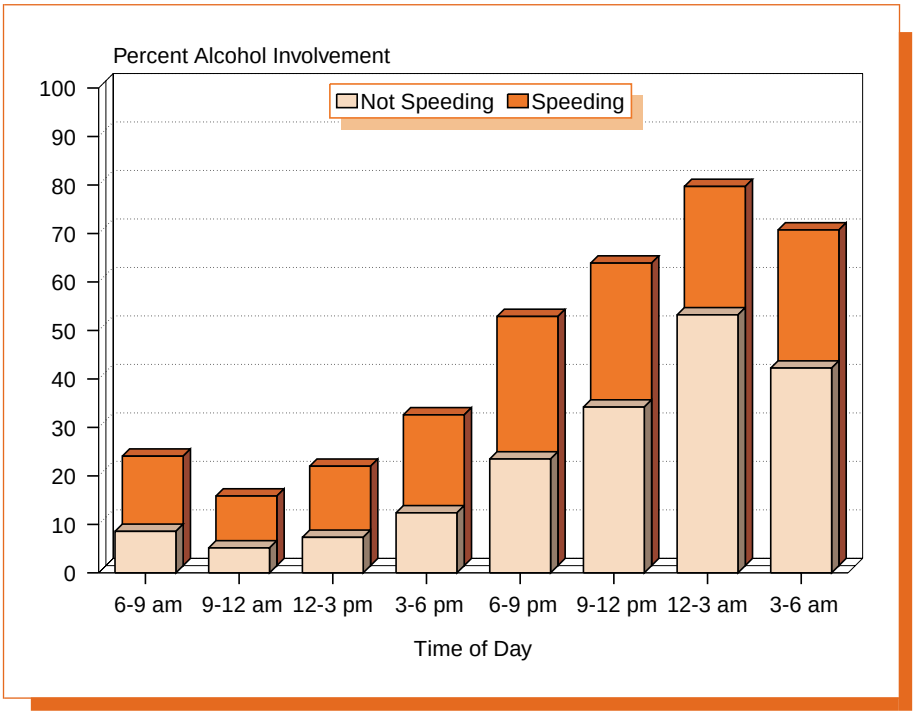
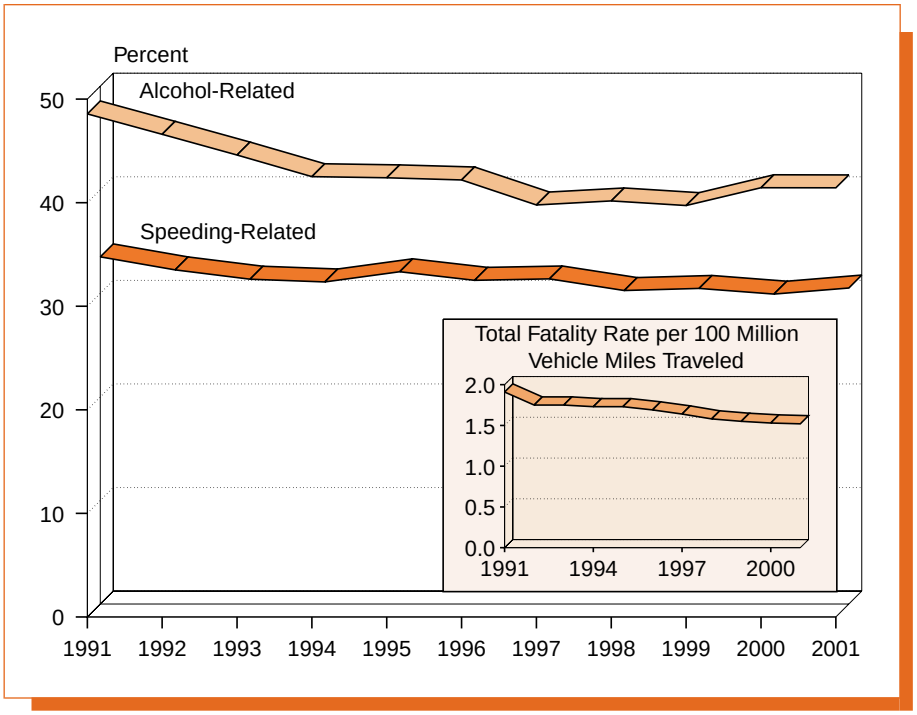


