

# AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety

## FACT SHEET

### American Driving Survey: Methodology and Year 1 Results, May 2013- May 2014

#### *Background*

- AAA Foundation seeks to collect data on how many miles Americans drive, which is critical to being able to quantify the risk that people face on our roadways.
- Several data sources exist regarding the total number of miles driven; however, they all have significant limitations for use in safety research.
  - Federal data available annually is based on counts of vehicles and cannot be examined in relation to the characteristics of drivers.
  - A large federal survey of drivers, which produces data that can be examined in relation to driver characteristics, is only conducted every several years and thus is of limited utility in examining yearly changes and trends.

#### *Objective*

- To provide in-depth data about when, where, and how much Americans are driving, with a special focus on young drivers and senior drivers.

#### *Sampling and Survey Methodology*

- Data are collected in telephone interviews, conducted using both landline and cell phones, with drivers living in a random sample of households nationwide.
- Teen drivers, drivers ages 75 and older, and drivers who reported driving “almost every day” were oversampled.
- Data collection is ongoing. Data presented in this report are based on interviews conducted between May 21, 2013 and May 31, 2014; data were weighted to reflect travel over a one-year period.
- Data on miles driven are based on interviews with 3,319 drivers who reported detailed information about all trips taken on the day before the interview; household-level data (e.g., number of vehicles and number of drivers in household) are based on interviews with members of 4,286 households.

#### *Key Findings –Daily Trip Estimates*

- Drivers, on average, made two driving trips per day, which took an average of 46 minutes.
- Drivers reported driving an average of:
  - 29.2 miles per day
  - Or 10,658 miles annually.



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- Women reported more driving trips, but men spend 25% more time driving – men drive 35% more miles than women.
- Both teenagers and seniors over the age of 75 drive less than any other age group; drivers 30-49 years drove the most.
- The average time spent driving and driving distance increased in relation to increased educational attainment. A respondent with a grade school or some high school education had an average daily duration of driving trips of 32 minutes, while a college graduate spent an average of 58 minutes driving daily.
- Respondents who reported living ‘in the country’ or ‘a small town’ reported driving greater distances (estimated 12,264 miles driven annually) and spending a greater amount of time driving than people who described living in a ‘medium sized town’ or a city (estimated 9,709 miles driven annually).
- Respondents in the South Census region reported driving the most at an estimated 11,826 miles annually, while those in the Northeast Census region reported driving the least at an estimated 8,468 miles annually.
- About one-third of all drivers did not drive at all on the day about which they were interviewed.

#### ***Key Findings - Seasonal and Weekly Driving Estimates***

- On average, respondents drive fewer miles on the weekend and more on weekdays.
  - Respondents drive more on Tuesdays (32.9 miles) and Wednesdays (32.0 miles) compared to other weekdays.
- Respondents drive, on average, the least during winter months (January through March) at 25.7 miles daily; and the highest number of miles during the summer months (July-September) at 30.6 miles daily.

#### ***Key Findings - Household Estimates***

- The average number of household vehicles (2.1) was greater than the average number of drivers in households (1.8).
- Most households (58%) reported having the same number of vehicles as drivers, 28% of households had more vehicles than drivers, and 14% had more drivers than vehicles.

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For more information on this study and the AAA Foundation’s other traffic safety research and materials, please visit [AAAFoundation.org](http://AAAFoundation.org).

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*Established in 1947 by AAA, the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety is a not-for-profit, publicly funded, 501(c)(3) charitable research and educational organization. The AAA Foundation’s mission is to prevent traffic deaths and injuries by conducting research into their causes and by educating the public about strategies to prevent crashes and reduce injuries when they do occur. This research is used to develop educational materials for drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists and other road users. Visit [www.AAAFoundation.org](http://www.AAAFoundation.org) for more information.*

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