

# Traffic Safety Facts

2018 Data

May 2020

DOT HS 812 957



In this fact sheet for 2018 the information is presented as follows.

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## Rural/Urban Comparison of Traffic Fatalities

For this fact sheet, rural and urban boundaries are determined by the State highway departments and approved by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The State highway departments use the boundaries decided by the Census Bureau.<sup>1</sup>

### Key Findings

- Of the 36,560 motor vehicle traffic fatalities in 2018 there were 16,411 (45%) that occurred in rural areas, 19,498 (53%) that occurred in urban areas, and 651 (2%) that occurred in unknown areas.
- According to the 2018 American Community Survey from the Census Bureau, an estimated 19 percent of the U.S. population lived in rural areas, and according to FHWA only 30 percent of the total vehicle miles traveled in 2018 were in rural areas. However, rural areas accounted for 45 percent of all traffic fatalities in 2018.
- Rural traffic fatalities decreased by 15 percent from 19,323 in 2009 to 16,411 in 2018, whereas urban traffic fatalities increased by 34 percent from 14,501 in 2009 to 19,498 in 2018.
- In 2018 the fatality rate per 100 million vehicle miles traveled was 2 times higher in rural areas than in urban areas (1.68 and 0.86, respectively).
- Speeding-related fatalities occurred in almost equal proportions in rural and urban areas. Of the 16,411 rural traffic fatalities in 2018, there were 4,347 (26%) killed in speeding-related crashes. Of the 19,498 urban traffic fatalities in 2018, there were 4,958 (25%) killed in speeding-related crashes.
- Rural alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities decreased by 23 percent from 6,160 in 2009 to 4,714 in 2018, while urban alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities increased by 23 percent from 4,579 in 2009 to 5,649 in 2018.
- The 2018 National Occupant Protection Use Survey (NOPUS) observed that the seat belt use rate among front seat passenger vehicle occupants in urban areas was 89.4 percent, and rural occupants were observed to have a use rate of 90.1 percent.
- Based on known restraint use in fatal crashes, 49 percent of rural passenger vehicle occupants killed in 2018 were unrestrained as compared to 45 percent of urban passenger vehicle occupants killed.

This fact sheet contains information on fatal motor vehicle crashes and fatalities, based on data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS). Refer to the end of this publication for more information on FARS.



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<sup>1</sup> See the Census Bureau link to define urban and rural areas at [www.census.gov/programs-surveys/geography/guidance/geo-areas/urban-rural/2010-urban-rural.html](http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/geography/guidance/geo-areas/urban-rural/2010-urban-rural.html)

## Overview

In 2018:

There were 33,654 fatal motor vehicle traffic crashes resulting in 36,560 fatalities.

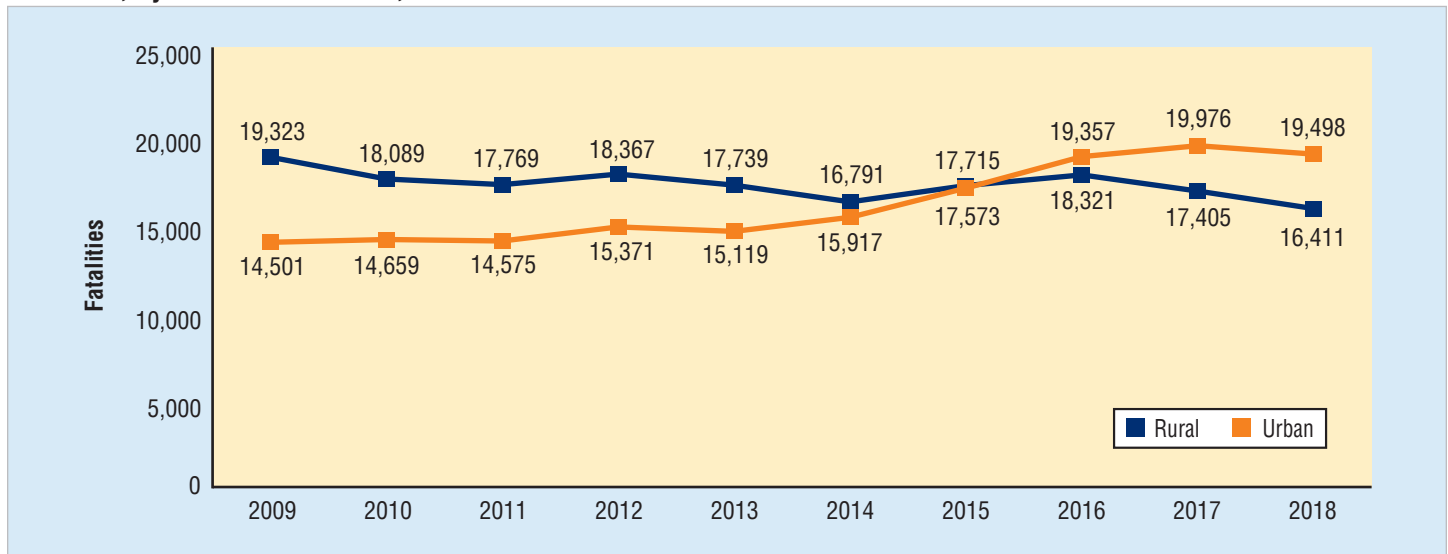
- Of these 33,654 fatal traffic crashes, 14,760 (44%) occurred in rural areas, 18,285 (54%) occurred in urban areas, and 609 (2%) occurred in unknown areas (not enough information to determine if the crashes were inside the rural or urban boundaries).
- Of these 36,560 traffic fatalities, 16,411 (45%) occurred in rural areas, 19,498 (53%) occurred in urban areas, and 651 (2%) occurred in unknown areas.

- According to the 2018 American Community Survey from the Census Bureau, an estimated 19 percent of the U.S. population lived in rural areas, and according to FHWA only 30 percent of the total vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in 2018 were in rural areas. However, rural areas accounted for 45 percent of all traffic fatalities in 2018.

Figure 1 presents the motor vehicle traffic fatality trends in the most recent 10-year period for which data is available by land use:

- Rural fatalities decreased by 15 percent from 19,323 in 2009 to 16,411 in 2018.
- Urban fatalities increased by 34 percent from 14,501 in 2009 to 19,498 in 2018.

Figure 1  
**Fatalities, by Year and Land Use, 2009–2018**



Source: FARS 2009–2017 Final File, 2018 Annual Report File (ARF)  
 Excludes fatalities of unknown land use.

