

Distracted Driving Crashes in Wisconsin

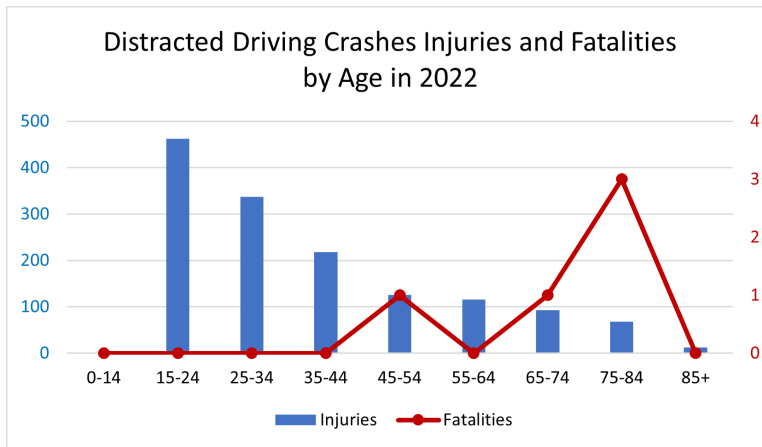


Did you know...

In Wisconsin, one person was injured or killed in a distracted driving crash every 2.3 hours in 2022.

- 9,677 crashes involved distracted drivers in Wisconsin in 2022.
- In these crashes, 39 people were killed and 3,817 people were injured.
- Distracted driving contributed to 7.5% of all crashes and 7% of all fatal crashes.

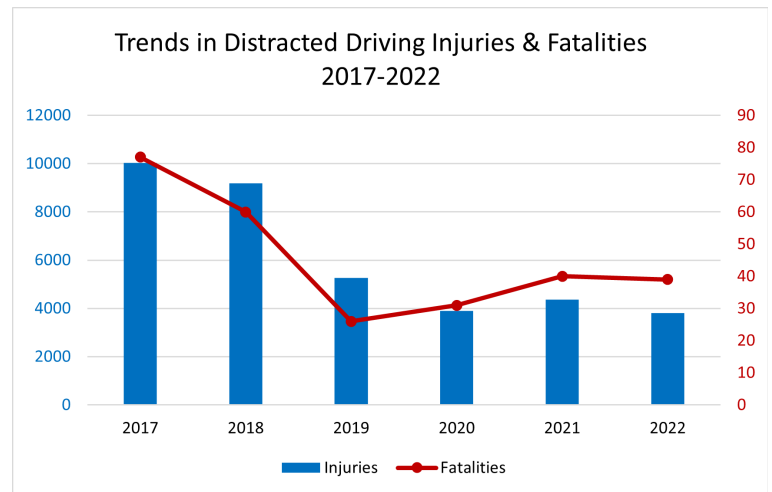
Scope of the Problem



Younger drivers (ages 15-24) are more likely to be involved in a distracted driving crash than members of any other age cohort. In 2022, younger drivers made up only 11% of all licensed drivers but accounted for 32% of all drivers in a distracted driving-related crashes.

Injuries were highest among 15 to 24 year olds, who make up more than 32% of all distracted driving injuries. Fatalities were highest among drivers aged 75-84 in 2022.

Distracted driving injuries and fatalities had been on the decline; however, fatalities since 2020 have increased after a dip in 2019. Perhaps a result of fewer road users during the pandemic, it is clear that distracted driving remains an issue seeing the increase from 2020 in distracted related injuries.



Distracted Driving Crash Risk Factors

Taking eyes off the road even quickly can lead to detrimental outcomes. The top distractions for distracted driving-related crashes are:

- Distraction by an outside person, object, or event.
- Using or reaching for device/object brought into the vehicle.
- Distraction by a passenger.
- Lost in thought/daydreaming.
- Adjusting audio or climate controls.

