

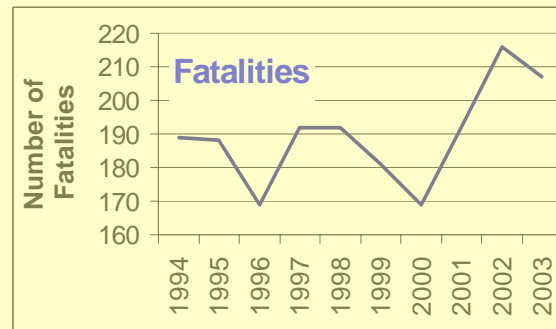
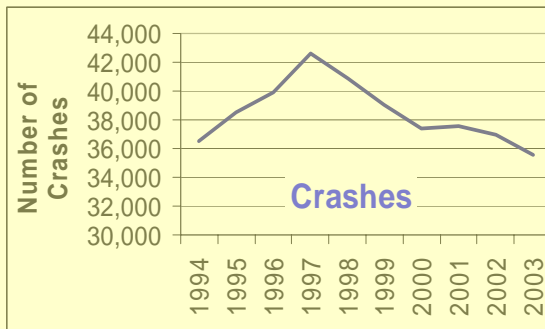
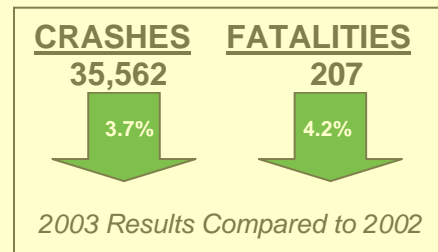


## The Status of Transportation Safety in Maine 2003 Crash Results in Key Areas

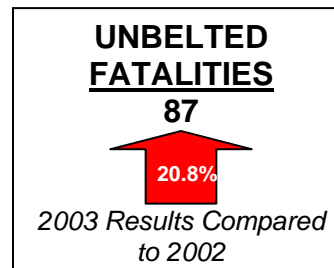
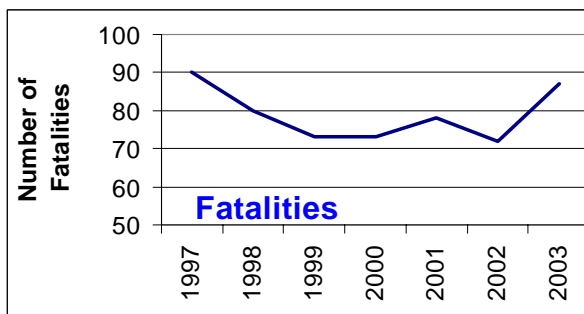
The Maine Transportation Safety Coalition will report annually on the state's crash activity in four priority crash topics (**Seat Belts/ Passenger Restraints; Lane Departure Crashes; Younger and Older Drivers; and Aggressive Driving**) plus any other noteworthy areas. This year the additional areas covered are *Alcohol/Drugs* and *Motorcycles*. (Notes: 1. The crash and fatality numbers and rates reported below are from crashes occurring on Maine public roads, unless otherwise noted. Other publications may include crash data for private roads, as well. 2. Crashes can be caused by a combination of factors, so one crash may have relationships to several of the categories listed below.)

### Overall 2003 CRASH Results

- There were 35,562 crashes in 2003, the lowest in the past 10 years.
- Crash Rate continues to decrease but still is slightly above the national average. The crash rate is 238 Crashes/ Hundred Million Vehicle Miles (HMVM). Latest national rate is 222 (2002).
- There were 207 fatalities on Maine's public and private roads, significantly higher than the state's recent low of 169 in 2000. (Deaths did increase on public roads)
- Fatality Rate of 1.38 Fatalities/HMVM is a decrease from 2002's rate of 1.47 (NHTSA reported data).
- Maine's Fatality Rate is below the national rate of 1.48



**SEAT BELT non-usage continues to be a concern.** Seat belts are not worn by occupants in a high percentage of traffic fatalities. The number of unbelted fatalities in passenger vehicles is shown in the chart below.



