

WRONG-WAY CRASHES: UPDATES AND TRENDS

INTRODUCTION

Wrong way driving crashes are rare, but typically have more severe safety outcomes when they occur. Previous AAA Foundation work examined fatal wrong-way driving crashes on limited access highways in the years 2010-2018. Since that report was published, fatal wrong-way crashes have increased at a higher rate than fatal crashes overall. The previous report examined a variety of driver, vehicle, and environmental risk factors, and found alcohol impairment and older age to be factors that increased the odds of being a wrong-way driver in a fatal crash. Updated research is needed to understand the increased incidence of these crashes, to reassess the previously cited risk factors with more recent data, and to explore and identify any new risk factors.

PROJECT GOAL AND PLAN

The goal of this project is to update and extend the Foundation's previous research on the prevalence of fatal wrong-way driving crashes and associated risk factors. This research seeks to answer four main questions: 1) What are the trends in fatal wrong-way driving crashes in the years 2013-2023? 2) Are there any meaningful subtypes of these crashes that could be better combatted with more tailored solutions? 3) Are the previously cited risk factors still relevant in the more recent data, and 4) Have any new risk factors emerged, and could they be contributing to the updated trends? This project will include a review of the literature published in the time since the last report, an environmental scan of any recent or emerging approaches to reduce wrong-way driving, analysis of fatal wrong-way driving crashes, and review of other crash sources including non-fatal crash databases and crash narrative information, where available.

Project Team

[AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety](#)

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Period of Performance

Q2 2025 – Q4 2025