West Virginia

Cost of deaths from motor vehicle crashes

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading killer of children, teens, and young adults (ages 5 to 34) and among the top ten causes of death for all ages. Over 30,000 people are killed in crashes each year in the United States. In 2005, in addition to the impact on victims' families and friends, crash deaths resulted in $41 billion nationally in medical and work loss costs. It's important to remember that crashes are preventable. Using effective programs and policies, we can reduce the number of injuries and deaths and their costs.

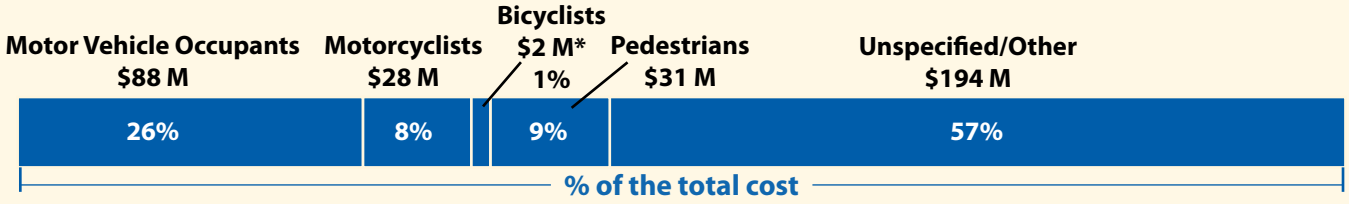
$342 million

Total crash-related death costs in West Virginia in one year.

$3 million
medical costs

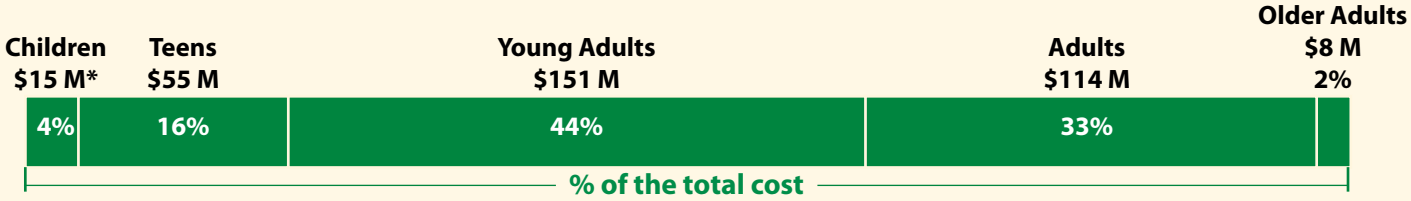
$339 million
work loss costs

By type of road user



Bicyclist and pedestrian categories include motor vehicle traffic-related and non-motor vehicle traffic-related deaths.
Other categories include only motor vehicle traffic-related deaths.
* Cost is based on fewer than 20 deaths and may be unstable.

By age group



Children: 0-14, Teens: 15-19, Young Adults: 20-34, Adults: 35-64, Older Adults: 65+
* Cost is based on fewer than 20 deaths and may be unstable.

Taking action can save lives

Hundreds of West Virginians are killed each year in preventable motor vehicle crashes. West Virginia can consider the following evidence-based strategies that are proven to save lives and money:

- **Primary enforcement seat belt law** that covers all seating positions.
- **Comprehensive graduated drivers licensing (GDL) system** to help young drivers gain experience under lower-risk conditions.

National Center for Injury Prevention and Control
Division of Unintentional Injury Prevention

States in your region	Population in 2005	Crash-related death costs in 2005
Delaware	0.8 million	$107 million
Maryland	5.6 million	$576 million
Pennsylvania	12.4 million	$1.52 billion
Virginia	7.6 million	$863 million
West Virginia	**1.8 million**	**$342 million**

FAQs

How can costs due to motor vehicle crashes be reduced?

The best way to reduce costs due to crash-related deaths is to prevent crashes. Effective strategies for preventing crashes include graduated drivers licensing laws, sobriety checkpoints, and ignition interlocks for those convicted of driving while intoxicated.

The next best way to reduce costs is to prevent injuries when crashes do happen. Among the proven ways to prevent injuries during a crash are increasing child safety seat and booster seat use through distribution and education programs, increasing seat belt use through enacting and enforcing primary seat belt laws, and increasing helmet use through comprehensive motorcycle helmet laws.

For more information about these programs and policies, visit: www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety.

Why are work loss costs so high for motor vehicle crash deaths?

Work loss costs are the total estimated salary, fringe benefits, and value of household work that an average person—of the same age and sex as the person who died—would be expected to earn over the remainder of his or her lifetime. Motor vehicle crash deaths disproportionately affect younger people, who have the potential to contribute to the workforce for many years. Therefore, when a younger person dies, the result is a higher work loss cost.

Where can I get more information on these cost estimates?

The costs used in this fact sheet came from CDC's Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS), which is an online, interactive system that provides reports of injury-related data. To find the costs of various injury deaths and nonfatal injuries, visit: www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars.

For more information about this fact sheet, including references, visit:
www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/statecosts

For more information about CDC's motor vehicle safety work, visit:
www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety

Working together, we can help keep people safe on the road—every day.

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