

Traffic Fatalities: Traffic fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled

## Oregon's strategy

ODOT's strategy to reduce traffic fatalities is to continue to implement traffic safety programs and proven countermeasures based on the causes of fatal crashes in Oregon. For example, the Oregon Transportation Safety Performance Plan ([HSP](#)) and the ODOT Transportation Safety Action Plan ([TSAP](#)) outline safety activities directed at unsafe driving behaviors, DUII, non-safety belt use, and speeding; that address strategies for programs like motorcycle safety, child passenger safety, bicycle and pedestrian safety and other priority areas. ODOT also seeks to combat traffic fatalities through strategic highway safety infrastructure improvements, such as

median cable barriers, rumble strips, and pedestrian crossings, as well as through the DMV medically at-risk program.

## About the target

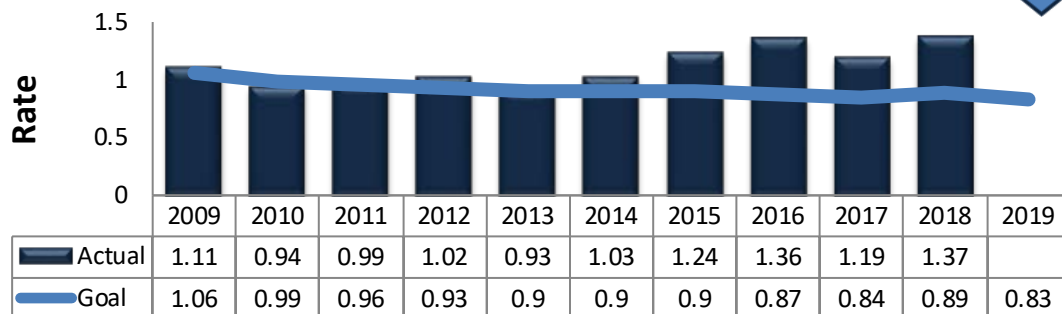
Oregon's goal is zero fatalities, but realistic interim targets are set based on the desire to reduce fatality rates gradually over time to achieve the longer-term goal of zero. Oregon's 2017 rate was 1.19 fatalities per 100M vehicle miles traveled.

## How Oregon is doing and how it compares

The preliminary rate of 1.37 for 2018 is above the TSAP target of 0.89 per 100 million VMT. There was a dramatic increase

in the number of fatalities, in line with the rest of the nation, in Oregon starting in October 2014 which increased the rate per 100 million VMT. When comparing Oregon traffic fatality data with national data provided by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Oregon's rate in 2017 was higher than the U.S. national fatality rate of 1.16; ODOT had set an aggressive long-term goal of reducing the traffic fatality rate to 0.84 per 100 million VMT by 2017. The targets are increasingly more challenging to meet, however the goal is important and should not change, as 'zero' is the goal for you and your family, every trip, every time. Until recently, Oregon's fatality

**Traffic Fatalities per 100 Million Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)**



## Fact

Fatal crashes involving alcohol impairment; speed; or not wearing a safety belt are the most common causes of a fatality on Oregon roadways.

# Traffic Fatalities, cont.

rates were consistently below the national average since 1999.

## Factors affecting results and what needs to be done

Several factors affected the traffic fatality rate in 2018. Among those factors were continuing increases in crashes involving impairment, the number of available traffic law enforcement officers, and emergency response times. Fatal crashes involving alcohol and/or drug use; excessive speed; or not wearing a safety belt are the most common causes of a fatality on Oregon roadways. Over the last 17 years, Oregon experienced its lowest fatality count since the late 1940s. ODOT and its safety partners must continue efforts to reduce fatalities by reviewing the causes of fatalities, targeting safety activities accordingly, and allocating safety resources to the programs most effective at reducing fatal crashes.



## About the data

Traffic fatality rates are reported on a calendar year basis. The data that ODOT uses to measure traffic fatality rates has several strengths. It is coded to national standards, which allows for state to state comparisons, and it is a comprehensive data

set that includes medical information. Some weaknesses of the data are that it is sometimes difficult to get blood alcohol content reports and death certificates for coding purposes, and priority is placed

on coding the data and not on creating localized reports for state, city, and county agencies and organizations.

## Contact information

Traci Pearl  
ODOT Transportation Safety Division  
503-986-6718

## Data source

Crash Analysis and Reporting, ODOT; Fatality Analysis Reporting System, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, US DOT