
Thanksgiving Travel Safety

Itasca, IL – The National Safety Council estimates 417 people may be killed and another 47,500 may be seriously injured in car crashes during the upcoming [Thanksgiving Day holiday period](#). Compared to last year, the fatality estimate is down nearly 4%, which is in line with an [estimated drop](#) in overall motor vehicle deaths in the U.S. Alcohol is a persistent factor in fatal crashes. Historical trends show that, on average, more than one-third of deaths during the Thanksgiving holiday period involve alcohol-impaired drivers. Since the day before Thanksgiving is known for its high volume of both travel and alcohol consumption, the Council is warning drivers to be particularly vigilant at the start of the holiday period, which runs from 6 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 27, to 11:59 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 1.

The Council also advises motorists not to drive under the influence of drugs, particularly as the decriminalization of cannabis continues in states throughout the U.S. and the widespread impact of the opioid crisis persists. Just like alcohol, the consumption of marijuana and opioid painkillers can impact judgement, reflexes and cognitive dexterity, increasing the risk of death and injury behind the wheel.

“Thanksgiving should be a time for family gatherings and good food, not the tragedy that a car crash can bring,” said Lorraine M. Martin, NSC president and CEO. “Let’s work to keep each other safe this holiday by planning ahead and avoiding impaired driving. Making smart decisions will help protect all of us as we travel for celebrations and other activities.”

In addition to urging sober, attentive driving during the Thanksgiving holiday period – and throughout the year – the Council advocates for all vehicle passengers to buckle up no matter what seating position they are in. An estimated 165 lives may be saved this Thanksgiving holiday period if vehicle occupants wear safety belts, and an additional 97 lives could be saved if everyone were to wear safety belts, according to the Council.

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Additional tips for safe travel include:

- Practice defensive driving, designate a [sober driver](#) or arrange alternative transportation, get plenty of sleep to [avoid fatigue](#), and drive attentively, [avoiding distractions](#)
- Recognize the dangers of drugged driving, including impairment from cannabis and opioids; visit nsc.org/rxpainkillers to understand the impact of the nation's opioid crisis
- Stay engaged in teens' driving habits; visit DriveitHOME.org for resources
- Learn about your vehicle's safety systems and how to use them; visit MyCarDoesWhat.org for information
- Fix recalls immediately; visit ChecktoProtect.org to ensure your vehicle does not have an open recall
- Ask lawmakers and state leaders to protect travelers on state roadways; the NSC [State of Safety report](#) shows which states have the strongest and weakest traffic safety laws
- Get involved in the Road to Zero Coalition, a group of more than 900 organizations across the country focused on eliminating roadway deaths by 2050; visit nsc.org/roadtozero to join



Safety Brief

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This form documents that the training specified above was presented to the listed participants. By signing below, each participant acknowledges receiving this training.

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