



U.S. Department  
Of Transportation  
**National Highway  
Traffic Safety  
Administration**



A Brief Statistical Summary published by the  
Mathematical Analysis Division

# Crash•Stats

DOT HS 809 780  
August 2004

---

## Alcohol-Related Fatalities by State, 2003

### Introduction

An alcohol-related crash is a crash that involved at least one driver, pedestrian or pedal-cyclist with a Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) of 0.01 g/dl or above (non-sober). A fatality that occurs in such a crash is defined as an alcohol-related fatality.

This fact sheet provides statistics on alcohol-related fatalities in the states in 2003 and also compares those numbers with the corresponding data for 2002<sup>1</sup>. Of particular interest are the changes in the number of alcohol related fatalities in states that were the *Strategic Evaluation (SE)* States.

In 2003, based on NHTSA's success with its priority safety belts campaign, *Click It or Ticket (CIOT)*, the agency initiated a comparable impaired driving campaign, the *You Drink and Drive You Lose (YD&DYL)* law enforcement crackdown. Like CIOT, YD&DL uses high visibility law enforcement, along with paid advertising and earned media during a nationally coordinated crackdown. Special emphasis was placed in the 13 SE States, by offering additional resources for paid media, evaluation and technical assistance.

### Results

Overall, 42,643 persons died in motor vehicle traffic crashes in the U.S. in 2003, a drop of 362 fatalities from 2002. Alcohol-related fatalities dropped to 17,013 in 2003 – the first decrease since 1999. The 511 fewer alcohol-related fatalities reflected a 3 percent reduction from the 17,524 fatalities in 2002. Table 1 (overleaf) depicts these changes and also illustrates the changes that took place in the SE states. As seen from Table 1, although the SES and the rest of the nation had similar decreases in the overall number of fatalities in 2003, the SES showed a greater magnitude of decline in alcohol-related fatalities. In fact, four of the 13 SES showed an increase in the total number of fatalities while twelve of the states showed a decrease in alcohol-related fatalities from 2002.

In the SE States, there were 380 fewer alcohol-related fatalities in 2003 as compared to 2002. In the non-SE States, there were 131 fewer alcohol-related fatalities in 2003. NHTSA estimates BAC values when they are not reported to FARS. The numbers depicted in Table 1 are a combination of known BAC values reported to FARS as well as estimated BAC values for those cases without a reported BAC value. The difference in the estimates of alcohol involvement between 2002 and 2003 are significant if they are outside the margin of the error of estimation. Alcohol-related fatalities in the SE States declined significantly in 2003 as compared to 2002. However, the decrease of 131 alcohol-related fatalities in the other (non-SE) states was within the margin of error and hence was not a significant decline. The overall decline of 511 alcohol-related fatalities for the nation was outside the margin of error and hence a significant decline.

---

<sup>1</sup> The 2002 numbers are based on the final version of the file and will differ from previously reported statistics for 2002 that were based on the Annual Report File.



**Table 1: Comparison of Total and Alcohol-Related Fatalities between 2002 and 2003,  
Strategic Evaluation (SE) States versus Other States**

