



North Carolina

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Current Safety Media Topics

- National Safety Council “Increase in Fatalities”
- Wrong Way Driving

September 18, 2015





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Monday, August 17, 2015

U.S. on pace for deadliest driving year since 2007, says National Safety Council

Traffic deaths and serious injuries substantially higher in first six months of 2015.

Itasca, IL – The [National Safety Council](#) estimates traffic deaths are 14 percent higher through the first six months of 2015 than they were during the same period in 2014, and serious injuries are 30 percent higher[i]. From January to June, nearly 19,000 people died in traffic crashes across the U.S., and more than 2.2 million were seriously injured[ii], putting the country on pace for its deadliest driving year since 2007.

Costs are also up. The six-month estimated bill for traffic deaths, injuries and property damage is \$152 billion – 24 percent higher than 2014.

Table 2
State Motor-Vehicle Deaths, Changes, and Rates

State	Number of Months Reported	Deaths Identical Periods			Percent Changes	
		2015	2014	2013	2014 to 2015	2013 to 2015
TOTAL U.S.	6	18,630	16,400	16,617	14%	12%
North Carolina	6	634	531	593	19%	7%

NEWS

Traffic deaths up in North Carolina, Triangle counties may be following trend

Aug 20, 2015, 10:05am EDT Updated Aug 20, 2015, 10:41am EDT

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Jeff Jeffrey
Staff Writer
Triangle Business Journal



Fatal traffic crashes are up 19 percent across North Carolina so far this year, according to a report from the **National Safety Council**. And the Triangle may be on pace to see at least as many traffic deaths as last year.

Statewide, 634 people were killed in traffic collisions through June of this year, up from the 531 deaths North Carolina saw during the same period in 2014. The uptick in North Carolina tracks with the national trend.

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SOULPHOBIA

Statewide, 634 people were killed in traffic collisions through June of this year, up... [more](#)

Traffic deaths across the country are up 12 percent in 2015, going from 16,400 last year to 18,630 this year. The increase follows two years of declining traffic fatalities and puts the country on pace for its deadliest driving year since 2007,

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Where do the NSC fatality numbers come from?

- Our NCDMV FARS team provides our state fatality numbers to the NSC
- NOTE: NSC uses estimates

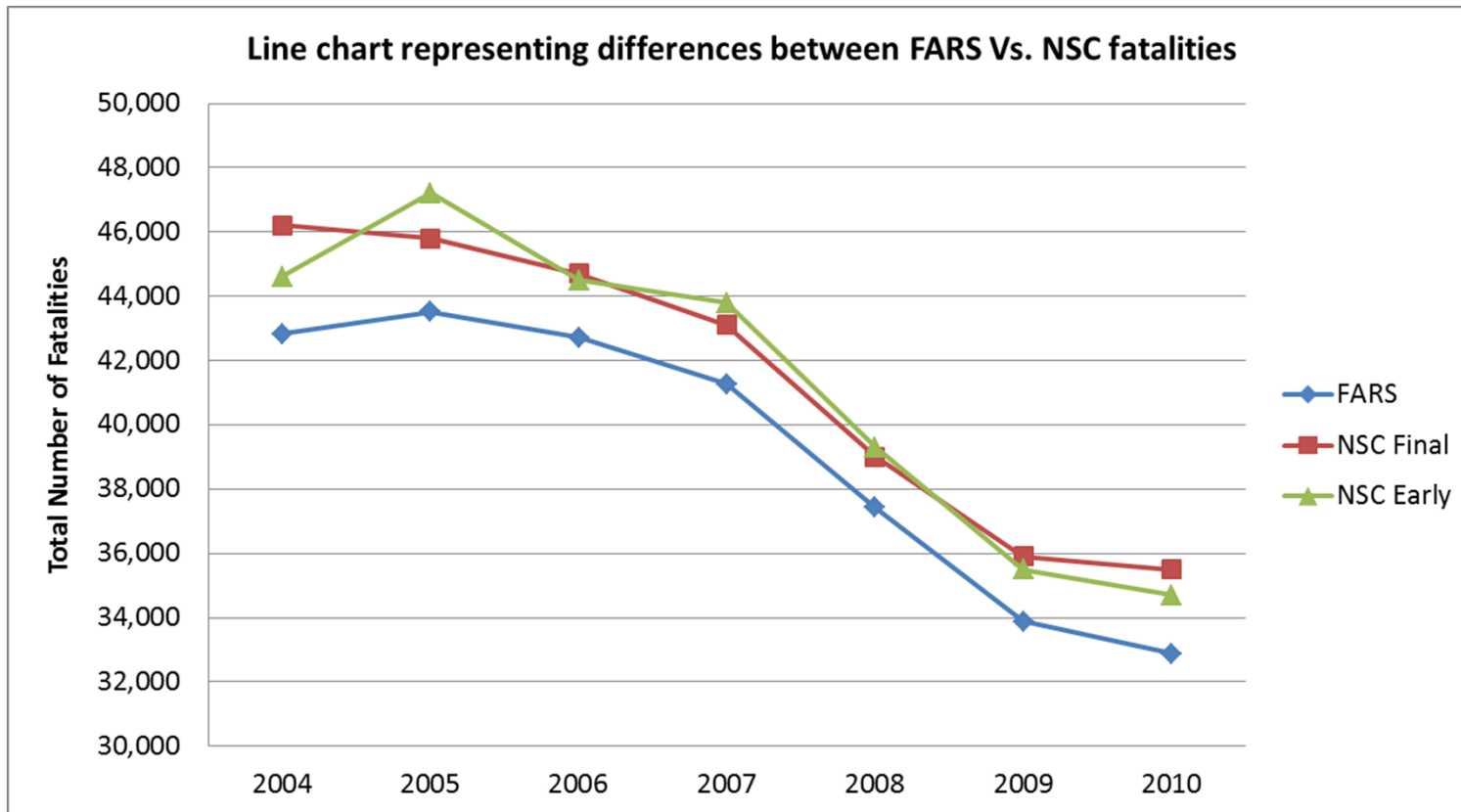
	January - June			% Change	% Change
	2015	2014	2013	2014 to 2015	2013 to 2015
NSC Numbers	634	531	593	19%	7%
<i>*Actual Numbers</i>	629	563	606	12%	4%