The number of urban fatalities has been larger than the number of rural fatalities since 2016. In years prior to 2016 rural fatalities were larger than urban fatalities. Below are some factors that could explain the rise in urban fatalities.

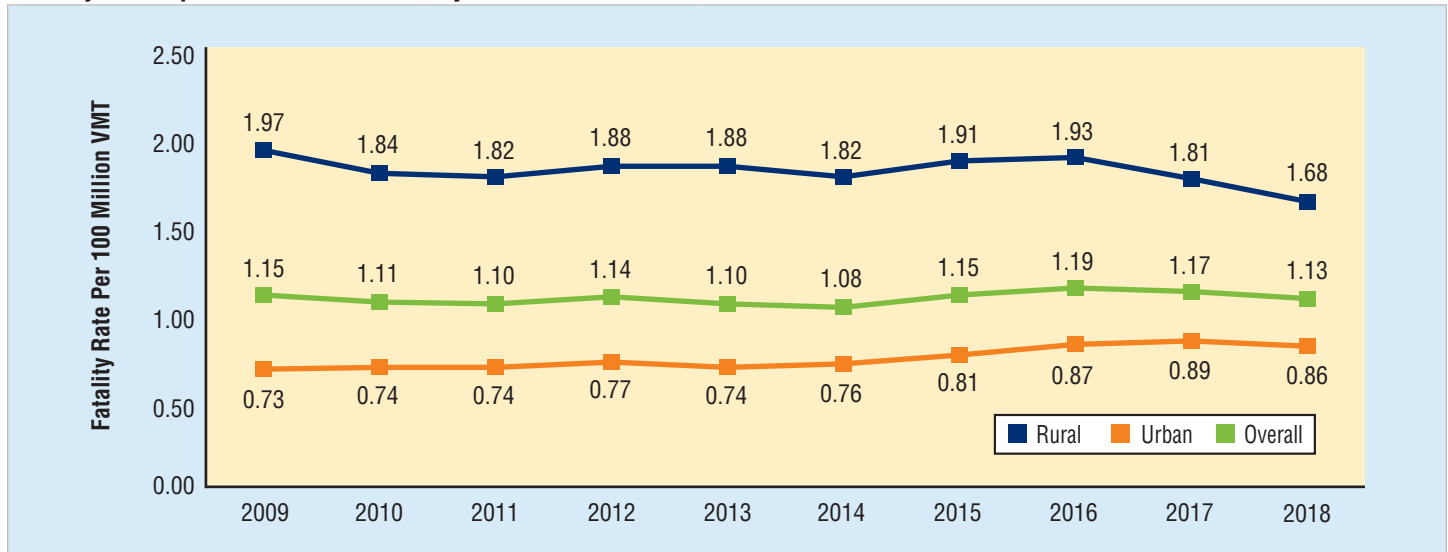
- Urban VMT increased by 15 percent since 2009; rural VMT decreased by 0.3 percent.
- According to the Census Bureau, urban population increased by 13 percent from 2009 to 2018 and rural population decreased by 13 percent.
- Passenger vehicle occupant fatalities in urban areas increased by 21 percent since 2009, rural areas decreased by 19 percent.
- Pedestrian fatalities in urban areas increased by 69 percent since 2009; rural areas increased by 0.1 percent.

- Pedalcyclist fatalities in urban areas increased by 48 percent since 2009; rural areas decreased by 9 percent.
- Motorcyclist fatalities in urban areas increased by 33 percent since 2009; rural areas decreased by 15 percent.

Figure 2 presents the fatality rates per 100 million VMT by land use (rural, urban, and overall) in the most recent 10-year period for which data is available.

- The fatality rate in rural areas decreased by 15 percent from 1.97 in 2009 to 1.68 in 2018.
- The fatality rate in urban areas increased by 18 percent from 0.73 in 2009 to 0.86 in 2018.
- In 2018 the fatality rate was 2 times higher in rural areas than in urban areas (1.68 and 0.86, respectively).

Figure 2  
**Fatality Rates per 100 Million VMT, by Year and Land Use, 2009–2018**



Sources: FARS 2009-2017 Final File, 2018 ARF; VMT – FHWA

## Environmental Characteristics

### Time of Day

More rural traffic fatalities occurred during the day and more urban traffic fatalities occurred during the night.

- Of the 16,411 rural traffic fatalities in 2018, there were 8,956 (55%) that occurred during the day (6 a.m. to 5:59 p.m.), 7,305 (45%) occurred at night (6 p.m. to 5:59 a.m.), and 150 (< 1%) occurred at unknown times.
- Of the 19,498 urban traffic fatalities in 2018, there were 8,321 (43%) that occurred during the day, 11,079 (57%) occurred at night, and 98 (<1%) occurred at unknown times.

### Light Condition

Table 1 shows fatalities in 2018 by light condition and land use.

- Of the 16,411 fatalities in rural areas, 8,921 (54%) occurred during daylight and 6,585 (40%) occurred when the light conditions were dark; the remaining 905 (6%) fatalities occurred during dawn, dusk, or other/unknown light conditions.
- Of the 19,498 urban fatalities, 10,554 (54%) occurred when the light conditions were dark, 8,063 (41%) occurred during daylight conditions, and 881 (5%) during dawn, dusk, or other/unknown light conditions.

Table 1  
**Fatalities by Light Condition and Land Use, 2018**

Light Condition	Land Use						Total	
	Rural		Urban		Unknown			
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Daylight	8,921	54%	8,063	41%	310	48%	17,294	47%
Dark	6,585	40%	10,554	54%	296	45%	17,435	48%
Dawn	393	2%	305	2%	17	3%	715	2%
Dusk	393	2%	451	2%	19	3%	863	2%
Other/Unknown	119	1%	125	1%	9	1%	253	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,411</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>19,498</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>651</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>36,560</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: FARS 2018 ARF

In 2018, 79 percent of the fatalities in rural areas were in crashes when the weather condition at the time of the crash was “clear,” 8 percent when it was raining, 2 percent when there was snow or sleet, and 11 percent during other weather conditions. In comparison, in urban areas 82 percent of fatalities were in crashes when the weather condition at the time of the crash was “clear,” 8 percent when it was raining, 1 percent when there was snow or sleet, and 9 percent during other weather conditions.

