
Traffic Facts and Figures

How Does Traffic Affect Us? A List of Facts and Figures to Put It in Perspective

- Traffic has such an effect on our lives that even non-drivers are impacted by it. Traffic costs us time and money, affects our physical and mental well-being, and has consequences for the environment. Here's a list of some traffic facts and figures that show what a powerful impact traffic has on us.

What it Costs

- America's families spend more than 19 cents out of every dollar earned on transportation, an expense second only to housing, and greater than food and health care combined. (Source: Center for Transportation Excellence)
- The individual cost of congestion exceeded \$900 per driver in 1997, resulting in more than \$72 billion in lost wages and wasted fuel. (Source: U.S. Dept. of Transportation)
- 85 percent of all transportation costs in the United States are related to private automobiles. (Source: Center for Transportation Excellence)

Lost Time

- Congestion results in 5.7 billion person-hours of delay annually in the United States. (Source: U.S. Dept. of Transportation)
- Drivers in one-third of U.S. cities spend more than 40 hours a year (an entire work week) in traffic that is not moving. (Source: Center for Transportation Excellence)

Safety and Health Concerns

- In 2003 there were more than 6.3 million motor vehicle crashes reported to police. Of those, 38,252 crashes resulted in fatalities. (Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration)
- In 2003, 15,251 people were killed in alcohol-related car accidents, representing 40 percent of all motor vehicle fatalities for that year. (Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration)
- In 2001, crashes were the leading cause of death for people ages 4-33 in the United States. (Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration)

Public Transportation

- Public transportation saves more than 855 million gallons of gasoline, a level equivalent to the energy used to heat, cool and operate one-fourth of all American homes annually. (Source: Center for Transportation Excellence)
- For every passenger-mile traveled, public transportation is twice as fuel-efficient as private automobiles, sport utility vehicles and light trucks. (Source: Center for Transportation Excellence)
- If one in 10 Americans regularly used mass transit, U.S. reliance on foreign oil could decline by more than 40 percent, or nearly the amount of oil imported from Saudi Arabia each year. (Source: Center for Transportation Excellence)

The Environment

- A regular rush-hour driver wastes an average of 99 gallons of gasoline a year due to traffic. The average cost of the time lost in rush hour traffic is \$1,160 per person. (Source: Center for Transportation Excellence)
- In 1999, public transportation vehicles used 856 million gallons of fossil fuels and 5.2 billion kilowatt hours of electricity -- less than 1 percent of all energy consumed in the United States. (Source: Center for Transportation Excellence)
- On-road vehicles are responsible for 44 percent of all carbon dioxide emissions in the United States, one-third of all nitrogen oxide emissions and one-quarter of all volatile organic compound emissions. (Source: Center for Transportation Excellence)