INTRODUCTION

A speeding-related collision is defined as one in which a driver is racing, driving too fast for the conditions, or driving in excess of the posted speed limit. In the United States, speeding has been involved in nearly one-third of all fatal crashes for more than twenty years and is a leading contributing factor in traffic collisions. Speeding reduces a driver’s ability to steer safely around curves or objects, reduces the amount of time a driver has to react to a dangerous situation, and extends safe stopping distances. Nationwide there were 10,111 people killed in speeding-related traffic collisions in 2016, a 4.0 percent increase from 9,723 in 2015, and a 2.1 percent decrease from 10,329 in 2012. Drivers involved in a fatal speeding-related crash were also more likely to engage in other risky behaviors compared with non-speeding drivers—36.8 percent had a BAC of .08 or higher compared with only 15.2 percent of non-speeding drivers; and only 50.5 percent were known to be wearing seatbelts, compared with 78.8 percent of non-speeding drivers.

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CALIFORNIA FACTS

There were 1,056 people killed in speeding-related traffic collisions in 2016, a 2.3% increase from 1,032 in 2015, and a 10.7% increase from 954 in 2012.

In 2016, a total of 29.1% of California’s 3,623 motor vehicle fatalities were speeding-related, and the state had the second-highest number of speeding-related fatalities in the nation.

The highest number of speeding-related fatal and serious injuries were in Los Angeles County, followed by San Diego, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside, Kern, Alameda, San Joaquin, and Sacramento counties.

The highest rates of speeding-related fatal and serious injury per population were concentrated in more rural parts of California in Alpine and Sierra counties, followed by Inyo, Mono, Plumas, Trinity, and Del Norte counties.

The vast majority (73.7%) of fatally and severely injured speed-related collision victims were males. Over half (51.0%) of those fatally and severely injured in speeding-related traffic crashes were ages 15 to 34.

The 2017 OTS Traffic Safety Survey reported that 65.0% of drivers surveyed perceived that it was safe to drive ten miles over the speed limit on freeways. When asked about the safety of driving 20 miles over the speed limit, 12.6% of drivers surveyed believed it was safe, while 21.2% of drivers age 18 to 24 believed it was safe to do so.
Because this program area is defined by collisions in which drivers are speeding, 100% of the collisions had a primary collision factor of unsafe speed.

Over one-third (35.1%) of speeding-related fatal and severe injury crashes were rear end collisions. Other common crash types for speeding-related collisions were hit object at 23.4% and overturned vehicle at 12.8%.

Over one third (36.5%) of fatal and severe injuries from speeding-related collisions occurred on weekends. Fatal and severe injuries were also common on Friday evenings between 3pm and midnight, accounting for 8.6% of fatal and severe injuries.

Fatal and severe speeding-related collisions also occurred frequently during the weekday evening commute hours between 3pm and 6pm, accounting for 13.4% of fatalities and severe injuries.

Over half of the fatal injuries from speeding-related collisions occurred in passenger vehicles (61.2%), followed by motorcycles (24.5%).

Over half (62.1%) of speeding-related collision fatalities and serious injuries occurred in urban areas compared with 37.9% on rural roads. Only 15.9% of travel took place on rural roads.

A little under half (43.5%) of all speeding-related fatalities occurred on non-interstate principal arterials (high-capacity urban roads). The next most common locations for fatalities were non-interstate minor arterials (17.8%) and interstates (15.7%).

REFERENCES