

SPEEDING COUNTS

. . . on all roads!



Speeding is a factor in one-third of all motor vehicle fatalities.

Speeding is defined as speed too fast for conditions or in excess of the posted limit. Speeding occurs every day on every road in the United States, but on certain types of roads, speeding has more severe consequences than on others. This handout presents speeding fatality data by type of road. Highway agencies classify roads into four major functional categories: Interstates, Other Arterials, Collectors, and Locals (See definitions — reverse side). Each road class has a different mix of mobility and land access (e.g. number of intersecting roads and driveways), and each class is tied to an allowable range of design standards. These standards include lane width, shoulder width, vertical alignment, superelevation (banking on curves), curve radius, etc. All of these design standards have direct influence on the consequences of speeding for motorists.

The class of road also has fiscal implications to State and local governments that wish to fund speeding countermeasures. Federal-aid and other sources of funding are often tied to class of roadway, but road ownership varies according to State and class of road. The Federal Government controls very few roads (less than five percent of all road miles). In America, 75 percent of all roads are under the jurisdiction of local government (cities, towns, and counties). States control less than 20 percent of all U.S. roads including all of the Interstates.

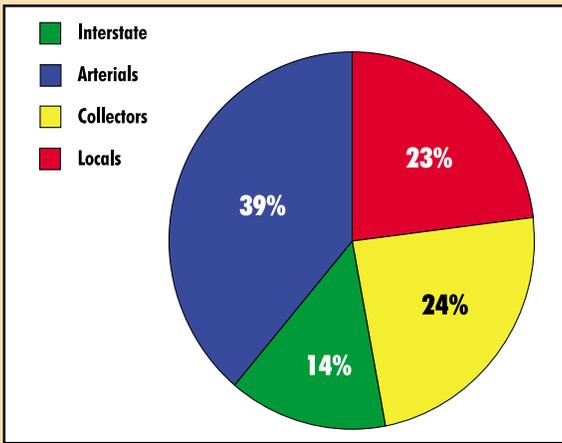


Fig. 1 - Distribution of Speeding-Related Fatalities by Road Class (1999)

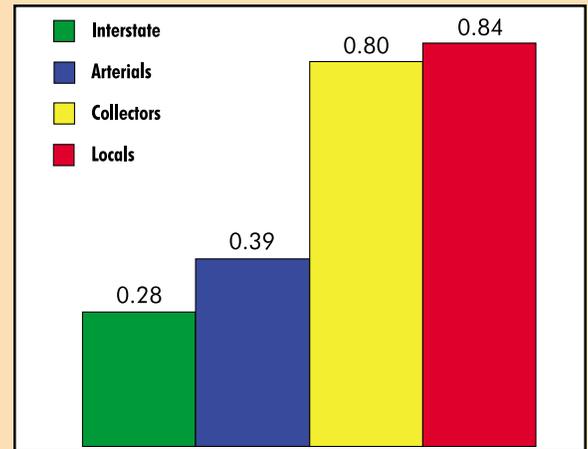


Fig. 2 - Rate of Speeding-Related Fatalities by Road Class [Fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT)] (1999)

- **Despite their low traffic volume, almost half of all speeding fatalities occur on local and collector roads – low speed roads found in residential and business areas.**
- **Local and collector roads in America have a speeding fatality rate almost triple that of the Interstates.**
- **Rural roads are especially hazardous for speeders and those who share the road with them. Almost 65 percent of all speeding-related fatalities take place on rural roads.**
- **Rural local roads are especially dangerous: their speeding-related fatality rate is four times higher than their urban counterparts.**

DEFINITIONS

The Interstate System is the highest classification of roadways in the United States. These arterial roads provide the highest level of mobility and the highest travel speeds over the longest uninterrupted distance. Interstates represent:

- 1.2 percent of total public road mileage.
- 23.9 percent of the annual vehicle-miles traveled.
- 13.9 percent of speeding-related fatalities.
- 0.28 persons killed in speeding-related crashes per 100 M VMT.

Other Arterials include freeways, multilane highways, and other important roadways that supplement the Interstate System. They connect, as directly as practicable, the Nation's principal urbanized areas, cities, and industrial centers and provide mobility with limited access. Arterial highways, not including the Interstate, represent:

- 9.9 percent of total public road mileage.
- 47.9 percent of the annual vehicle-miles traveled.
- 38.7 percent of speeding-related fatalities.
- 0.39 persons killed in speeding-related crashes per 100 M VMT.

Collectors are major and minor roads that connect local roads and streets with arterials. Collectors provide less mobility than arterials at lower speeds and for shorter distances. They offer a balance of mobility and land access. Collector roads represent:

- 20.3 percent of total public road mileage.
- 14.7 percent of the annual vehicle-miles traveled.
- 24.3 percent of speeding-related fatalities.
- 0.80 persons killed in speeding-related crashes per 100 M VMT.

Local roads provide limited mobility and are the primary access to residential areas, businesses, farms, and other local areas. Local roads constitute the majority of roads in the U.S. Local roads represent:

- 68.6 percent of total public road mileage.
- 13.4 percent of the annual vehicle-miles traveled.
- 23.1 percent of speeding-related fatalities.
- 0.84 persons killed in speeding-related crashes per 100 M VMT.