

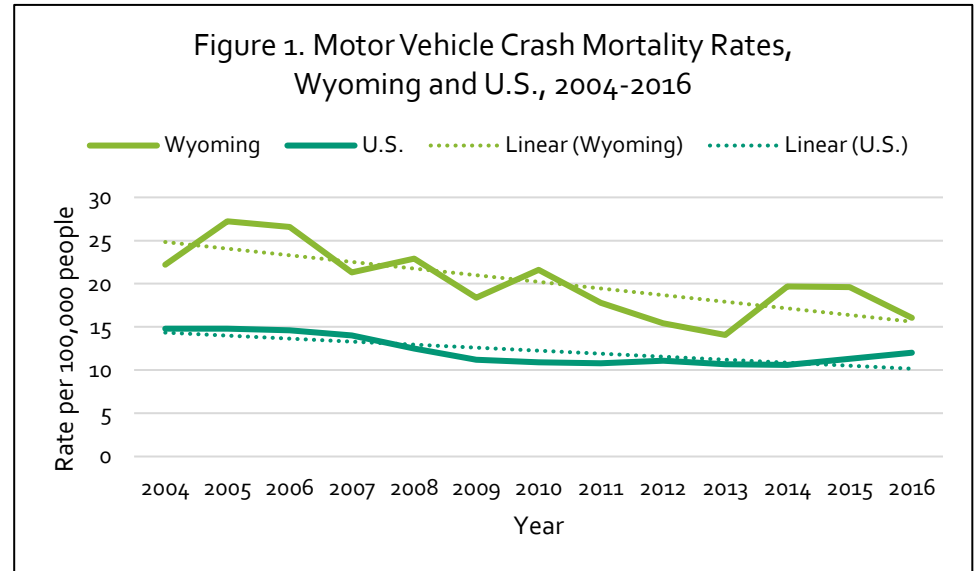
Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of injury death and the second leading cause of non-fatal injury hospitalization among Wyoming residents. Each year, approximately 111 Wyoming residents die from a motor vehicle crash injury and an additional 865 are hospitalized.¹⁻²

Motor Vehicle Crash Mortality Rates are Decreasing

Motor vehicle crash mortality rates have significantly decreased since 2004 in Wyoming and the U.S. (Figure 1.). Safety initiatives that work to increase seat belt use and decrease impaired driving in addition to improvements to vehicle technologies such as air bags and electronic stability control have all contributed to the decrease in deaths seen across the U.S. However, Wyoming rates remain consistently higher than the U.S.³

Gender Differences

Males have higher rates of both fatal and non-fatal motor vehicle crash injuries than females. The motor vehicle crash fatality rate among males is 28 deaths per 100,000 compared to females 11.8



per 100,000 (2004-2016). The non-fatal motor vehicle crash injury hospitalization rate among males is 44.5 hospitalizations per 100,000 compared to females at 27.2 per 100,000 (2009-2015).¹⁻²

Age Differences

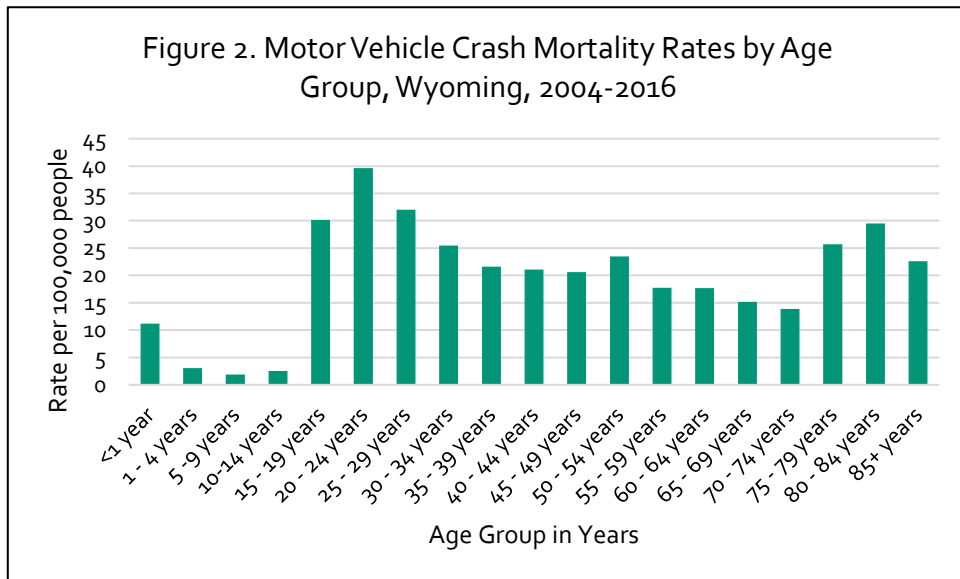
Motor vehicle crash mortality rates increase rapidly after age 14 and are highest among young adults 15-29 years and older adults 75+ years (Figure 2).¹

