



# News Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **National Safety Council Estimates Traffic Deaths Down Three Percent in 2013**

Itasca, IL – The [National Safety Council](http://www.nsc.org) announced today its preliminary estimate that approximately 35,200 motor vehicle fatalities occurred in 2013. This is a three percent decrease from 2012. Crash injuries requiring medical attention also are estimated to have fallen by two percent since 2012 to a total of 3.8 million.

Although 2013 traffic fatalities are three percent lower than 2012, they are one percent higher than 2011. The relatively high number of fatalities in 2012 appears to have been a one year bump, partially due to a mild winter. The 2013 numbers have dropped back down to 2010 and 2011 levels.

“More than 90% of crashes are due to human error,” said John Ulczycki, vice president of Strategic Initiatives at the National Safety Council. “Drivers are taking a lot of risks on our roads today – people are speeding, driving impaired from alcohol and drugs, not wearing seat belts, talking on phones, reading or sending email and texts, and parents are letting teens drive before they are ready. We all need to look at the risks we take and the resulting harm that may be caused to ourselves and others. Many of these 35,200 fatalities last year surely involved people taking risks they thought they could handle. Sadly, they were wrong.”

In addition to devastating human loss, car crashes present a significant national cost in lost wages and productivity, medical expenses, administrative expenses, employer costs and property damage. The estimated cost of motor vehicle deaths, injuries and property damage in 2013 was \$267.5 billion, a three percent decrease from 2012.

### [Research Detail](#)

#### **NSC Motor Vehicle Fatality Reporting System**

Each month, motor vehicle fatality data is supplied to the National Safety Council by traffic authorities in 50 states and the District of Columbia. This data is used to make current year estimates based on the latest final count from the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). NSC counts total motor vehicle-related fatalities that occur within a year of the crash, consistent with data compiled from death certificates by the NCHS, and includes those occurring on public roadways and private property. This differs from the methods used by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The NHTSA method counts traffic fatalities that occur within 30 days of a crash and only those occurring on public roadways.

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### **About the National Safety Council**

Founded in 1913 and chartered by Congress, the National Safety Council, [nsc.org](http://nsc.org), is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to save lives by preventing injuries and deaths at work, in homes and communities, and on the road through leadership, research, education and advocacy. NSC advances this mission by partnering with businesses, government agencies, elected officials and the public in areas where we can make the most impact – distracted driving, teen driving, workplace safety, prescription drug overdoses and Safe Communities. [Safety+Health](#) magazine, the Council's flagship publication, is a leading source of occupational safety and health information.

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