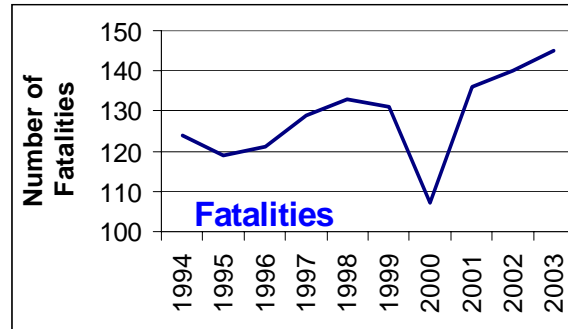
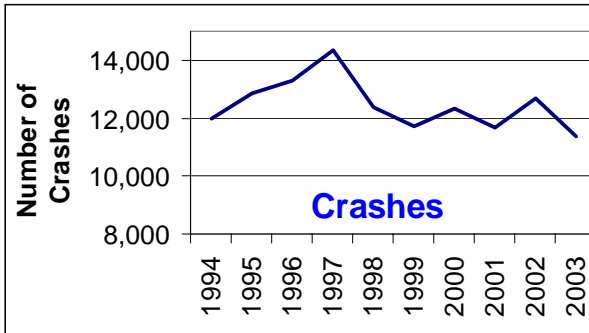
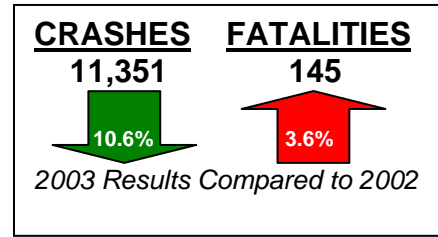
Maine's 59% seat belt usage rate in 2002 was the third lowest usage rate in the nation.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Note: A media and enforcement campaign aimed at increasing seat belt usage was conducted in May-June 2004. This effort cost about \$530,000. A seat belt use survey taken immediately after this campaign showed an increase in usage to 72%. People tend to slip back into their old habits after such campaigns are over, however.

# The Status of Transportation Safety in Maine-2003

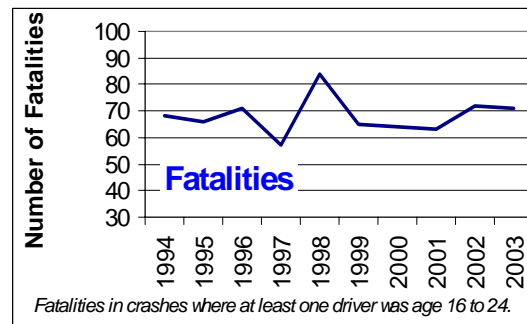
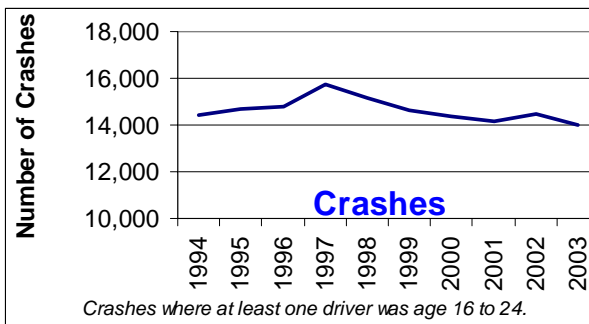
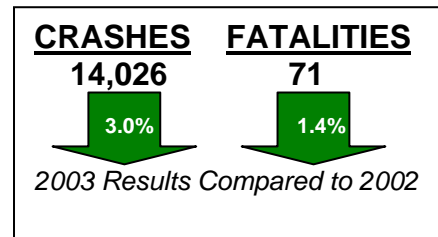
## LANE DEPARTURE crashes continue as Maine's most fatal crash type.

- There were 11,351 Lane Departure crashes-32% of Maine's crash total.
- 145 fatalities resulted from Lane Departure crashes, the most in the past 10 years, and 71% of the total crash fatalities.