Similar trends are seen with motor vehicle crash hospitalization rates however an increase is also seen at ages 45-49 years.²

Motor Vehicle Crashes among Older Adults

Motor vehicle crashes are the second leading cause of death and hospitalization among Wyoming older adults.¹⁻² Wyoming consistently ranks among the top 10 states with the highest rates of older adult motor vehicle crash fatalities. In 2016, the motor vehicle crash mortality rate among older adults was 19.3 deaths per 100,000 adults 65+ years compared to the U.S. of 15.1 per 100,000.⁴

Wyoming older adults 65+ years accounted for almost 20% of licensed drivers in 2016.⁷ As the population of Wyoming continues to age, this group will continue to increase. Programs such as the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) Smart Driver Course as well as programs that promote increased strength and flexibility such as Tai Chi may help older adults stay safer on the road.



What can you do to reduce your risk of a motor vehicle crash injury?

Always wear a seatbelt as a driver or passenger.

Drive without distractions such as using a cell phone or texting.

Choose not to drive while impaired by alcohol or drugs, and help others do the same.

Obey all traffic laws including speed limits.

Contributing Factors

There are many factors that may contribute to an increased risk of motor vehicle crash injuries and death including, but not limited to: safety restraint use; distracted, drunk, or drowsy driving; and number of miles driven.

Seatbelt Use

According to the Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), in 2016 88% of Wyoming adults reported that they always or nearly always use seatbelts when they drive or ride in a car compared to the U.S. rate of 94%. More females (92%) than males (84%) reported always or nearly always wearing a seatbelt.⁶

Alcohol-Related Crashes

In 2017, 32% of fatal motor vehicle crashes and 10% of injury motor vehicle crashes in Wyoming involved alcohol.⁷ Almost half (40%) of drivers involved with alcohol-related crashes were less than 30 years old.⁵

Miles Driven

According to the Federal Highway Administration, in 2016 Wyoming had the highest number of average annual vehicle miles driven per capita in the U.S. with 16, 540 miles per person compared to the U.S. overall with 10,280 miles per person.⁷

Cost of Motor Vehicle Crash Injuries

Even though rates are declining, motor vehicle crashes still have significant economic impacts. In 2015 in Wyoming, there was an estimated \$147 million in lifetime work loss and medical costs associated with fatal motor vehicle crashes among Wyoming residents; or an average of \$1.3 million per motor vehicle crash related death.⁴ In 2016, the Wyoming Department of Transportation reported there was a total \$5 billion in economic loss attributed to all reportable traffic crashes in Wyoming which includes crashes among both residents and non-residents travelling throughout Wyoming.⁵

Motor Vehicle Crash Prevention

The Wyoming Injury & Violence Prevention Program continues to participate in collaborative efforts to prevent motor vehicle crashes across the state. To find out more information and to become involved with motor vehicle crash prevention in Wyoming, please contact the Wyoming Injury and Violence Prevention Program at (307) 777-8034 or at wdh-wipp@wyo.gov.

References

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Wyoming Injury & Violence Prevention Program

6101 Yellowstone Road, Suite 510
Cheyenne, WY 82002
<https://health.wyo.gov/publichealth/prevention/wipp/injurymvtui/>