**Crash Database as of 8/25/15*

UNC Highway Safety Research Center Comparison

Total Number of Fatalities			
Year	FARS	NSC Final	NSC Early
2004	42,836	46,200	44,600
2005	43,510	45,800	47,200
2006	42,708	44,700	44,500
2007	41,259	43,100	43,800
2008	37,423	39,000	39,300
2009	33,883	35,900	35,500
2010	32,885	35,500	34,700

NSC Early Estimates were extracted from the Dec estimate for the latest year available. NSC Final Estimates were extracted from the Dec estimate for the prior year. For example, the 2009 early estimate came from the Dec 2009 file. The 2009 final estimate came from the Dec 2010 file.



Three killed in wrong-way crash on I-85

Posted July 19

Updated July 20

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HILLSBOROUGH, N.C. — Three people were killed early Sunday in a head-on collision on Interstate 85 in Orange County, authorities said.

The crash occurred shortly after 3 a.m. near the split of I-85 and Interstate 40.

Wrong-Way Crash

Thomasville man dies in accident on I-77 in Charlotte

The-Dispatch.com
Davidson County's News Source

Published: Monday, September 7, 2015 at 12:28 p.m.

Last Modified: Monday, September 7, 2015 at 12:28 p.m.

Larry Donald Olson, 60, of Thomasville, died in an early Saturday morning wreck on Interstate 77, troopers said, according to WSOC-TV.

Troopers were dispatched to Interstate 77 north near Stumptown Road after a number of people called 911 reporting a driver, later identified as Olson, was traveling south in the northbound lanes. When troopers arrived they found two cars that had collided head-on near mile marker 25. Olson died at the scene.

Winston-Salem officer rams wrong-way driver to prevent crash



POSTED 10:49 AM, JULY 26, 2015, BY JOE BORLIK

Wrong Way Crashes in NC Update (2006-2012) Study

Year	Freeway <i>Wrong Way Crashes</i> (2006-2012)					Freeway <i>All Crashes</i> (2006-2012)				
	Total Crashes	Fatalities	A Injuries	B Injuries	C Injuries	Total Crashes	Fatalities	A Injuries	B Injuries	C Injuries
2006	28	15	10	18	15	17,972	150	240	1,947	6,881
2007	42	13	10	16	20	18,054	146	206	1,995	6,772
2008	27	9	2	15	22	16,449	138	185	1,765	5,937
2009	20	2	6	8	12	17,958	95	183	1,826	6,423
2010	30	3	1	18	20	19,037	147	188	1,732	6,578
2011	26	8	7	19	11	17,691	133	182	1,688	5,998
2012	27	9	3	14	13	17,706	101	182	1,544	6,086
Totals	200	59	39	108	113	124,867	910	1,366	12,497	44,675