### Speeding

NHTSA considers a crash to be speeding-related if the driver was charged with a speeding-related offense or if an officer indicated that racing, driving too fast for conditions, or exceeding the posted speed limit was a contributing factor in the crash.

In 2018:

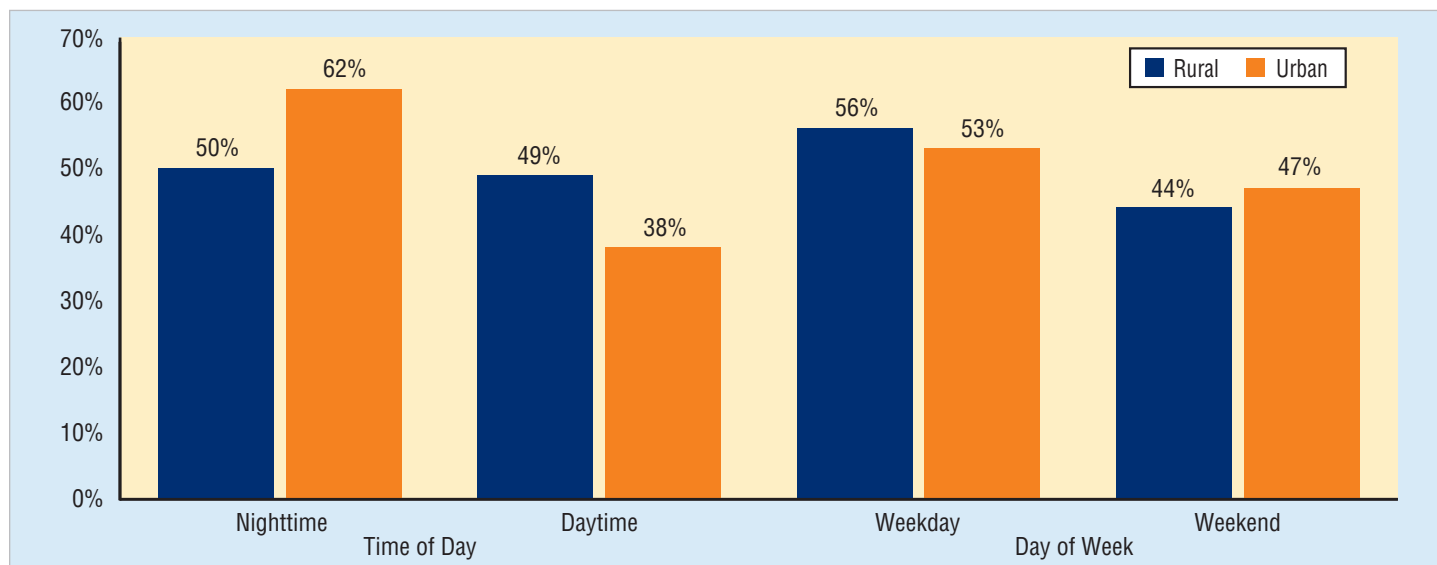
- Of the 36,560 traffic fatalities, 9,378 (26%) were killed in speeding-related crashes.

- Of the 16,411 rural traffic fatalities, 4,347 (26%) were killed in speeding-related crashes, the same percentage as all fatalities.
- Of the 19,498 urban traffic fatalities, there were 4,958 (25%) who were killed in speeding-related crashes.

Figure 3 shows the rural and urban percentages of speeding-related fatalities in traffic crashes in 2018 by time of day (nighttime – 6 p.m. to 5:59 a.m.; daytime – 6 a.m. to 5:59 p.m.) and day of week (weekday – Monday 6 a.m. to Friday 5:59 p.m.; weekend – Friday 6 p.m. to Monday 5:59 a.m.):

- Fifty percent of rural speeding-related fatalities occurred at night and 44 percent occurred over the weekend.
- Nearly two-thirds (62%) of urban speeding-related fatalities occurred at night and 47 percent occurred over the weekend.

Figure 3  
**Percentages of Speeding-Related Fatalities in Traffic Crashes, by Land Use, Time of Day, and Day of Week, 2018**



Source: FARS 2018 ARF  
 Note: Nighttime – 6 p.m. to 5:59 a.m.  
 Daytime – 6 a.m. to 5:59 p.m.  
 Weekday – Monday 6 a.m. to Friday 5:59 p.m.  
 Weekend – Friday 6 p.m. to Monday 5:59 a.m.

The majority of rural fatal crashes occurred on roads where the speed limit was 55 mph or higher, the opposite of urban fatal crashes. Specifically, 65 percent of drivers involved in urban fatal crashes in 2018 were on roadways where the posted speed limits were 50 mph or less. In rural fatal crashes, 72 percent of drivers involved were on roadways where the posted speed limit was 55 mph or higher.

### Drivers

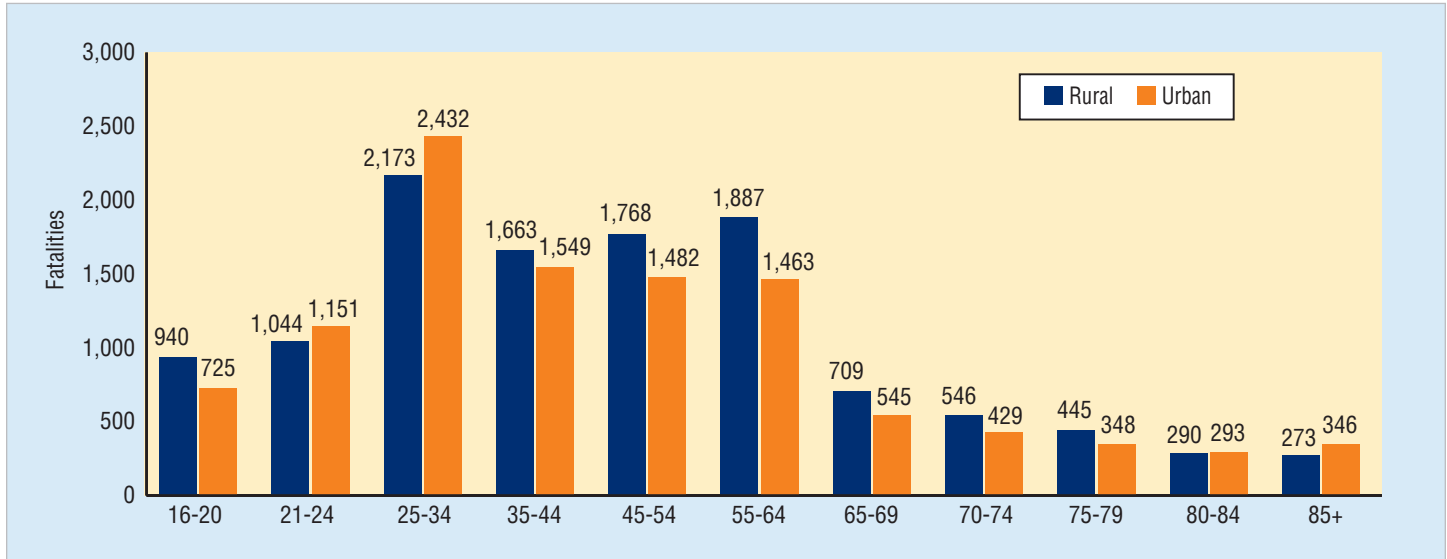
Figure 4 shows drivers killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes in 2018 by land use and age group. Driver fatalities in 2018 were higher in rural areas when compared to urban areas for almost all age groups except the 21-to-24, 25-to-34, 80-84, and 85+ age groups.