| Year<br>State       | 2002          |                     |               | 2003          |                     |               | Change (Percent Change) |                     |
|---------------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
|                     | Total         | Alcohol<br>-Related | % of<br>Total | Total         | Alcohol-<br>Related | % of<br>Total | Total                   | Alcohol-<br>Related |
| <b>U.S.</b>         | <b>43,005</b> | <b>17,524</b>       | <b>41%</b>    | <b>42,643</b> | <b>17,013</b>       | <b>40%</b>    | <b>-362 (-0.8%)</b>     | <b>-511 (-2.9%)</b> |
| <b>SE States</b>    | <b>19,773</b> | <b>8,267</b>        | <b>42%</b>    | <b>19,591</b> | <b>7,887</b>        | <b>40%</b>    | <b>-182 (-0.9%)</b>     | <b>-380 (-4.6%)</b> |
| Alaska              | 89            | 37                  | 41%           | 95            | 35                  | 37%           | +6 (+6.7%)              | -2 (-5.4%)          |
| Arizona             | 1,132         | 489                 | 43%           | 1,120         | 470                 | 42%           | -12 (-1.1%)             | -19 (-3.9%)         |
| California          | 4,088         | 1,628               | 40%           | 4,215         | 1,626               | 39%           | +127 (+3.1%)            | -2 (-0.1%)          |
| Florida             | 3,136         | 1,279               | 41%           | 3,169         | 1,274               | 40%           | +33 (+1.1%)             | -5 (-0.4%)          |
| Georgia             | 1,524         | 533                 | 35%           | 1,603         | 488                 | 30%           | +79 (+5.2%)             | -45 (-8.4%)         |
| Louisiana           | 907           | 427                 | 47%           | 894           | 406                 | 45%           | -13 (-1.4%)             | -21 (-4.9%)         |
| Mississippi         | 885           | 335                 | 38%           | 871           | 320                 | 37%           | -14 (-1.6%)             | -15 (-4.5%)         |
| Montana             | 269           | 126                 | 47%           | 262           | 128                 | 49%           | -7 (-2.6%)              | +2 (+1.6%)          |
| New Mexico          | 449           | 219                 | 49%           | 439           | 198                 | 45%           | -10 (-2.2%)             | -21 (-9.6%)         |
| Ohio                | 1,418         | 558                 | 39%           | 1,277         | 467                 | 37%           | -141 (-10%)             | -91 (-16%)          |
| Pennsylvania        | 1,614         | 649                 | 40%           | 1,577         | 618                 | 39%           | -37 (-2.3%)             | -31 (-4.8%)         |
| Texas               | 3,823         | 1,810               | 47%           | 3,675         | 1,709               | 47%           | -148 (-3.9%)            | -101 (-5.6%)        |
| West Virginia       | 439           | 179                 | 41%           | 394           | 148                 | 37%           | -45 (-10%)              | -31 (-17%)          |
| <b>Other States</b> | <b>23,232</b> | <b>9,257</b>        | <b>40%</b>    | <b>23,052</b> | <b>9,126</b>        | <b>40%</b>    | <b>-180 (-0.8%)</b>     | <b>-131 (-1.4%)</b> |
| Alabama             | 1,038         | 410                 | 39%           | 1,001         | 415                 | 41%           | -37 (-3.6%)             | +5 (+1.2%)          |
| Arkansas            | 640           | 241                 | 38%           | 627           | 254                 | 41%           | -13 (-2.0%)             | +13 (+5.4%)         |
| Colorado            | 743           | 314                 | 42%           | 632           | 246                 | 39%           | -111 (-15%)             | -68 (-22%)          |
| Connecticut         | 325           | 144                 | 44%           | 294           | 131                 | 45%           | -31 (-9.5%)             | -13 (-9.0%)         |
| Delaware            | 124           | 50                  | 40%           | 142           | 60                  | 42%           | +18 (+15%)              | +10 (+20%)          |
| Dist. Of Columbia   | 47            | 24                  | 51%           | 67            | 34                  | 50%           | +20 (+43%)              | +10 (+42%)          |
| Hawaii              | 119           | 47                  | 39%           | 135           | 72                  | 53%           | +16 (+13%)              | +25 (+53%)          |
| Idaho               | 264           | 91                  | 34%           | 293           | 107                 | 37%           | +29 (+11%)              | +16 (+18%)          |
| Illinois            | 1,420         | 653                 | 46%           | 1,453         | 639                 | 44%           | +33 (+2.3%)             | -14 (-2.1%)         |
| Indiana             | 792           | 262                 | 33%           | 834           | 262                 | 31%           | +42 (+5.3%)             | 0 (0%)              |
