

Safety Belt Use in Arkansas

Arkansas traffic crash facts

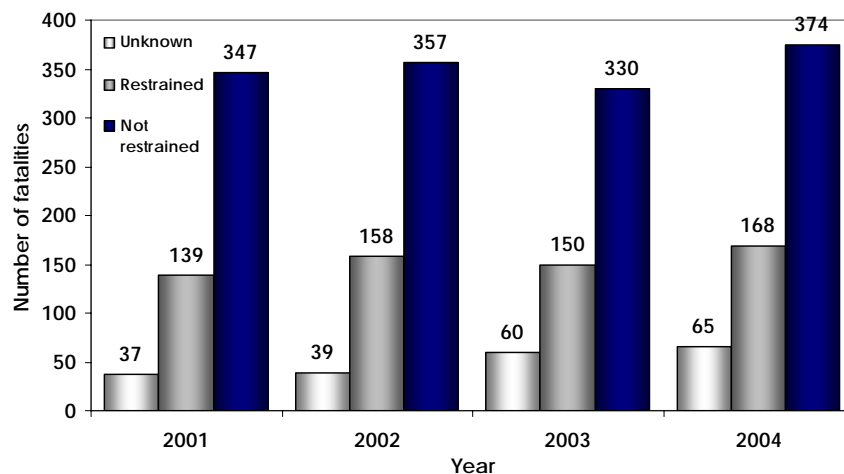
- **Every day** in Arkansas, on average **two people die** in traffic crashes.¹
- The overall **economic impact of traffic crashes** in Arkansas was estimated to be **\$1.965 billion** in 2000.²
- Arkansas had the **3rd highest traffic fatality rate** (per 100 million vehicle miles traveled) in the country in 2004. That year, **25.6 of every 100,000 Arkansans died** in traffic crashes.³
- The observed restraint use in Arkansas was 68% in 2005 and **only 32% of those fatally injured in passenger vehicles were restrained** that year.²
- Arkansas's rate of traffic fatalities in 2004 was 25.6 per 100,000 population, which was **1.8 times higher than national average** (14.6/100,000) and 3.4 times higher than the state with the lowest rate at 7.4/100,000.⁴
- Arkansas currently has a secondary safety belt law, meaning that citations for not wearing a safety belt can only be written if a vehicle is stopped for another reason. Primary laws are more readily enforced than secondary laws and the average safety belt use rate in states with primary laws was 10 percentage points higher than in states without primary laws in 2005 (84 versus 73 percent safety belt use).⁶

Less than 2 out of 3 Arkansans routinely use their safety belts.²

According to NHTSA, if Arkansas converted to a primary safety belt law, the state could expect a 12 percentage point gain in safety belt use, which over one year would:

- *prevent 50 fatalities*
- *prevent 530 serious nonfatal injuries*
- *save \$104 million in economic costs.⁵*

Figure 1: Arkansas traffic-crash related fatalities by safety restraint use*



*Non-motorist and motorcycle fatalities not included. Data source: Highway Safety Office. *Arkansas 2004 Traffic Crash Statistics*. Little Rock, AR: Arkansas State Police. 2006.

Table 1: Traffic crashes and fatalities in Arkansas, 2001–2004

Facts*	2001	2002	2003	2004	4-yr Ave.
Crashes	68,797	70,904	70,914	74,059	71,169
Fatal crashes	538	557	564	626	571
Individual fatalities	611	641	641	721	654
Nonfatal injuries	47,003	52,474	55,944	64,331	54,938
Fatalities/100,000 population	22.7	23.7	23.5	25.6	24.0
Fatalities/100 million vehicle miles traveled	2.1	2.2	2.1	2.3	2.2
Fatalities, % not restrained*	71%	69%	69%	69%	70%

*Non-motorist and motorcycle fatalities not included. Data sources: *Highway Safety Office. *Arkansas 2004 Traffic Crash Statistics*. Little Rock, AR: Arkansas State Police. 2006.

Table 2: Severity of injuries caused by traffic crashes in Arkansas, 2001–2004

Number of persons	2001	2002	2003	2004	4-yr Ave.
Fatal injury	611	641	641	721	654
Incapacitating injury	4,516	3,856	3,462	3,508	3,836
Non-incapacitating injury	12,320	12,648	12,977	13,927	12,968
No visible injury	30,166	35,966	39,505	46,896	38,133
No injury/property damage only	135,814	137,185	130,545	131,148	133,673

Data source: Highway Safety Office. *Arkansas 2004 Traffic Crash Statistics*. Little Rock, AR: Arkansas State Police. 2006.

Data sources

1. Highway Safety Office. *Arkansas 2004 Traffic Crash Statistics*. Little Rock, AR: Arkansas State Police; 2006. http://www.asp.state.ar.us/hso/hso_index.html. Accessed 3 Oct 2006.
2. National Center for Statistics and Analysis. *Arkansas: Toll of Motor Vehicle Crashes, 2005*. Washington, D.C.: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration; 2005. http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/departments/nrd-30/ncsa/STSI/5_AR/2005/5_AR_2005.htm#IDX3. Accessed 3 Oct 2006.
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6. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. *Traffic Safety Facts: Laws*. Washington, D.C.: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration; 2006. <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/staticfiles/DOT/NHTSA/Rulemaking/Articles/Associated%20Files/13%20Strength%20Safety%20Belt%20Use.pdf>. Accessed 3 Oct 2006.

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