Drivers involved in fatal crashes in 2018 in rural areas were found to have a higher percentage of valid driver’s licenses than urban drivers (87% and 82%, respectively).

There were 22,925 drivers killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes in 2018. Sixty-seven percent of drivers killed in rural areas died at the scenes of the crashes, compared to 50 percent of drivers killed in urban areas. Data also shows that 41 percent of all drivers killed were

transported to hospitals and 2 percent of those drivers died en route. Drivers in rural areas represented 58 percent of drivers who died en route to hospitals compared to 41 percent for drivers in urban areas.

Figure 4  
**Driver Fatalities, by Land Use and Age Group, 2018**



Source: FARS 2018 ARF  
 Excludes driver fatalities of unknown land use and drivers under 16 years old.

### Alcohol

Drivers are considered to be alcohol-impaired when their blood alcohol concentrations (BACs) are .08 grams per deciliter (g/dL) or higher. Thus, any fatality occurring in a crash involving a driver with a BAC of .08 g/dL or higher is considered to be an alcohol-impaired-driving fatality. Table 2 presents the number of traffic fatalities and alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities by land use.

- In 2018 the proportion of alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities in both rural and urban areas was 29 percent.

- Of the 10,511 alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities in 2018, there were 4,714 (45%) that occurred in rural areas, 5,649 (54%) that occurred in urban areas, and 148 (1%) were unknowns.
- Alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities decreased by 2 percent from 10,759 in 2009 to 10,511 in 2018.
  - Rural alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities decreased by 23 percent from 6,160 in 2009 to 4,714 in 2018.
  - Urban alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities increased by 23 percent from 4,579 in 2009 to 5,649 in 2018.

Table 2  
**Total Fatalities and Alcohol-Impaired-Driving Fatalities, by Land Use, 2009 and 2018**

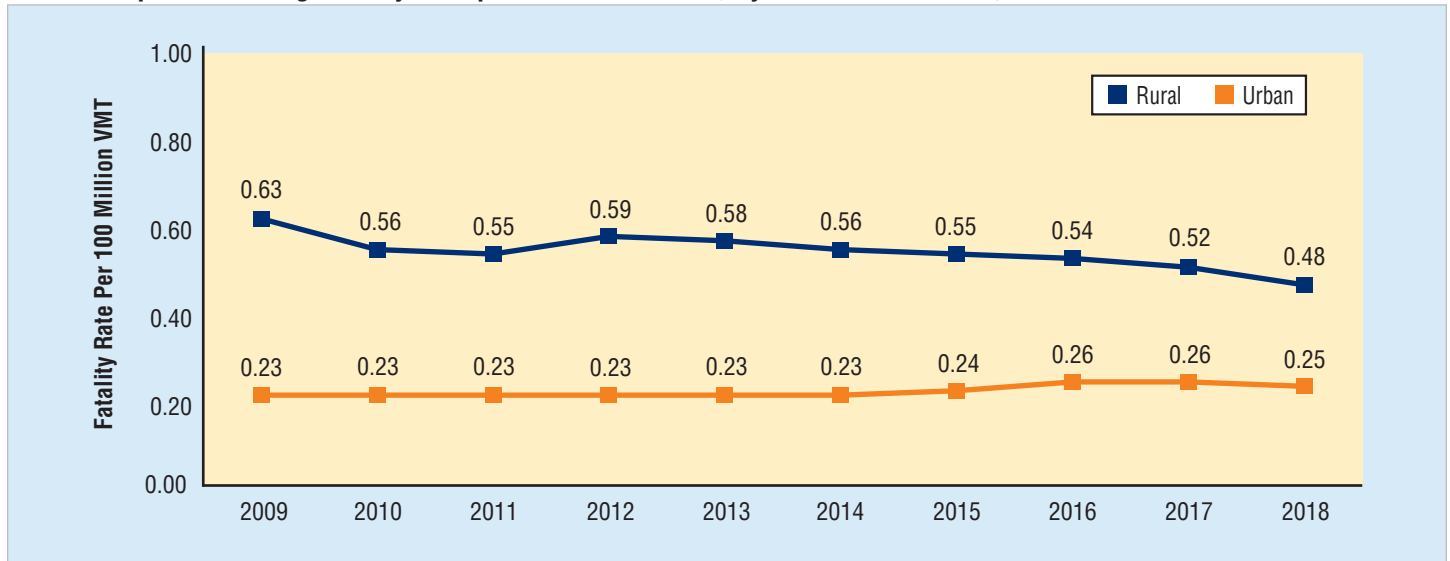
Land Use	2009			2018		
	Total Fatalities	Alcohol-Impaired-Driving Fatalities (BAC=.08+ g/dL)		Total Fatalities	Alcohol-Impaired-Driving Fatalities (BAC=.08+ g/dL)	
		Number	Percent		Number	Percent
Rural	19,323	6,160	32%	16,411	4,714	29%
Urban	14,501	4,579	32%	19,498	5,649	29%
<b>Total*</b>	<b>33,883</b>	<b>10,759</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>36,560</b>	<b>10,511</b>	<b>29%</b>

Source: FARS 2009 Final File, 2018 ARF  
 \*Includes fatalities where land use was unknown.