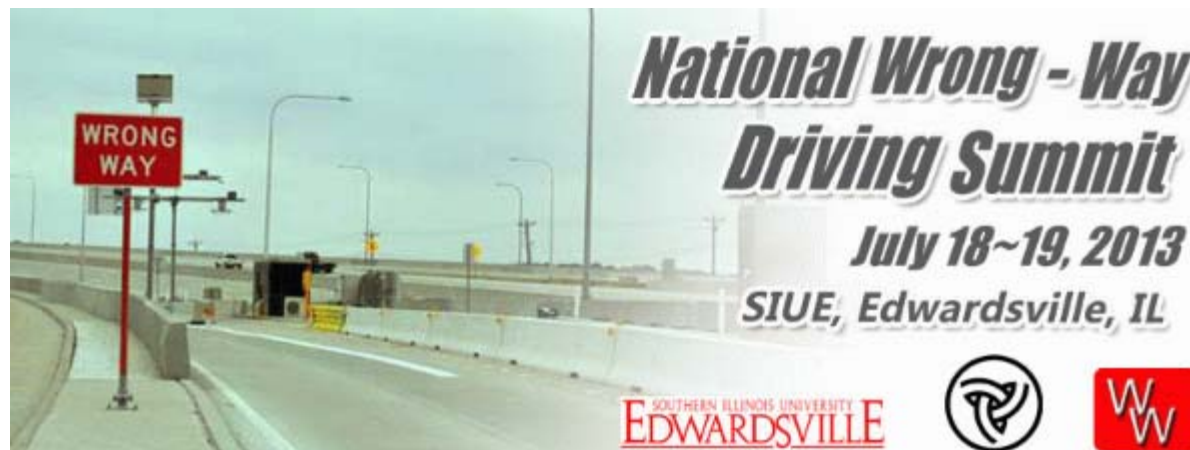
- Freeways defined in initial study as two-way median divided facilities with full control access
- Wrong Way Crashes make up about 0.2% of all freeway crashes
- 48% of all wrong way crashes were alcohol related
- 24% of all wrong way drivers were 20 to 29 years of age
- 21% of all wrong way drivers were 60 years of age and above
- 72% of all wrong way crashes occurred on Interstate routes
- 47% of all wrong way crashes occurred between the hours of Midnight and 5:59am

National Wrong Way Driving Summit

- Representatives from 23 states gathered to discuss national trends associated with wrong way crashes

Common Themes:

- It is hard to determine the exact entry points of wrong way driving, therefore making it hard to treat a specific location
- Older drivers are often confused when there are too many signs at a given location and they tend to look for/at pavement markings in these cases
- Wrong way driving crashes/incidents are more likely to occur at locations in which two ramp entry/exit points are closed spaced
- Some states have used cell phone/Bluetooth data (direction, speed, vehicle movements) to track wrong way driving



What Other States are Doing



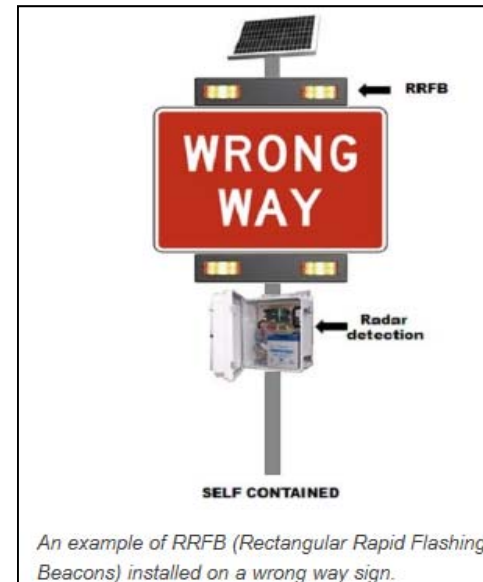
Figure 3. Example of NTTA DO NOT ENTER Lowered Signs.
North Texas Tollway Authority (NTTA)



CALTRANS



Texas DOT



University of South Florida for
Urban Transportation Research

An example of RRFB (Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons) installed on a wrong way sign.



NCHRP 03-117 [Active]

Traffic Control Devices and Measures for Deterring Wrong-Way Movements

The objectives of this research are to:

- (1) Determine the type(s), number and location(s) of traffic control devices required on freeway and expressway ramps, cross streets, frontage roads, intersection approaches, and emergency cross-overs in order to improve safety and deter wrong-way movements
- (2) Evaluate the impact of varying median widths on wrong-way movement signing and marking requirements on low- and high-speed rural and urban highways
- (3) Identify inconsistencies in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) pertaining to median widths used to determine whether medians are treated as one or two intersections for traffic control purposes, and
- (4) Propose for the adoption to the Regulatory and Warning Technical Committees of the National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (NCUTCD) and to the NCUTCD appropriate definitions, text, and figure changes where applicable in Parts 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the MUTCD

Project Data	
Funds:	\$300,000
Staff Responsibility:	Lori L. Sundstrom
Research Agency:	Texas A&M Transportation Institute
Principal Investigator:	Melisa D. Finley
Effective Date:	5/11/2015
Completion Date:	9/11/2017

STATUS: Research is in progress.

What Can We Do



Example of a reconfigured side-by-side ramp at Lake Boone Trail and I-440 Inner Beltline

Try Something New -
Possible use of Double
Sided Signs

