

## **Introduction**

*Idaho Traffic Crashes 2009* provides an annual description of motor vehicle crash characteristics for crashes that have occurred on public roads within the State of Idaho. This document is used by state and local transportation, law enforcement, health, and other agencies charged with the responsibility of coping with the increasing costs of traffic crashes. Agencies use the data to identify traffic safety problems and target areas for the development of crash reduction and injury prevention programs.

A traffic safety problem is an identifiable subgroup of drivers, pedestrians, vehicles, or roadways that is statistically higher in crash experience than normal expectations. Problem identification involves the study of relationships between crashes and the population, licensed drivers, registered vehicles, vehicle miles traveled, and characteristics of specific subgroups that may contribute to crashes.

This document is divided into two major sections: a statewide crash summary and a breakdown of crashes by identified problem areas. Maps displaying the approximate location of each fatal crash by transportation district are found in Appendix A. Precise locations of fatal crashes cannot be determined from the maps. Appendix B is a map of crashes with wild animals. Information regarding crashes on the State Highway System is available in Appendix C. A five-year fatal and injury crash history is contained in three tables in Appendix D. A twenty-five year history of fatalities and the fatality rate per 100 million annual vehicle miles traveled is provided in Appendix E.

*Idaho Traffic Crashes 2009* is organized to reflect the adoption of focus areas by the Idaho Traffic Safety Commission for the Highway Safety Grant Programs. The focus areas include: Impaired Driving, Safety Restraint Usage, Youthful Drivers, Aggressive Driving, Emergency Medical Services, Pedestrians, Bicyclists, and Motorcyclists.

## **Explanation of Data**

The source for crash information is the Idaho Transportation Department State Crash Database. The database consists of crash reports completed by all law enforcement agencies in Idaho. All law enforcement agencies use a standard crash report, as designated in Idaho Code 49-1307. The resulting numbers are conservative since the database consists of only crashes investigated by law enforcement officers. Prior to 2006, only crashes resulting in injury or death of any person, or damage to the property of any one person in excess of \$750 were included. The law was amended in 2006 to crashes resulting in excess of \$1,500 property damage to any one person, crashes resulting in injury or death remained unchanged. Crashes occurring on private property and any intentional acts are excluded.

When examining any of the statistics herein, it is important to distinguish between the three different levels of crash data: the crash level, the vehicle level, and the person level. For example, location, date, time, severity, and weather conditions are specific to the entire crash; vehicle type, extent of deformity, contributing circumstances, and events are specific to each vehicle in the crash; and lastly, age, gender, injury type, and restraint use are specific to each person involved in the crash. Each crash must involve at least one motor vehicle and each vehicle contains any number of people, including zero. Each crash is classified by the most severe injury that resulted from the crash. Therefore, each fatal crash resulted in at least one fatality but may have also produced any number and combination of additional fatalities and injuries.

The Division of Motor Vehicles and the Economics and Research Section (Idaho Transportation Department) provide information on licensed drivers, registered motor vehicles, driver's license suspensions, and driver's license convictions. The Traffic Survey Section (Idaho Transportation Department) provides the annual vehicle miles of travel. The Bureau of Criminal Identification (Idaho State Police) provides information regarding DUI arrests. Other sources of information that support this document are referenced.

Current year data is compared to data from the prior year to identify simple percentage changes either upward or downward. The average change over the prior four years is given to provide an additional perspective.

If you have any questions or suggestions concerning *Idaho Traffic Crashes 2009*, contact the Office of Highway Safety. Contact information is available on the title page at the front of this document.

## Glossary of Terms

The following terms are used throughout this report and are provided to clarify the meaning of the data.

**BICYCLE (PEDACYCLE):** Every vehicle propelled exclusively by human power upon which any person may ride, having two tandem wheels, except scooters and similar devices.

**CHILD SAFETY SEAT:** A car safety seat that meets the requirements of Federal Motor Vehicle Standard 213. As of July 1, 2005, every child under the age of seven that is transported in a motor vehicle must be properly restrained in such a seat.

**CRASH (TRAFFIC):** An unintended event that causes a death, injury, or damage and involves a motor vehicle on a public roadway.

**DRIVER (OPERATOR):** Every person who is in actual physical control of a motor vehicle upon a highway.

**FATAL CRASH:** Any motor vehicle crash that resulted in the death of one or more persons due to injuries received from the crash within 30 days of the crash.

**FATALITY:** An individual involved in a motor vehicle crash who died within 30 days of the crash as a result of injuries sustained in the crash.

**HEAVY TRUCK:** A motor vehicle exceeding 8,000 pounds gross weight; has two or more wheels per axle or has more than two axles; and is designed, used, or maintained primarily for the transportation of property.