Figure 5 shows alcohol-impaired-driving fatality rate per 100 million VMT from 2009 to 2018. In rural areas, the alcohol-impaired-driving fatality rate declined from 0.63 in 2009 to 0.48 in 2018, but in

urban areas the alcohol-impaired-driving fatality rate has increased slightly from 0.23 in 2009 to 0.25 in 2018.

Figure 5  
**Alcohol-Impaired-Driving Fatality Rate per 100 Million VMT, by Year and Land Use, 2009–2018**



Sources: FARS 2009-2017 Final File, 2018 ARF; VMT – FHWA

Of the 51,490 drivers involved in fatal traffic crashes in 2018, there were 10,011 (19%) who were alcohol-impaired. Of these alcohol-impaired drivers, 4,362 (44%) were driving in rural areas at the time of the crashes and 5,506 (55%) were driving in urban areas.

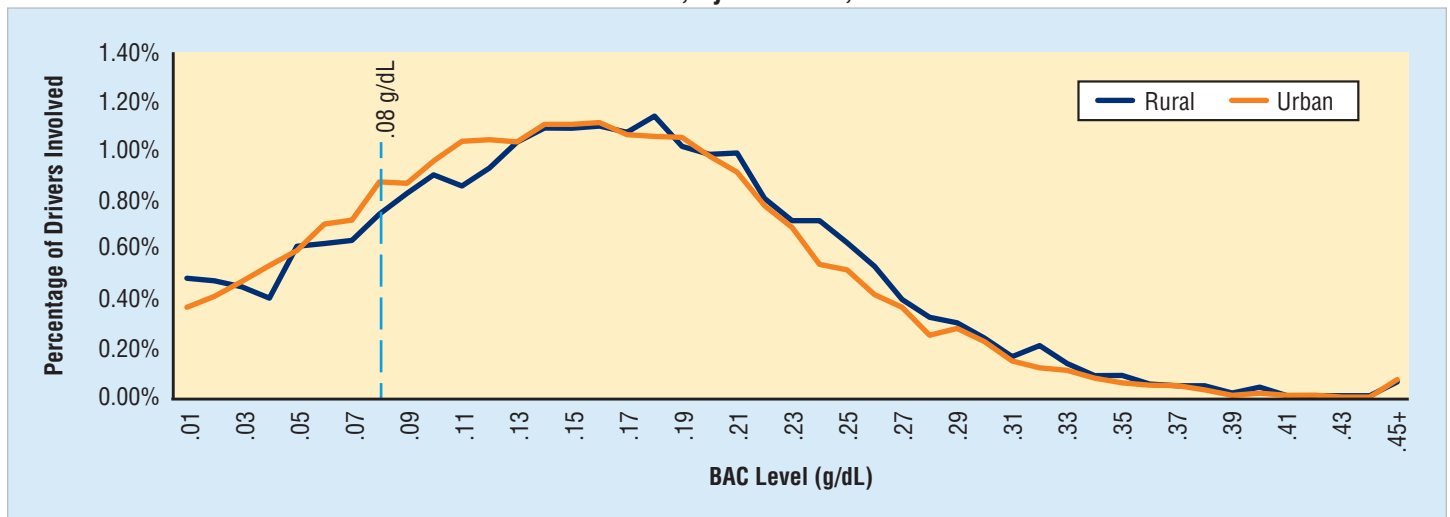
The highest percentage of alcohol-impaired drivers involved in fatal crashes by age group in 2018 was the 21-to-24 age group (27%), followed by the 25-to-34 age group (25%) and the 35-to-44 age group (21%). Rural alcohol-impaired drivers followed the same trend with the 21-to-24 age group (28%), followed by the 25-to-34 age group (27%) and the 35-to-44 age group (21%). Similarly, in urban areas the highest percentage of alcohol-impaired drivers was

the 21-to-24 age group (27%), followed by the 25-to-34 age group (25%) and the 35-to-44 age group (21%).

In cases where drivers involved in fatal crashes in 2018 had one or more previous convictions for driving while intoxicated, 48 percent of rural drivers were alcohol-impaired and 47 percent of urban drivers were alcohol-impaired.

As shown in Figure 6, the most frequently recorded BAC among drinking drivers involved in fatal crashes in rural areas was .18 g/dL and in urban areas was .16 g/dL.

Figure 6  
**Distribution of BACs of Drivers Involved in Fatal Crashes, by Land Use, 2018**



Source: FARS 2018 ARF

Of the all drivers involved in fatal crashes in 2018, in rural areas the proportion of alcohol-impaired drivers (BAC=.08+ g/dL) was highest for drivers of motorcycles (24%), followed by pickup trucks (23%), passenger cars (22%), SUVs (20%), vans (14%), and large

trucks (3%). In urban areas the proportion of alcohol-impaired (BAC=.08+ g/dL) was highest among motorcycle riders (26%), followed by passenger cars (21%), pickup trucks (19%), SUVs (18%), vans (12%), and large trucks (3%).

Table 3

**Total Drivers and Alcohol-Impaired Drivers Involved, by Vehicle Type and Land Use, 2018**

Vehicle Type	Rural			Urban			Total*		
	Total Drivers	Alcohol-Impaired (BAC =.08+ g/dL)		Total Drivers	Alcohol-Impaired (BAC =.08+ g/dL)		Total Drivers	Alcohol-Impaired (BAC =.08+ g/dL)	
	Number	Number	Percent	Number	Number	Percent	Number	Number	Percent
Passenger Car	7,596	1,643	22%	12,182	2,519	21%	20,175	4,217	21%
Light Truck**	9,169	1,929	21%	10,185	1,810	18%	19,663	3,782	19%
– Pickup	4,552	1,054	23%	3,920	746	19%	8,595	1,822	21%
– SUV	3,718	751	20%	5,022	915	18%	8,883	1,679	19%
– Van	848	115	14%	1,184	137	12%	2,070	256	12%
Large Truck	2,745	89	3%	2,011	56	3%	4,786	146	3%
Motorcycle	1,920	460	24%	3,062	804	26%	5,108	1,295	25%
<b>Total***</b>	<b>22,138</b>	<b>4,362</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>28,445</b>	<b>5,506</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>51,490</b>	<b>10,011</b>	<b>19%</b>

Source: FARS 2018 ARF

\*Includes drivers involved when land use was unknown.

\*\*Includes other/unknown light-truck vehicle types.

\*\*\*Includes buses and other/unknown vehicle types.