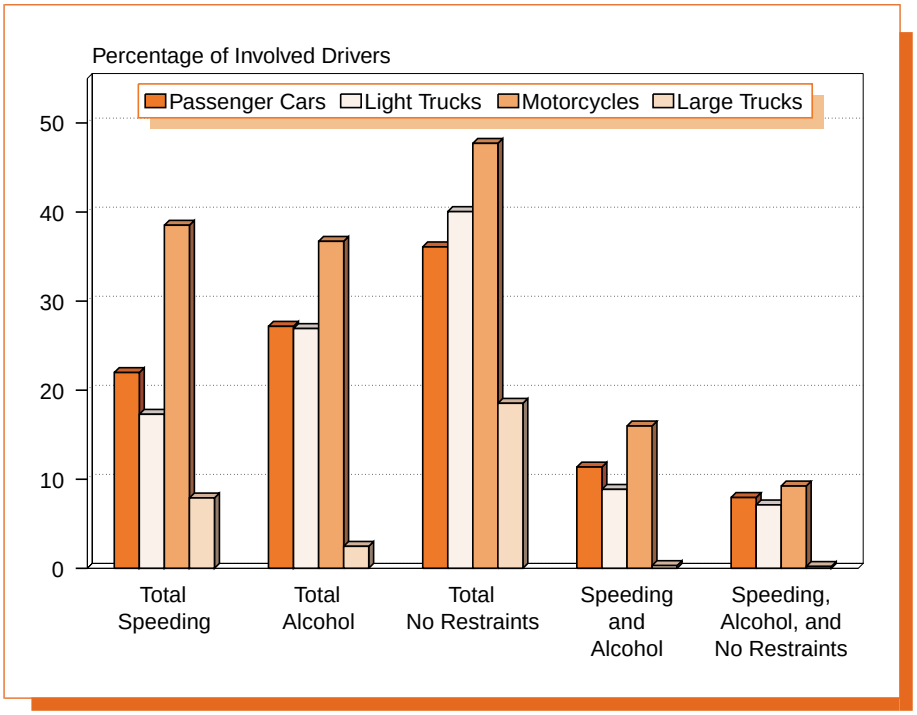
Figure 5. Percentages of Fatalities Related to Speeding and to Alcohol, 1991-2001



"Speeding involvement for motorcyclists in fatal crashes was twice as high as for car and light truck drivers."

In 2001, 39 percent of all motorcyclists involved in fatal crashes were speeding. The percentage of speeding involvement in fatal crashes was approximately twice as high for motorcyclists as for drivers of passenger cars or light trucks, and the percentage of alcohol involvement was about 37 percent higher for motorcyclists.

Figure 6. Speeding, Alcohol Involvement, and Failure To Use Restraints Among Drivers Involved in Fatal Crashes by Vehicle Type, 2001



"Among drivers in fatal crashes in 2001, those who were not speeding were nearly twice as likely to be wearing safety belts as those who were speeding at the time of the crash."

In 2001, only 42 percent of **speeding** passenger vehicle drivers under 21 years old who were involved in fatal crashes were wearing safety belts at the time of the crash. In contrast, 65 percent of **nonspeeding** drivers in the same age group were restrained. For drivers 21 years and older, the percentage of **speeding** drivers involved in fatal crashes who were using restraints at the time of the crash was 40 percent, but 68 percent of **nonspeeding** drivers in fatal crashes were restrained.

In 2001, 19 percent of **speeding** drivers involved in fatal crashes had an invalid license at the time of the crash, compared with 9 percent of **nonspeeding** drivers.

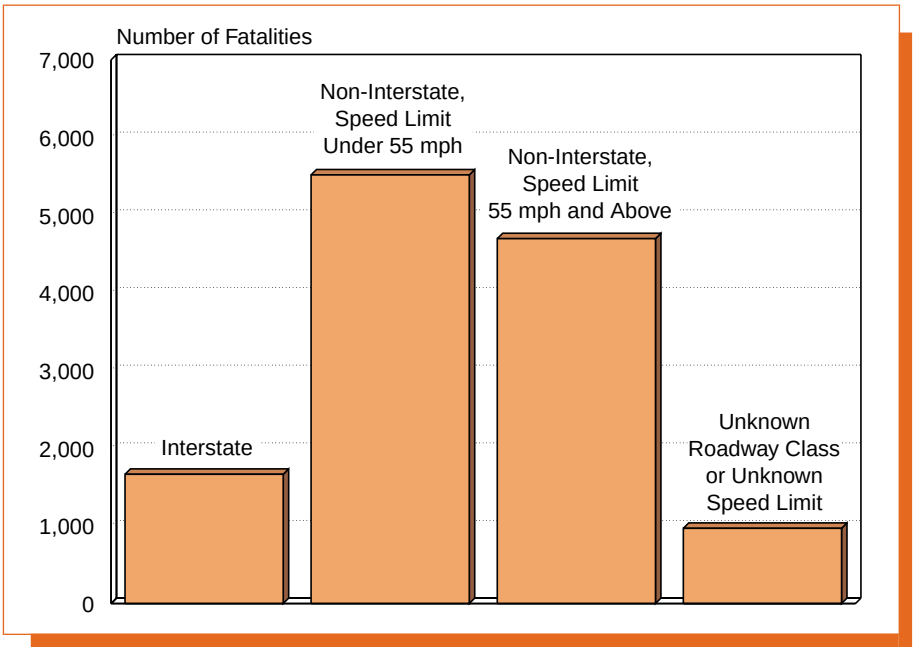
Speeding was a factor in 28 percent of the fatal crashes that occurred on dry roads in 2001 and in 33 percent of those that occurred on wet roads. Speeding was a factor in 50 percent of the fatal crashes that occurred when there was snow or slush on the road and in 62 percent of those that occurred on icy roads.

Speeding was involved in nearly one-third (29 percent) of the fatal crashes that occurred in construction/maintenance zones in 2001.

