

Chapter 8



Intersections

Disregarding traffic signals is an increasing crash cause in Maine. Why do so many crashes occur at intersections, especially those that are signalized?

- Lots of activity. Signalized intersections are heavily traveled locations with slowing, stopping, and turning vehicles. The traffic scene constantly changes.
- Intersection layout and signal timing vary.
- Some drivers make mistakes - others take chances.
- Drivers looking for landmarks or signs lose sight of changes in traffic movement and traffic signals.
- Unsafe behaviors lead to taking chances such as: trying to make up time when running late; being aggressive or upset; or under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

General

- There were over 10,000 crashes at Maine intersections in 2002, resulting in 37 fatalities and 5,300 injuries.
- The annual number of overall intersection crashes has been decreasing, but the resulting number of fatalities has been relatively unchanged.
- The percent of intersection crashes to total crashes has been unchanged for most of the past 10 years, with reductions occurring in the last two years.

Signalized Intersections

In Maine, there are about 600 traffic signal controlled intersections.

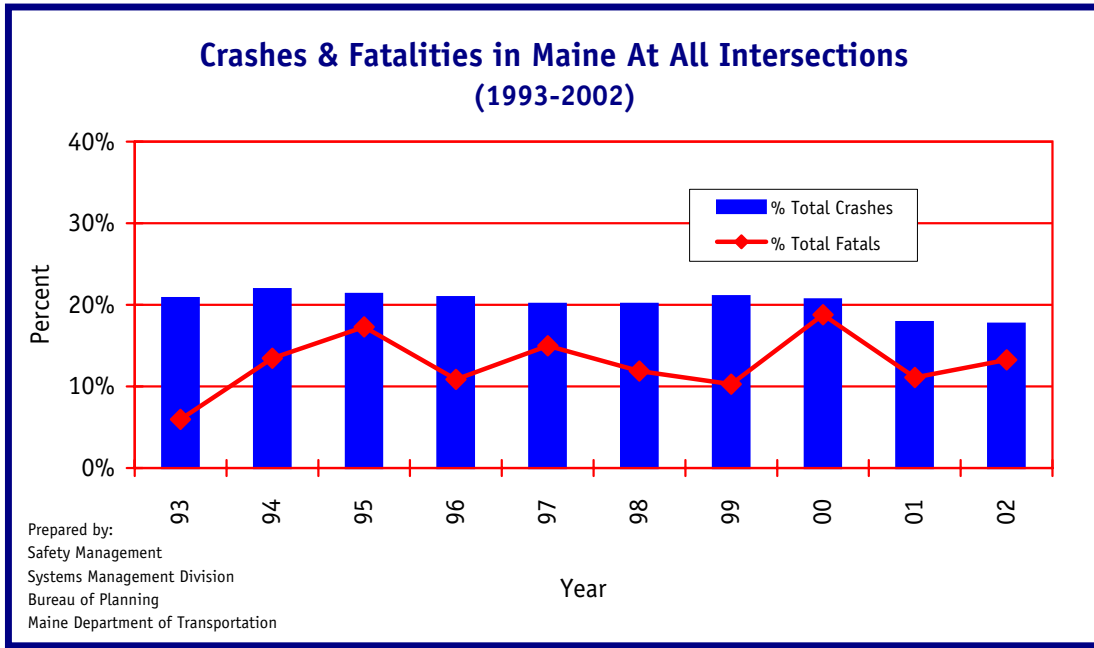
- There were 3,000 crashes at these locations resulting in 4 fatalities and 3,500 injuries in 2002.
- Red light running crashes have increased from 12% of all crashes occurring at traffic lights to 16% over the past four years.

There are two common driver errors at Maine traffic lights:

