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16. Abstract

Since 2005, road safety in the U.S. has improved substantially. Of interest in this study was road safety in the individual U.S. states and the District of Columbia, both in terms of the current status and recent changes. The analysis included the use of two primary measures: fatality rate per distance driven, and fatality rate per population. The data for two years were analyzed: 2012 (the latest available year) and 2005.

The results indicate that the *fatality rate per distance driven* varies greatly. In 2012, the lowest fatality rates per 1 billion miles were in the District of Columbia (4.20), Massachusetts (6.24), and Minnesota (6.93). The highest rates were in West Virginia (17.63), South Carolina (17.60), and Montana (17.25). Similarly, the percentage change in this rate between 2005 and 2012 exhibited a wide range. On one extreme were the District of Columbia (-67.5%), Nevada (-48.0%), and Idaho (-39.0%). On the other extreme were Vermont (+12.7%), North Dakota (+3.8%), and Maine (+2.0%).

The variability of the *fatality rate per population* is even greater than that of the fatality rate per distance driven. In 2012, the lowest fatality rates per 100 thousand people were in the District of Columbia (2.37), Massachusetts (5.25), and New York (5.97). The highest rates were in North Dakota (24.30), Wyoming (21.34), and Montana (20.40). As was the case for the fatality rate per distance driven, the percentage change between 2005 and 2012 in the fatality rate per population exhibited a wide range. On one extreme were the District of Columbia (-72.8%), Nevada (-47.1%), and Idaho (-40.1%). On the other extreme were North Dakota (+25.8%), Vermont (+4.9%), and Maine (-3.5%).

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