In 2001, 86 percent of speeding-related fatalities occurred on roads that were not Interstate highways.

"Only 14 percent of speeding-related fatalities occur on Interstate highways."

Figure 7. Speeding-Related Fatalities by Road Type, 2001



For more information:

Information on speeding involvement in traffic fatalities is available from the National Center for Statistics and Analysis, NPO-121, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20590. NCSA information can also be obtained by telephone or by fax-on-demand at 1-800-934-8517. FAX messages should be sent to (202) 366-7078. General information on highway traffic safety can be accessed by Internet users at http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/ncsa. To report a safety-related problem or to inquire about motor vehicle safety information, contact the Auto Safety Hotline at 1-800-424-9393.

Other fact sheets available from the National Center for Statistics and Analysis are *Overview*, *Alcohol*, *Occupant Protection*, *Older Population*, *Young Drivers*, *Children*, *Pedestrians*, *Pedalcyclists*, *Large Trucks*, *Motorcycles*, *School Transportation-Related Crashes*, *State Traffic Data*, and *State Alcohol Estimates*. 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*.

Table 1. Speeding-Related Traffic Fatalities by Road Type and Speed Limit, 2001

State	Total Traffic Fatalities	Speeding-Related Fatalities by Road Type and Speed Limit								
		Total	Interstate		Non-Interstate					
			>55 mph	≤55 mph	55 mph	50 mph	45 mph	40 mph	35 mph	<35 mph
AL	994	351	48	2	97	8	111	22	28	19
AK	85	35	12	6	6	3	6	0	1	0
AZ	1,048	383	58	13	37	25	71	51	30	35
AR	611	143	13	3	76	1	10	3	15	16
CA	3,956	1,443	225	14	357	63	132	99	170	139
CO	736	341	24	22	48	13	51	38	47	44
CT	312	143	8	11	9	9	18	10	17	59
DE	136	37	5	1	5	14	0	3	5	3
DC	68	19	0	1	0	1	4	5	1	6
FL	3,011	529	41	1	38	7	46	22	27	26
GA	1,615	341	33	12	96	5	39	15	39	27
HI	140	38	0	4	3	0	7	0	16	8
ID	259	84	13	1	13	13	10	0	9	6
IL	1,414	537	43	55	194	10	51	55	72	54
IN	909	229	18	14	74	14	21	27	24	31
IA	447	63	5	2	32	2	1	2	4	11
KS	494	150	8	2	57	6	10	9	5	22
KY	845	156	14	7	95	2	10	0	13	7
LA	954	127	14	4	61	5	13	3	15	8
ME	192	73	3	1	5	9	28	5	10	9
MD	660	230	13	10	23	33	16	37	37	32
MA	477	144	14	6	0	8	8	12	11	59
MI	1,328	307	24	7	148	8	18	13	21	48
MN	568	153	13	14	69	9	0	5	5	26
MS	784	149	19	2	38	7	43	4	13	9
MO	1,098	444	46	14	135	10	21	28	40	57
MT	230	99	22	0	3	0	8	0	5	4
NE	246	66	9	1	3	19	6	6	3	11
NV	313	121	23	1	8	2	22	1	20	8
NH	142	29	1	1	6	4	0	5	6	5
NJ	747	75	3	4	4	21	7	10	4	18
NM	463	154	17	4	27	3	17	9	18	23
NY	1,548	486	7	25	183	14	27	29	31	75
NC	1,530	574	25	12	333	14	112	2	53	7
ND	105	59	5	1	35	2	4	1	0	1
OH	1,378	242	21	4	6	0	0	0	7	8
OK	676	286	35	3	42	11	61	19	24	9
OR	488	130	6	3	73	6	5	7	9	16
PA	1,530	551	24	20	145	9	101	73	112	53
RI	81	50	2	4	1	5	0	4	13	21
SC	1,059	490	41	6	153	13	91	25	72	34
SD	171	59	4	0	20	6	5	2	5	3
TN	1,251	288	21	6	84	7	52	33	25	44
TX	3,724	1,416	184	36	178	53	93	114	117	128
UT	292	83	21	2	6	7	5	9	7	7
VT	92	49	3	1	1	23	1	10	5	3
VA	935	224	27	10	106	4	32	6	20	16
WA	649	237	34	2	18	32	12	30	62	25
WV	376	97	7	1	40	0	13	6	18	10
WI	763	258	12	1	151	1	22	5	18	37
WY	186	78	18	0	10	0	1	4	0	2
USA*	**42,116**	**12,850**	**1,287**	**377**	**3,352**	**541**	**1,442**	**878**	**1,329**	**1,329**
PR	481	230	1	51	4	3	39	25	84	23

*Of the total number of speeding-related fatalities in 2001, 5,627 occurred on roads with posted speed limits between 55 and 65 mph, and 912 occurred on roads with speed limits above 65 mph.

Notes: Totals may not equal sum of components due to independent rounding. The total column for speeding-related fatalities includes fatalities that occurred on roads for which the speed limit was unknown. The total column for costs of speeding-related crashes includes costs for crashes that occurred on unknown road types. Costs are based on preliminary estimates.