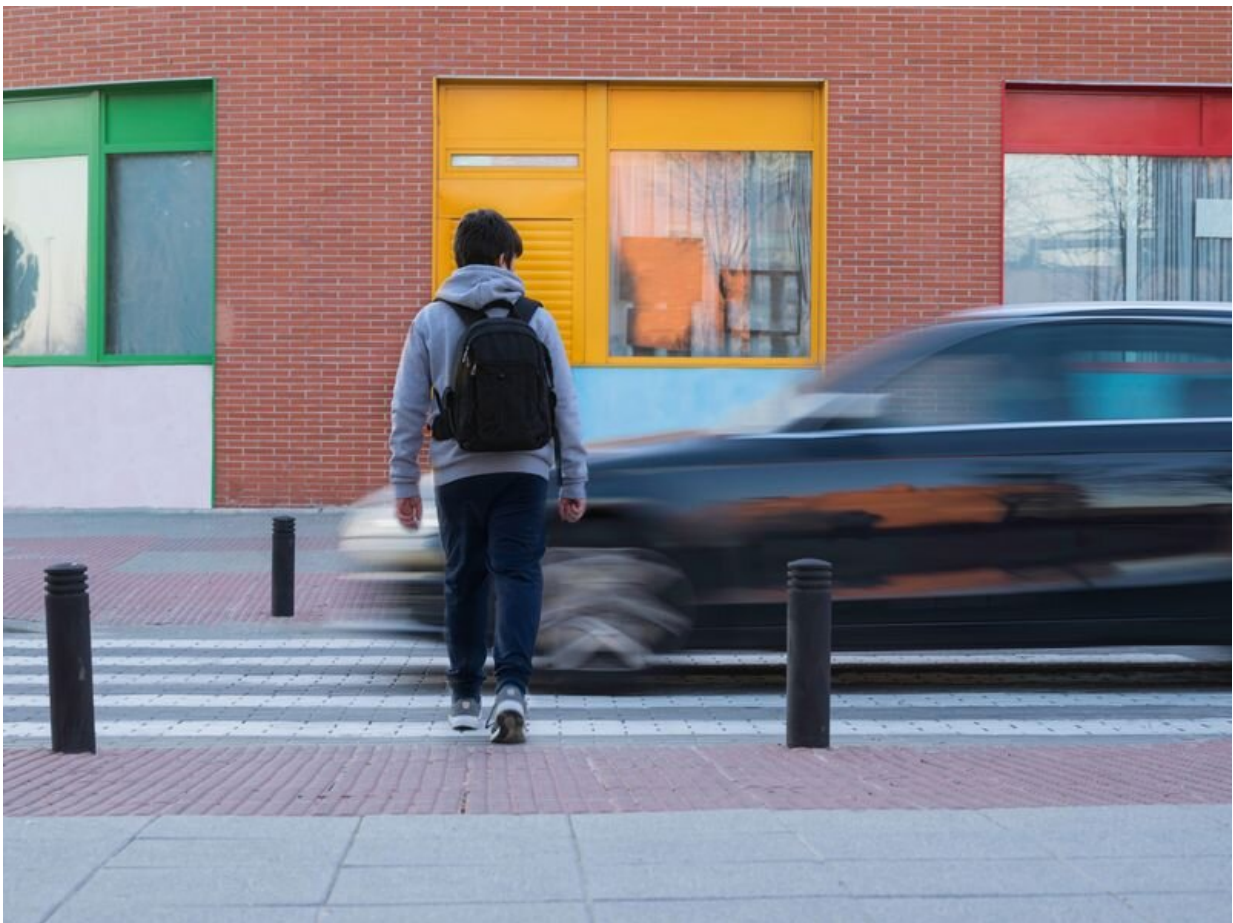


# US pedestrian deaths keep rising, finds highway safety analysis

February 28 2023, by Cara Murez

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Pedestrian deaths have surged on U.S. roads in recent years, and they are

climbing again.

Pedestrian deaths hit a 40-year high in 2021, and numbers for the first half of 2022 were up about 5% over the same period in 2021, according to a new Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) analysis.

It cites a variety of contributors, including heavier vehicles that are more likely to injure or kill people on foot. Roads, meanwhile, are designed to prioritize fast-moving traffic over the [slower speeds](#) that are safer for pedestrians, according to the GHSA.

Many parts of the United States lack adequate sidewalks, crosswalks and lighting, the group noted.

In addition, [dangerous driving](#) surged at the start of the pandemic and has not abated.

"There is a pedestrian safety crisis on our roads, and it's only gotten worse since the start of the pandemic," [Jonathan Adkins](#), chief executive officer of GHSA, said in an association news release. "A single roadway death is tragic. But it's absolutely mind-boggling and heartbreaking that drivers are killing an average of 19 pedestrians every single day."

GHSA's annual Spotlight on Highway Safety report is based on preliminary data from state highway safety offices.

GHSA said the increase is even more alarming compared to 2019, before the pandemic.

Between the first half of 2019 and 2022, pedestrian deaths surged 18%, the GHSA found. The numbers showed 1.04 pedestrian deaths per 100,000 people in 2022, up from 0.9 per 100,000 in 2019.

There were 168 more deaths during the first half of 2022 compared to the first half of 2021, the findings showed.

"The only way to reverse this awful trend is to do more of everything that works—more and better designed infrastructure to keep people walking safe, equitable enforcement of traffic safety laws to stop dangerous driving and engaging more communities where the impacts of this crisis are felt the hardest," Adkins said.

The GHSA said it supports a solution based on the Safe System approach outlined in the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Roadway Safety Strategy.

Its elements—safe [road users](#), safe vehicles, safe speeds, safe roads and post-crash care—provide a multilayered [safety](#) net to protect people on foot as well as other road users, GHSA said.

The reported increases continue a decade-long trend.

In the first half of 2013, the United States recorded 2,141 pedestrian deaths—compared to 3,434 in the first half of last year. That's a 60% increase and nearly 1,300 more people killed.

The U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) reported that 2021 also saw the most roadway deaths since 2005, about 43,000.

Pedestrian deaths increased in 24 states during the first half of last year. Another 21 states saw declines. Four states had unchanged numbers. Oklahoma did not provide data.

California, Florida and Texas—which are home to 28% of the U.S. population—accounted for 38% of [pedestrian deaths](#) in the first six

months of 2022. GHSA noted the states have [warmer climates](#), which can increase foot travel, and many [urban areas](#) where vehicles and pedestrians are more likely to share the road.

GHSA plans to publish a second report this spring with state fatality projections for all of 2022, an analysis of 2021 data from the NHTSA and an overview of proven strategies to reduce pedestrian crashes and injuries.

**More information:** The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has more on [pedestrian safety](#).

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