## Restraint Use

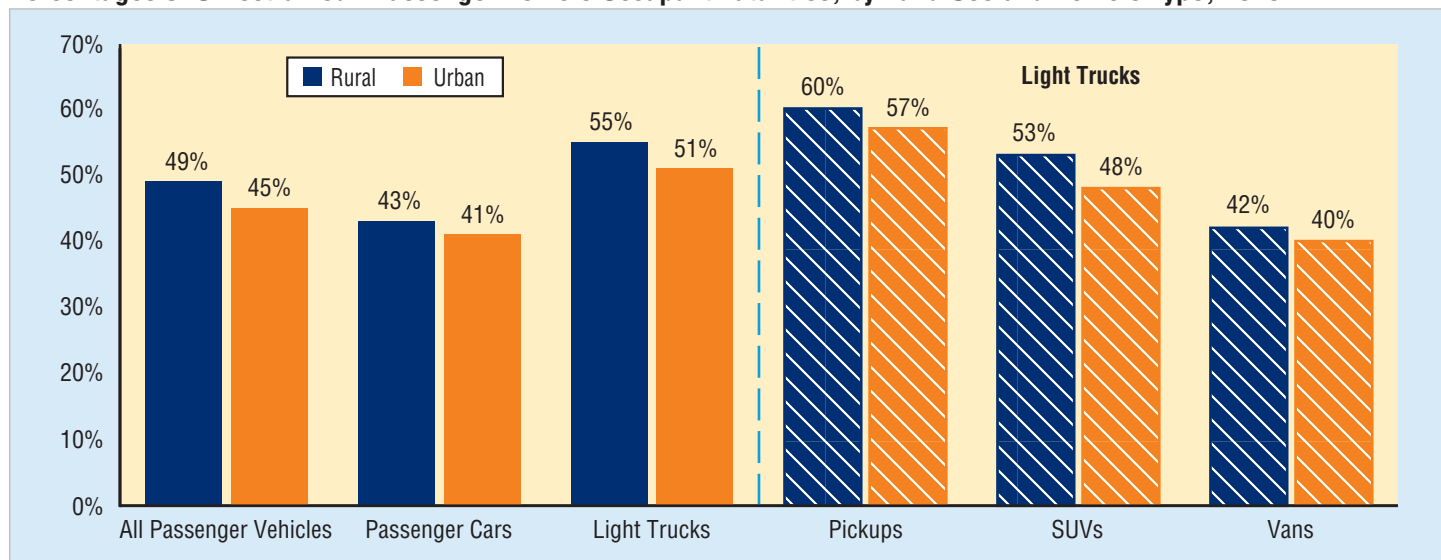
The 2018 NOPUS observed that the seat belt use rate among front seat passenger vehicle (defined as passenger cars and light trucks) occupants in urban areas was 89.4 percent, and rural occupants were observed to have a use rate of 90.1 percent (see the NHTSA Research Note, *Seat Belt Use in 2018 – Overall Results*, Report No. DOT HS 812 662, at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/812662>).

Of the 22,697 passenger vehicle occupants killed in 2018, there were 12,068 (53%) killed in rural areas and 10,330 (46%) were killed in urban areas. Figure 7 presents the 2018 rural and urban percentages

(based on known restraint use) of unrestrained passenger vehicle occupant fatalities by vehicle type (passenger cars and light trucks including pickups, SUVs, and vans). In 2018 (based on known restraint use):

- Forty-nine percent of passenger vehicle occupants killed in rural areas were unrestrained as compared to 45 percent of the passenger vehicle occupants killed in urban areas.
- Sixty percent of rural pickup occupants killed were unrestrained – the highest percentage of any passenger vehicle occupants killed among both rural and urban areas.

Figure 7

**Percentages of Unrestrained\* Passenger Vehicle Occupant Fatalities, by Land Use and Vehicle Type, 2018**

Source: FARS 2018 ARF

\*Based on known restraint use.

## Rollover Crashes

Of the 12,068 passenger vehicle occupants killed in rural areas in 2018, there were 4,159 (34%) killed in vehicles that rolled over. Of the 10,330 passenger vehicle occupants killed in urban areas, 2,285 (22%) were in vehicles that rolled over. Data further shows that of those killed in rollover vehicles, 66 percent passenger vehicle occupants in rural areas and 65 percent of passenger vehicle occupants in urban areas were unrestrained (based on known restraint use). SUVs involved in rural fatal crashes in 2018 experienced the highest rollover percentage at 33 percent. Other rural rollover percentages were 28 percent for pickups, 19 percent each for vans and passenger cars, and 16 percent for large trucks. In urban areas, vehicles experienced lower rollover percentages: 15 percent for SUVs, 14 percent for pickups, 8 percent each for both passenger cars and vans, and 7 percent for large trucks.

Of the vehicles involved in 2018 in single-vehicle fatal crashes, 48 percent of the vehicles in rural areas and 18 percent in urban areas rolled over, whereas in multi-vehicle fatal crashes, 9 percent of the vehicles in rural areas and 6 percent in urban areas rolled over.

## Nonoccupants

Nonoccupants are defined as pedestrians, pedalcyclists, or other nonoccupants. In 2018:

- Of the 6,283 pedestrians killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes, 1,147 (18%) died in rural areas, 4,975 (79%) died in urban areas, and 161 (3%) died in unknown areas.
- Of the 857 pedalcyclists killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes, 174 (20%) died in rural areas, 645 (75%) died in urban areas, and 38 (4%) died in unknown areas.

## Fatalities by State

Table 4 presents the number and percentage of rural and urban traffic fatalities, VMT, and fatality rate per 100 million VMT for each State and the District of Columbia in 2018. Puerto Rico is included in this table, but not included in the overall U.S. total. In 2018, fatality rates per 100 million VMT among States (excluding the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico) in rural areas ranged from 0.85 in Maryland to 2.66 in South Carolina, and in urban areas ranged from 0.33 in Vermont to 1.52 in Louisiana.

Additional State/county-level data is available at NHTSA's State Traffic Safety Information website at <https://cdan.nhtsa.gov/stsi.htm>.

In 2018 the rural fatality rate per 100 million VMT was two times higher in rural areas compared to urban areas (1.68 and 0.86, respectively). The two columns on the right side of Table 4 show the fatality rates per 100 million VMT for rural and urban areas by State.