**YOUNGER DRIVERS.** Sixty three drivers aged 16 to 24 were involved in fatal crashes. Twenty-eight of these crashes were Run Off the Road. There were 43 young (age 16 to 24) people deaths in vehicles driven by young drivers. Leading characteristics of these fatal crashes were:

- Unsafe Speed (30)
- Positive Blood-Alcohol Content (BAC) (20) (11 were OUI)
- Failed to keep in proper lane (15)
- Inattention (13)
- Inexperience (9)
- Asleep/Fatigued (3)

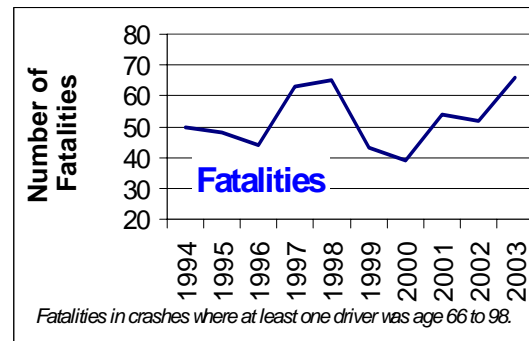
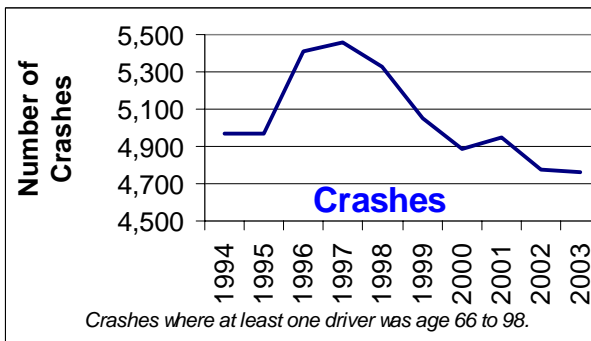
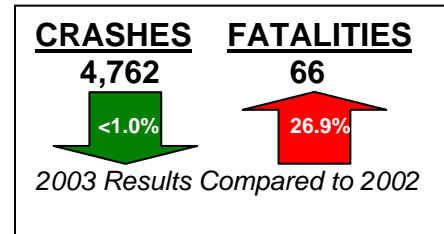


Note: See additional background on these topics in MTSC's **The Status of Transportation Safety in Maine**. Lane Departure is a crash where at least one vehicle leaves its proper lane of travel – Run Off Road and Head On crashes.

## The Status of Transportation Safety in Maine-2003

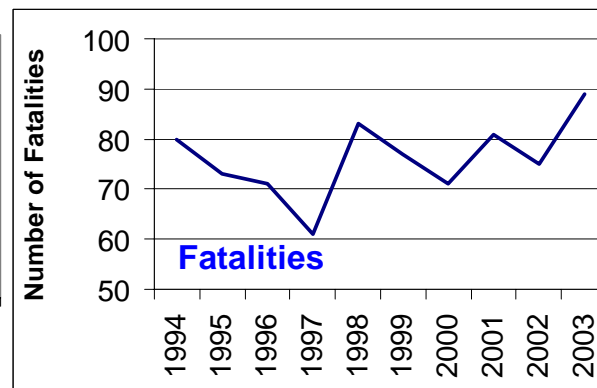
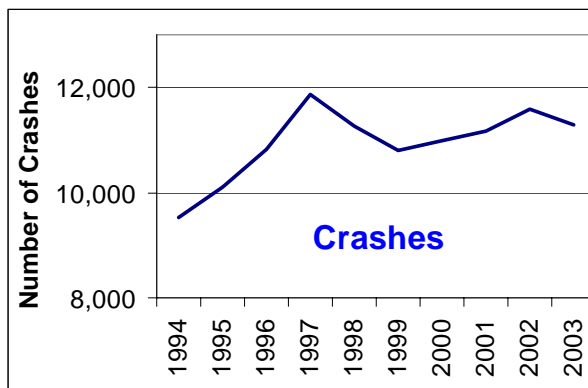
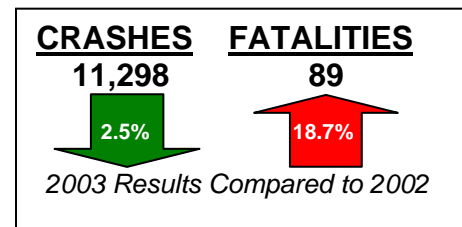
**OLDER DRIVERS.** Fifty drivers over 65 years of age were involved in crash fatalities, and 48 over the age of 65 died in crashes. Nine of the crashes were Run Off the Road. Leading crash characteristics are different than those for younger drivers. They were:

- Failure to Yield the Right of Way, Fail to Stop for Stop Sign (17)
- Inattention (16)
- Failing to Keep in Proper Lane (7)
- Ill or Sick (6)
- Asleep or Fatigued (2)
- No drivers were noted as having a positive BAC.