| Iowa                | 405           | 137                 | 34%           | 441           | 145                 | 33%           | +36 (+8.9%)             | +8 (+5.8%)          |
| Kansas              | 507           | 227                 | 45%           | 471           | 206                 | 44%           | -36 (-7.1%)             | -21 (-9.3%)         |
| Kentucky            | 915           | 302                 | 33%           | 928           | 276                 | 30%           | +13 (+1.4%)             | -26 (-8.6%)         |
| Maine               | 216           | 50                  | 23%           | 207           | 75                  | 36%           | -9 (-4.2%)              | +25 (+50%)          |
| Maryland            | 661           | 276                 | 42%           | 649           | 281                 | 43%           | -12 (-1.8%)             | +5 (+1.8%)          |
| Massachusetts       | 459           | 224                 | 49%           | 462           | 207                 | 45%           | +3 (+0.7%)              | -17 (-7.6%)         |
| Michigan            | 1,277         | 494                 | 39%           | 1,283         | 481                 | 37%           | +6 (+0.5%)              | -13 (-2.6%)         |
| Minnesota           | 657           | 256                 | 39%           | 657           | 267                 | 41%           | 0 (0%)                  | +11 (+4.3%)         |
| Missouri            | 1,208         | 518                 | 43%           | 1,232         | 504                 | 41%           | +24 (+2.0%)             | -14 (-2.7%)         |
| Nebraska            | 307           | 117                 | 38%           | 293           | 121                 | 41%           | -14 (-4.6%)             | +4 (+3.4%)          |
| Nevada              | 381           | 165                 | 43%           | 368           | 182                 | 50%           | -13 (-3.4%)             | +17 (+10%)          |
| New Hampshire       | 127           | 50                  | 39%           | 127           | 52                  | 41%           | 0 (0%)                  | +2 (+4.0%)          |
| New Jersey          | 771           | 281                 | 36%           | 747           | 275                 | 37%           | -24 (-3.1%)             | -6 (-2.1%)          |
| New York            | 1,530         | 482                 | 31%           | 1,491         | 529                 | 35%           | -39 (-2.5%)             | +47 (+9.8%)         |
| North Carolina      | 1,576         | 592                 | 38%           | 1,531         | 554                 | 36%           | -45 (-2.9%)             | -38 (-6.4%)         |
| North Dakota        | 97            | 49                  | 50%           | 105           | 52                  | 50%           | +8 (+8.2%)              | +3 (+6.1%)          |
| Oklahoma            | 739           | 251                 | 34%           | 668           | 255                 | 38%           | -71 (-9.6%)             | +4 (+1.6%)          |
| Oregon              | 436           | 180                 | 41%           | 512           | 207                 | 40%           | +76 (+17%)              | +27 (+15%)          |
| Rhode Island        | 84            | 46                  | 55%           | 104           | 57                  | 55%           | +20 (+24%)              | +11 (+24%)          |
| South Carolina      | 1,053         | 549                 | 52%           | 968           | 488                 | 50%           | -85 (-8.1%)             | -61 (-11%)          |
| South Dakota        | 180           | 92                  | 51%           | 203           | 98                  | 48%           | +23 (+13%)              | +6 (+6.5%)          |
| Tennessee           | 1,177         | 485                 | 41%           | 1,193         | 447                 | 37%           | +16 (+1.4%)             | -38 (-7.8%)         |
| Utah                | 328           | 71                  | 22%           | 309           | 46                  | 15%           | -19 (-5.8%)             | -25 (-35%)          |
| Vermont             | 78            | 27                  | 35%           | 69            | 29                  | 41%           | -9 (-12%)               | +2 (+7.4%)          |
| Virginia            | 914           | 379                 | 41%           | 943           | 364                 | 39%           | +29 (+3.2%)             | -15 (-4.0%)         |
| Washington          | 658           | 299                 | 45%           | 600           | 259                 | 43%           | -58 (-8.8%)             | -40 (-13%)          |
| Wisconsin           | 803           | 360                 | 45%           | 848           | 387                 | 46%           | +45 (+5.6%)             | +27 (+7.5%)         |
| Wyoming             | 176           | 67                  | 38%           | 165           | 62                  | 38%           | -11 (-6.3%)             | -5 (-7.5%)          |

Source: NCSA FARS 2002 (Final) and 2003 (Annual Report Files)