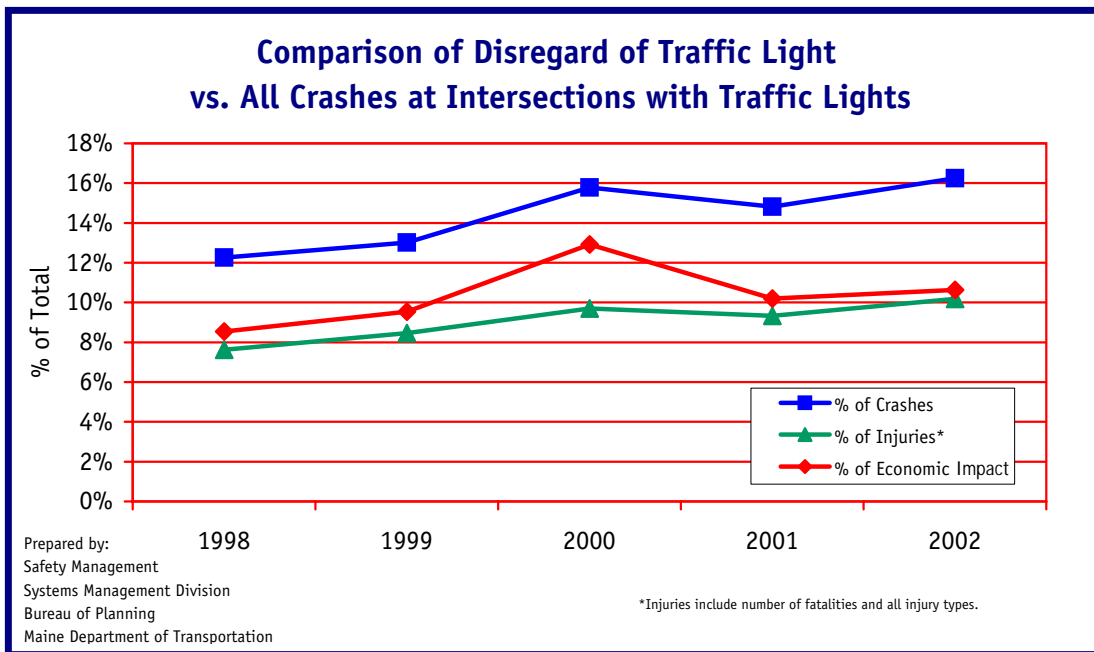
1. Drivers disregarding traffic signals caused over 1,500 crashes with an estimated economic impact of over \$50 million from 2000 through 2002.
2. Another 2,400 crashes occurred during the last three years because drivers failed to yield the right of way.

National Trends

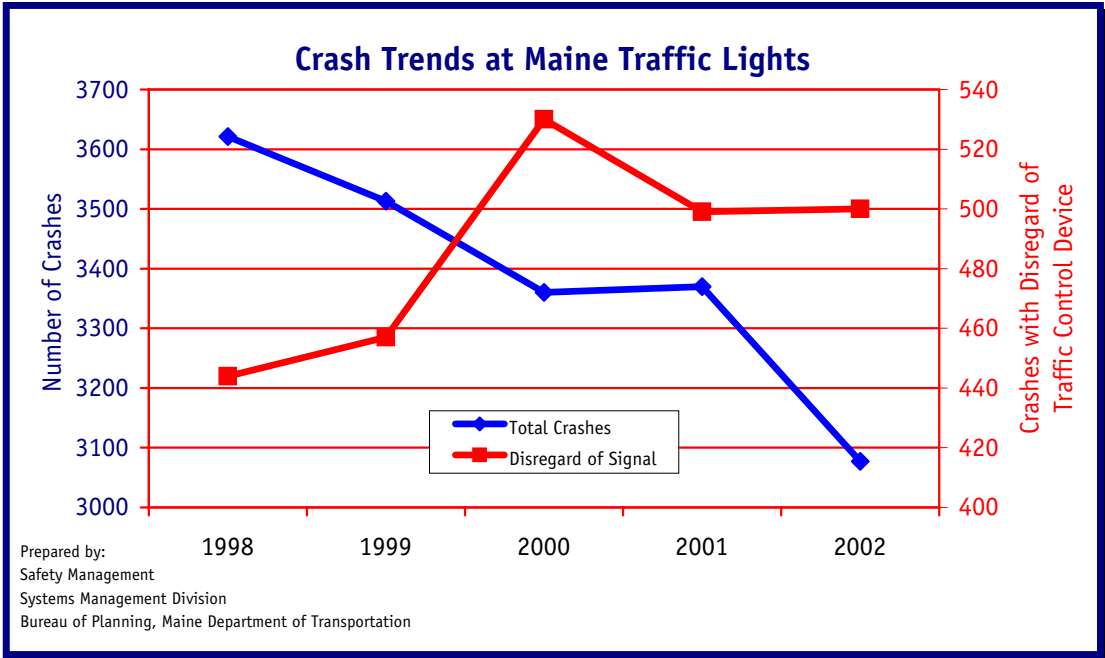
- In 2002, there were more than 1.8 million intersection crashes.
- In 2001, there were about 8,500 intersection related deaths.
- In 2002, there were 219,000 red light running crashes resulting in 1,000 deaths and 181,000 injuries.
- Forty-two percent of all pedestrian injuries and twenty-one percent of pedestrian fatal injuries occurred at intersections.



Intersection crashes account for about 20% of all crashes and roughly 12% of the fatalities.



From 1998 to 2002, disregard of traffic control device crashes increased by 31% and resulting injuries increased by 30% (as a percent of total signalized intersection crashes).



While overall crashes at intersections with traffic lights have decreased by 13% during the past five years, crashes where there was Disregard of Traffic Control Device are up by 13%.