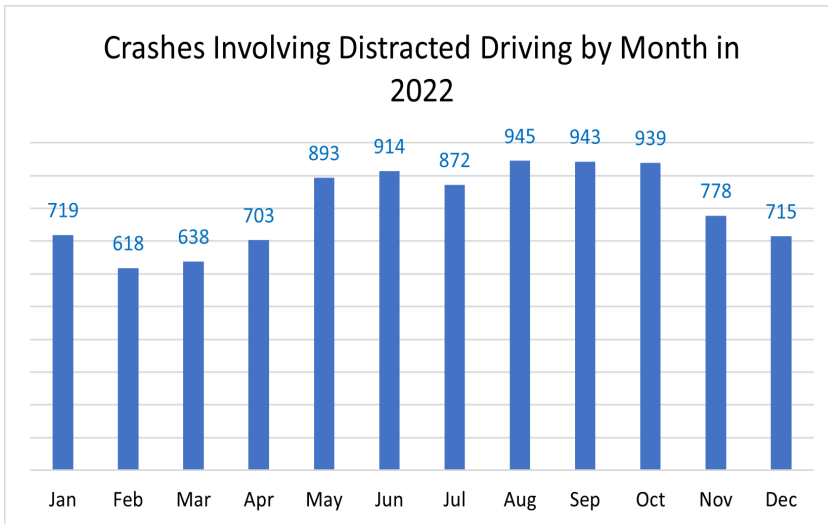
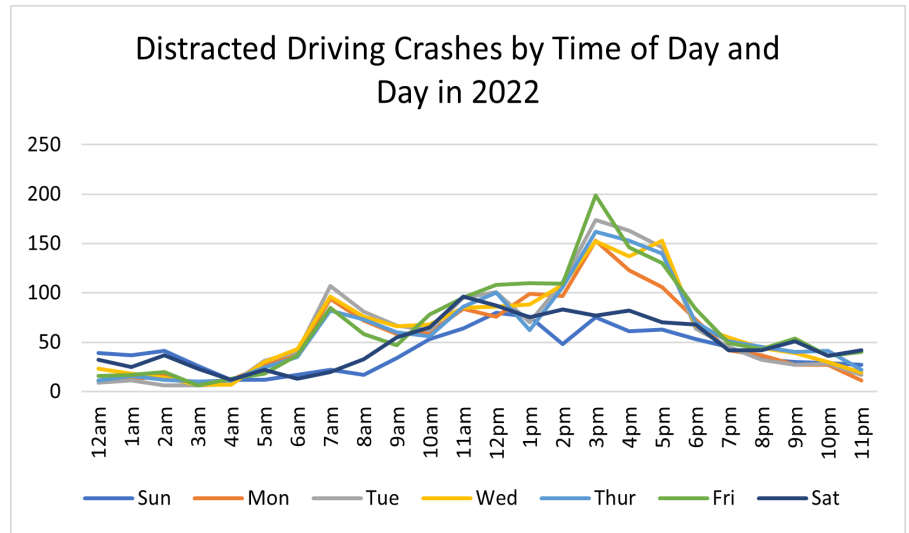
60% of distracted driving-related crashes occurred in urban areas in 2022. Urban areas can present more obstacles for drivers. Drivers should concentrate on watching for pedestrians, cyclists, and other vehicles to avoid crashes.

About 81% of distracted driving crashes occur in dry road conditions, followed by wet conditions with 12% of crashes in 2022. The third most common weather condition where distracted driving crashes occurred was in snow, at 3% of crashes in 2022.

When do Crashes Occur?

The peak times for distracted driving-related crashes occur from 6 to 7 a.m. and from 2 to 6 p.m. Over the week, these crash patterns vary. Patterns correlate with weekday peak commute times.

Friday has the highest total number of crashes with the afternoon also having the highest peak of all day of the week. Sunday has the fewest number of crashes.



The number of distracted driving-related crashes is consistent over the year. In 2022, August peaked at 945 crashes and February dipped to the lowest at 618 crashes.

The summer months are subject to the highest number of distracted driving crashes when compared to other seasons. This can be somewhat attributed to the young drivers being out of school, and the nice weather, resulting in higher numbers of less attentive drivers on the road.

Distracted Driving Laws

Distracted driving laws are defined in Wis. Stats. 346.89 (1), (3), (4), and (5):

- Drivers may not perform activities that interfere with the safe driving of their vehicle.
- Drivers may not text while the car is in motion.
- Drivers with a learner's permit or probationary license may not use their mobile phones while driving, except to report emergencies.
- Drivers may not operate or be in a position to directly observe any electronic device located within the vehicle that is activated and that is providing entertainment primarily by visual means.

What Can You Do?

- Just drive—don't try to multitask behind the wheel.
- Keep both hands on the wheel and eyes on the road.
- Be alert to your surroundings and traffic conditions.
- Don't drive while tired.
- Use caution and reduce travel speed in unfavorable weather and road conditions.
- Be alert when traveling in work zones, school zones and railway grade crossings.
- Obey speed limits and wear a safety belt to reduce the risk of being injured or killed.