Table 4  
**Fatalities, VMT, and Fatality Rate per 100 Million VMT, by State and Land Use, 2018**

State	Land Use						Total Fatalities		VMT (million)		Fatality Rate Per 100 Million VMT	
	Rural		Urban		Unknown							
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
Alabama	541	57%	412	43%	0	0%	953	100%	28,788	42,379	1.88	0.97
Alaska	41	51%	39	49%	0	0%	80	100%	2,277	3,211	1.80	1.21
Arizona	318	31%	680	67%	12	1%	1,010	100%	16,343	49,802	1.95	1.37
Arkansas	306	59%	210	41%	0	0%	516	100%	17,787	18,888	1.72	1.11
California	1,072	30%	2,490	70%	1	0%	3,563	100%	58,432	290,364	1.83	0.86
Colorado	259	41%	373	59%	0	0%	632	100%	15,894	38,059	1.63	0.98
Connecticut	39	13%	252	86%	3	1%	294	100%	3,159	28,437	1.23	0.89
Delaware	54	49%	57	51%	0	0%	111	100%	2,470	7,710	2.19	0.74
District of Columbia	1	3%	30	97%	0	0%	31	100%	0	3,691	0.00	0.81
Florida	724	23%	1,860	59%	549	18%	3,133	100%	36,742	185,074	1.97	1.01
Georgia	508	34%	996	66%	0	0%	1,504	100%	32,849	98,607	1.55	1.01
Hawaii	26	22%	91	78%	0	0%	117	100%	1,845	9,042	1.41	1.01
Idaho	168	73%	63	27%	0	0%	231	100%	10,180	7,529	1.65	0.84
Illinois	386	37%	645	63%	0	0%	1,031	100%	25,652	82,302	1.50	0.78
Indiana	524	61%	333	39%	1	0%	858	100%	29,691	51,837	1.76	0.64
Iowa	254	80%	64	20%	0	0%	318	100%	19,717	13,566	1.29	0.47
Kansas	308	76%	95	24%	1	0%	404	100%	15,345	16,846	2.01	0.56
Kentucky	515	71%	208	29%	1	0%	724	100%	26,616	22,928	1.93	0.91
Louisiana	304	40%	463	60%	1	0%	768	100%	19,534	30,511	1.56	1.52
Maine	117	85%	19	14%	1	1%	137	100%	10,178	4,605	1.15	0.41
Maryland	90	18%	403	80%	8	2%	501	100%	10,648	49,128	0.85	0.82
Massachusetts	36	10%	323	90%	1	0%	360	100%	3,069	63,703	1.17	0.51
Michigan	407	42%	566	58%	1	0%	974	100%	31,204	71,194	1.30	0.80
Minnesota	218	57%	160	42%	3	1%	381	100%	24,672	35,766	0.88	0.45
Mississippi	440	66%	224	34%	0	0%	664	100%	23,833	16,898	1.85	1.33
Missouri	512	56%	409	44%	0	0%	921	100%	33,166	43,429	1.54	0.94
Montana	154	85%	28	15%	0	0%	182	100%	8,754	3,945	1.76	0.71
Nebraska	171	74%	59	26%	0	0%	230	100%	11,617	9,358	1.47	0.63
Nevada	89	27%	239	72%	2	1%	330	100%	5,701	22,618	1.56	1.06
New Hampshire	78	53%	69	47%	0	0%	147	100%	5,484	8,292	1.42	0.83
New Jersey	45	8%	509	90%	10	2%	564	100%	4,868	72,671	0.92	0.70
New Mexico	231	59%	158	40%	2	1%	391	100%	16,179	11,109	1.43	1.42
New York	466	49%	477	51%	0	0%	943	100%	25,303	98,207	1.84	0.49
North Carolina	843	59%	593	41%	1	0%	1,437	100%	41,166	79,962	2.05	0.74
North Dakota	91	87%	14	13%	0	0%	105	100%	6,882	2,974	1.32	0.47
Ohio	471	44%	580	54%	17	2%	1,068	100%	34,637	79,837	1.36	0.73
Oklahoma	429	65%	225	34%	1	0%	655	100%	22,096	23,337	1.94	0.96
Oregon	328	65%	178	35%	0	0%	506	100%	14,589	22,259	2.25	0.80
Pennsylvania	524	44%	660	55%	6	1%	1,190	100%	34,318	67,792	1.53	0.97
Rhode Island	15	25%	43	73%	1	2%	59	100%	913	7,095	1.64	0.61
South Carolina	681	66%	356	34%	0	0%	1,037	100%	25,596	31,205	2.66	1.14
South Dakota	117	90%	13	10%	0	0%	130	100%	6,786	2,934	1.72	0.44
Tennessee	471	45%	570	55%	0	0%	1,041	100%	25,892	55,429	1.82	1.03
Texas	1,520	42%	2,110	58%	12	0%	3,642	100%	76,747	205,290	1.98	1.03
Utah	93	36%	165	63%	2	1%	260	100%	8,916	23,154	1.04	0.71
Vermont	60	88%	7	10%	1	1%	68	100%	5,217	2,129	1.15	0.33
Virginia	471	57%	346	42%	3	0%	820	100%	29,009	56,327	1.62	0.61
Washington	235	43%	305	56%	6	1%	546	100%	17,426	44,940	1.35	0.68
West Virginia	178	61%	116	39%	0	0%	294	100%	9,868	9,579	1.80	1.21
Wisconsin	386	66%	199	34%	3	1%	588	100%	33,357	32,528	1.16	0.61
Wyoming	96	86%	14	13%	1	1%	111	100%	7,387	3,052	1.30	0.46
<b>U.S. Total</b>	<b>16,411</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>19,498</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>651</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>36,560</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>978,802</b>	<b>2,261,525</b>	<b>1.68</b>	<b>0.86</b>
Puerto Rico	178	58%	130	42%	0	0%	308	100%	1,077	13,943	16.53	0.93