**IMPAIRED DRIVING CRASH:** Any crash in which an officer indicated on the crash report that alcohol or drugs were used, or were a contributing factor in the crash.

**INJURY:** Bodily harm to a person as a result of a motor vehicle crash.

### **INJURY SEVERITY:**

**Fatal Injury (Death) -** Any injury that results in the death of a person within 30 days of the crash in which the injury was sustained.

**Serious Injury (Incapacitating Injury) -** Any injury, other than a fatal injury, which prevents the injured person from walking, driving, or normally continuing the activities the person was capable of performing before the injury occurred.

**Visible Injury (Non-incapacitating, Evident Injury) -** Any injury, other than a fatal injury or incapacitating injury, which is evident to observers at the scene of the crash in which the injury occurred.

**Possible Injury -** Any injury reported or claimed which is not a fatal injury, incapacitating injury, or non-incapacitating, evident injury.

**LICENSED DRIVER:** A person who is licensed by a State to operate a motor vehicle on public highways. In Idaho, a person who has reached the age of 15 years, and who has successfully completed an approved driver's training course, may apply for a class "D" license. Driving privileges are restricted to daylight hours only until the age of 16.

**LOCAL ROAD:** Any road other than an Interstate, U.S., or State Highway.

**MOTOR VEHICLE:** Every motorized vehicle which is self-propelled or propelled by electric power obtained from overhead trolley wires but not operated upon rails except motorized wheelchairs.

## Glossary of Terms (Continued)

**OCCUPANT:** A person who is in or on a motor vehicle.

**PASSENGER:** Any occupant of a vehicle other than its driver.

**PEDESTRIAN:** Any person afoot and any person operating a wheelchair or motorized wheelchair.

**PROPERTY DAMAGE ONLY:** Any crash in which there was property damage of \$751 or more to any one person but no injuries or fatalities prior to 2006. The threshold was increased to \$1,501 or more in 2006 and later.

**RURAL:** All areas, incorporated and unincorporated, with a population of less than 5,000 people.

**SEAT BELT:** A device designed to hold the occupant of a motor vehicle in the seat of a vehicle that was manufactured with safety belts in compliance with Federal Motor Vehicle safety standard number 208. Each occupant of a motor vehicle which has a gross vehicle weight of not more than 8,000 pounds, and so manufactured, shall have a seat belt properly fastened about his body at all times when the vehicle is in motion.

**STATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM:** Includes all Interstate, U.S. and State highways (i.e. I-84, US 95, SH 75)

**TRACTOR/BOBTAIL:** A motor vehicle designed and used primarily for drawing other vehicles but not so constructed as to carry a load other than part of the weight of the vehicle and load so drawn.

**URBAN:** Any incorporated area with a population of 5,000 or more.

**VEHICLE:** Every device in, upon, or by which any person or property is or may be transported or drawn upon a highway, excepting devices used exclusively upon stationary rails or tracks.

**VIOLATION:** A conviction of a misdemeanor charge involving a moving traffic violation, or an admission or judicial determination of the commission of an infraction involving a moving traffic infraction, except bicycle infractions.

## References and Notes

1. U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Memorandum: Treatment of the Economic Value of a Statistical Life in Departmental Analyses, March 19, 2008.
2. Blincoe, L.J., et al, The Economic Cost of Motor Vehicle Crashes, 2000, May, 2002. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, DOT HS 809 446.
3. Kahane, Charels J., Fatality Reduction by Safety Belts for Front-Seat Occupants of Cars and Light Trucks, December 2000, Washington D.C.: U.S Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, DOT HS 809 199.
4. Haddon and S. Baker, "Injury Control", Chapter 8, Preventive and Community Medicine, Edited by C. Clark and B. MacMahon, Title Brown and Co., New York, 1987.
5. Highway District boundaries: District I - North Idaho (Boundary, Bonner, Kootenai, Benewah, and Shoshone Counties), District II - North Central Idaho (Latah, Nez Perce, Lewis, Clearwater, and Idaho Counties), District III - Southwest Idaho (Adams, Valley, Washington, Payette, Gem, Boise, Canyon, Ada, Owyhee, and Elmore Counties), District IV - South Central Idaho (Camas, Blaine, Gooding, Lincoln, Minidoka, Jerome, Twin Falls, and Cassia Counties), District V - Southeast Idaho (Bingham, Power, Bannock, Caribou, Oneida, Franklin, and Bear Lake Counties) and District VI - Eastern Idaho ( Lemhi, Custer, Butte, Clark, Fremont, Jefferson, Madison, Teton, and Bonneville Counties).
6. Dean, J. Michael, Reading, James C., and Nechodom, Patricia J., Overreporting and Measured Effectiveness of Seat Belts in Motor Vehicle Crashes in Utah, Transportation Research Record 1485, Transportation Research Board, National Research Council, National Academy Press, 1995.