



**COLORADO**  
Department of Transportation



**2012 Statewide Crash Book**

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## Purpose

The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) publishes an annual Crash Book to inform stakeholders and the public about the causes, effects and trends of crashes in the State of Colorado. This information is vital to many state and local agencies whose program managers and administrators use the information to make decisions about traffic safety programs and projects. This information also improves Colorado's road safety by increasing the public's awareness of key safety issues.

## Crash Data

The Colorado Department of Revenue (CDOR) maintains the official Crash Record documentation. CDOT summarizes and enhances the CDOR Crash Records for analysis purposes. This CDOT summary data is used by CDOT leaders, engineers, and planners to inform traffic safety program development, scoping and project selection processes. CDOR crash data is compiled from accident reports completed by Law Enforcement agencies from around the state and include both highway and local road crashes.

## Fatal Crashes

Statistical data on fatal crashes was compiled and supplied by the Colorado Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS). FARS is a nationwide, federally mandated program that tracks, analyses, and stores data on fatal crashes. The criteria used in maintaining the FARS database can differ slightly from the criteria used in maintaining the CDOT summary database. Therefore, there may be slight differences in the data derived from the two databases. It is clearly notated where these differences can be seen within this document.

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## Available At

<https://www.codot.gov/library/traffic/safety-crash-data/accident-rates-books-coding/crash-rate-books-accident-rates-books>

The CDOT Traffic & Safety Engineering Branch, working in conjunction with CDOT's Office of Transportation Safety (OTS) have established the goal of reducing the incidence and severity of motor vehicle crashes and their associated human and economic loss. To that end, a set of four specific objectives have been set.

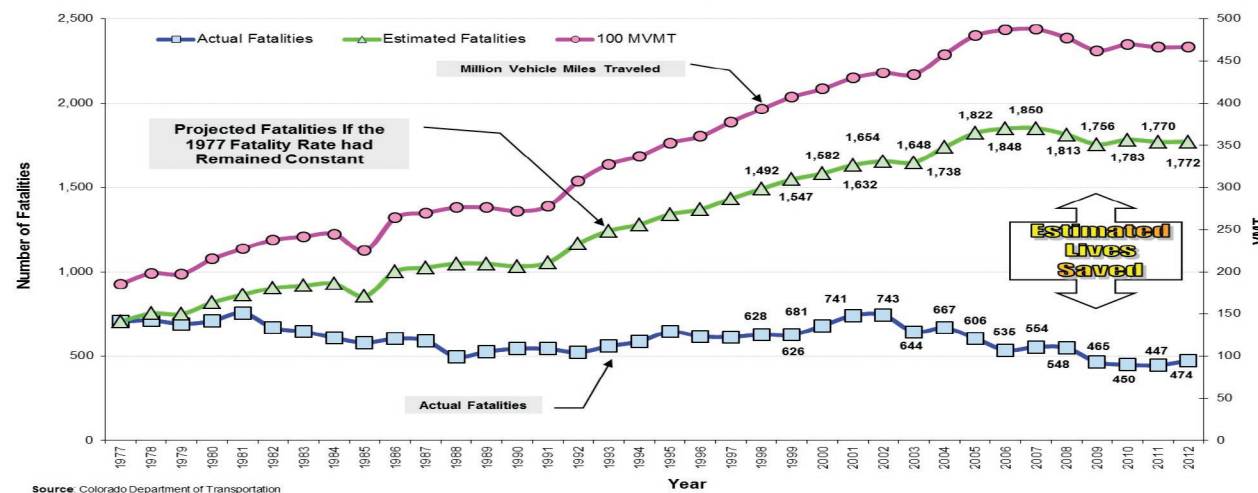
- Reduce the fatality rate per 100 million Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)
- Increase the observed seat belt use for passenger vehicles.
- Reduce the number of fatalities in crashes involving a driver or motorcycle operator with a BAC of .08 and above.
- Reduce the number of motorcyclist fatalities

As the table below shows, significant progress has been made in most of these areas in the past five years.

OBJECTIVE	2012	AVG. OF 2007-2011	IMPROVEMENT
Fatality Rate	1.01	1.04	0.03
Seatbelt Usage	81.7	81.8	- 0.1
Fatalities (Driver BAC 0.08+)	109	127.2	18.2
Motorcycle Fatalities	79	87.2	8.2

Overall, Colorado's roads are much safer than they were 35 years ago. In 1977 Colorado had 3.8 fatalities per 100 million VMT. The chart below demonstrates how many fatalities could have occurred on Colorado's roads if the 1977 rate had remained unchanged. Cumulatively, CDOT estimates that 25,515 lives have been saved as a result of the steady reduction in statewide fatalities from the 1977 rate. Just in 2012, it was estimated that 1,303 lives have been saved.

## Actual Annual Fatalities and Projected Annual Fatalities Colorado 1977–2012



Source: Colorado Department of Transportation

In 2012, there were 100,881 reported traffic crashes on public roads in Colorado. These crashes involved 12,533 people injured and 473 people killed.

Colorado made progress in the following areas in 2012 when compared to previous years:

- Since 2007, Colorado has seen a 9.8% decline in total crashes and an 18.5% decline in reported injury crashes
- Colorado Fatal crashes have fallen 14.7% from 2007 to 2012
- The fatality rate per 100,000 population dropped from 2007 (11.45) to 2012 (9.13), a decrease of 20.2%
- Speeding related fatalities decreased by 26.8% from 2007 to 2012
- Between 2007 and 2012 passenger fatalities decreased 27.2%
- A 18.9% decrease was observed in the number of total crashes involving young drivers from 2007 to 2012; The number of fatal crashes related to young drivers decreased 23.5% from 81 in 2007 to 62 in 2012.
- The Rate of Crashes per 1000 Registered Motorcycles decreased 15.8% from 2007 (15.78) to 2012 (13.29); The rate of fatal crashes per 1000 registered Motorcycles consistently decreased from 0.55 in 2007 to 0.39 in 2012, a 29.1% reduction.
- Overall helmet use by motorcyclists in crashes increased from 44.6% in 2007 to 48.5% in 2012.
- The crashes involving school age pedestrian decreased from 108 in 2008 to 87 in 2012, a reduction of 51.7%

Some areas of concern are:

- Bicycle related crashes increased 18.3% , from 1302 in 2007 to 1540 in 2012.
- Pedestrian related crashes increased 5.3% from 2007 to 2012; Pedestrian fatalities increased from 2007 to 2012 by 30%
- 2012 saw the highest percentage (5.0%) of crashes with DUI related charges by Annual rates of the six years observed
- In 2012, 8.8% of fatal crashes in Colorado involved a distracted driver, an increase of 35.4% from 2007 (6.5%)
- From 2007 to 2012 the total crashes involving senior drivers increased almost 10%, where the total crashes, statewide, decreased almost 10%

A safety summit dealing with pedestrian related crashes was held at CDOT HQ in 2013. Utilizing traffic data provided at this summit, stakeholders discussed and strategized engineering, enforcement and prevention measures with the goal to making the roads safer for pedestrians.

Thanks to the hard work off all of those involved in traffic safety, the trend toward safer roads continues in Colorado. The facts and statistics available in Colorado Crash Book can support maintaining this trend by helping to inform decision makers for Colorado's traffic safety programs, and raise awareness of safety issues with the general public.