**AGGRESSIVE DRIVING** as a proportion of total crashes (especially Speed-related) continues to grow – now at 31.9% (31.4% in 2002) of total crashes and 43.6% of total fatalities (38.3% in 2002).

- Speed is the leading Aggressive Driving concern.
- In 2003, there were 5,856 Speed-related crashes, resulting in 77 fatalities (annual fatality average for the prior 3 years was 66).



*Note: See additional background on these topics in MTSC's **The Status of Transportation Safety in Maine. Aggressive Driving** is a crash where the driver displays a risky behavior – those considered in this analysis are Disregard of Traffic Control Device; Following Too Close; Illegal or Unsafe Speed; Improper Passing; or Improper, Unsafe Lane Change.*

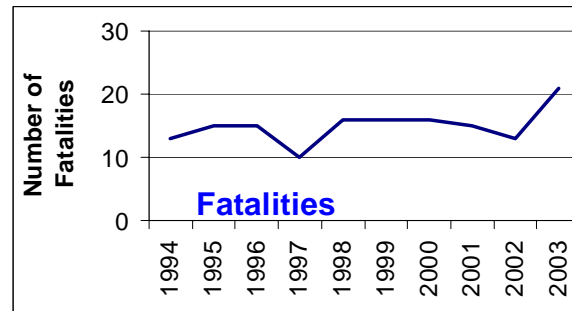
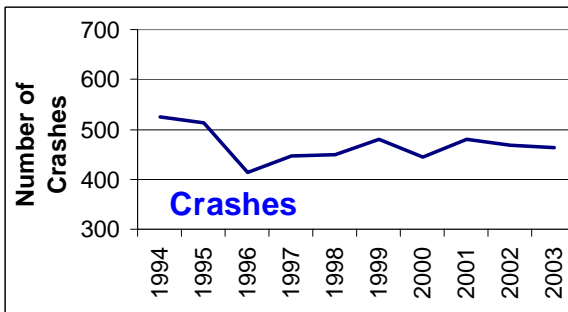
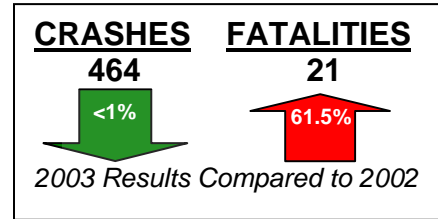
## The Status of Transportation Safety in Maine-2003

In addition to MTSC's four identified leading crash concern areas, the following two areas were also noteworthy for 2003:

### **MOTORCYCLE** crashes resulted in a significant increase in fatalities (21).

There were 20 fatal motorcycle crashes resulting in 21 deaths. Nine crashes were Run Off the Road; 5 - Intersection; 3 - Head On; 2 - Moose; and 1-Rear End.

- Illegal or Unsafe Speed was a factor for the motorcycle operator in 10 fatal crashes.
- Alcohol or Drugs was a factor for the motorcycle operator in 8 fatal crashes, with 7 operators having a BAC over 0.08%.
- Speed was a factor in 50% of the fatal crashes.
- Helmets were not worn by 64% of the operators killed.
- Leading age group of motorcycle fatalities is 35 to 44 year olds, followed closely by 45-54 year olds.



### **ALCOHOL**-related crash fatalities increased in 2003.

Maine's alcohol-related fatal crash rate in 2003 of 27.5% on ALL Maine roads does continue to be below the national rate of 40%. Twenty young drivers, age 16 to 24, had positive BAC levels (35% of the alcohol related fatalities).