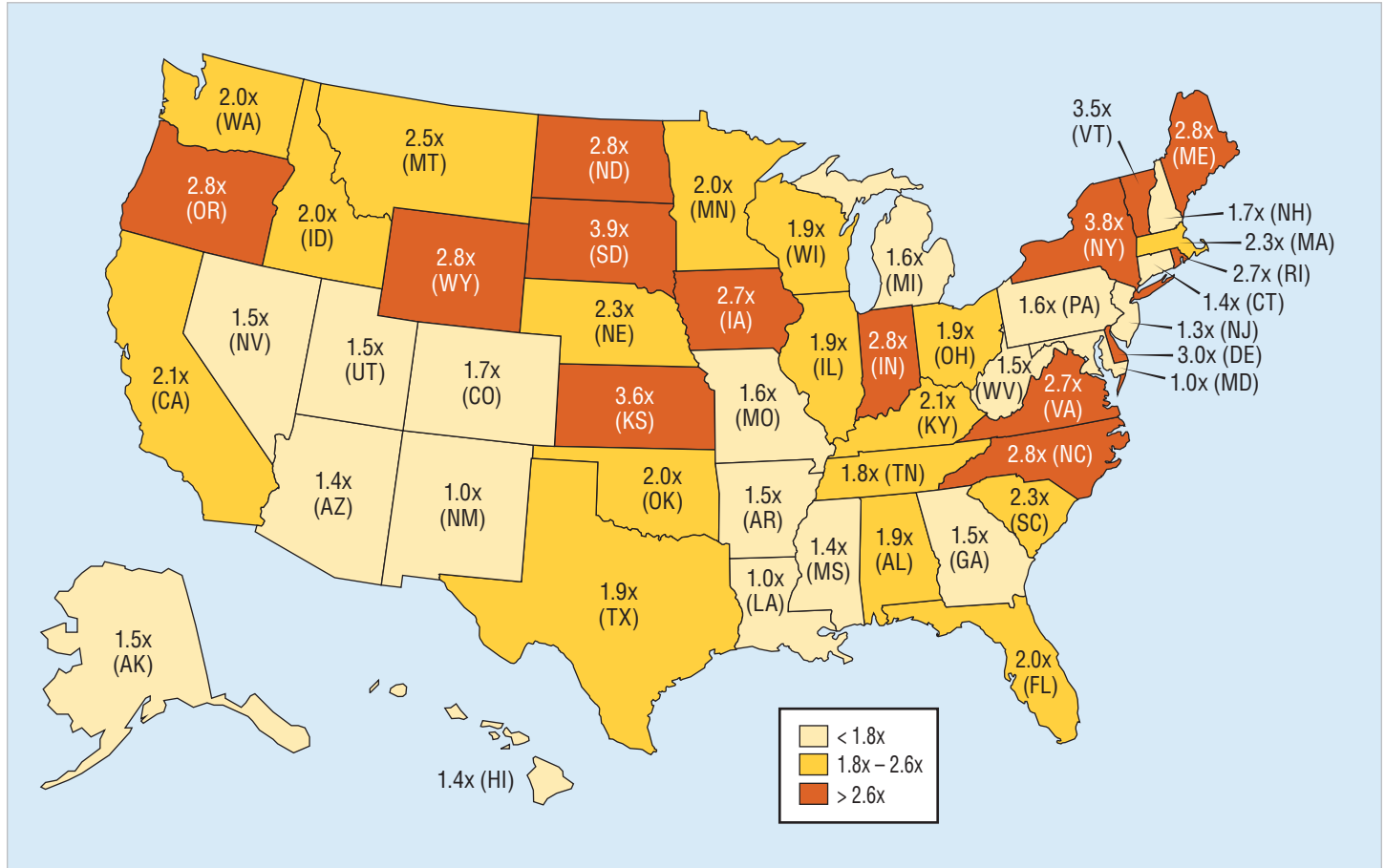
Sources: FARS 2018 ARF; VMT – FHWA

Note: Some States contain high proportions of unknown land use; many of these will be resolved when the file is finalized. In addition, there was 1 fatal crash resulting in 1 fatality in the District of Columbia recorded as rural, however the District of Columbia does not have any lands designated as rural. This will be resolved when the 2018 file is finalized.

The ratios of rural to urban fatality rates by State are shown in Figure 8. The ratios of rural to urban fatality rates by State ranged from a high of 3.9 times in South Dakota to a low of 1.0 times in New Mexico, Louisiana, and Maryland. Not shown in Figure 8 are

the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. The District of Columbia does not have any rural area and the rural fatality rate for Puerto Rico (17.8) is too high when compared to other States.

Figure 8  
**Ratio of Rural to Urban Fatality Rate per 100 Million VMT, by State, 2018**



Sources: FARS 2018 ARF; VMT – FHWA

## Fatality Analysis Reporting System

The FARS contains data on every fatal traffic crash in the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. To be included in FARS, a crash must involve a motor vehicle traveling on a public trafficway and must result in the death of a vehicle occupant or a nonoccupant within 30 days of the crash. The Annual Report File (ARF) is the FARS data file associated with the most recent available year, which is subject to change when it is finalized about a year later. The final version of the file is aptly known as the “Final” file. The additional time between the ARF and the Final file provides the opportunity for submission of important variable data requiring outside sources, which may lead to changes in

the final counts. The updated final counts for a given previous calendar year will be reflected with the release of the recent year’s ARF. For example, along with the release of the 2018 ARF, the 2017 Final file was also released to replace the previous year’s 2017 ARF. The final fatality count in motor vehicle crashes for 2017 was 37,473, which was updated from 37,133 from the 2017 ARF. The number of rural fatalities from the 2017 Final file was 17,405, which was updated from 17,216 from the 2017 ARF and the number of urban fatalities from the 2017 Final file was 19,976, which was updated from 19,038 from the 2017 ARF.

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## For More Information:

Information on traffic fatalities is available from the National Center for Statistics and Analysis, NSA-230, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590. NCSA can be contacted at 800-934-8517 or by email at [NCSARequests@dot.gov](mailto:NCSARequests@dot.gov). General information on highway traffic safety can be found at [www.nhtsa.gov/data](http://www.nhtsa.gov/data). To report a safety-related problem or to inquire about motor vehicle safety information, contact the Vehicle Safety Hotline at 888-327-4236.

Other fact sheets available from the National Center for Statistics and Analysis are *Alcohol-Impaired-Driving, Bicyclists and Other Cyclists, Children, Large Trucks, Motorcycles, Occupant Protection in Passenger Vehicles, Older Population, Passenger Vehicles, Pedestrians, School-Transportation-Related Crashes, Speeding, State Alcohol-Impaired-Driving Estimates, State Traffic Data, Summary of Motor Vehicle Crashes, and Young Drivers*. Detailed data on motor vehicle traffic crashes are published annually in *Traffic Safety Facts: A Compilation of Motor Vehicle Crash Data*. The fact sheets and annual Traffic Safety Facts report can be found at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/>.



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