

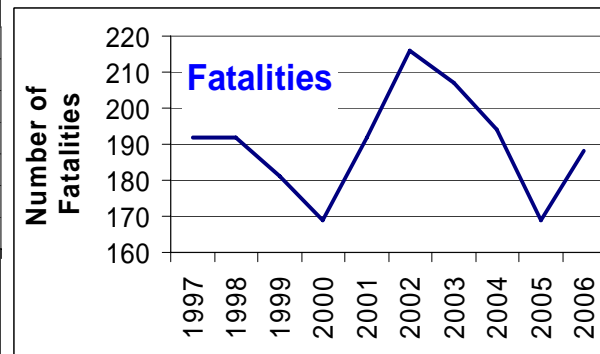
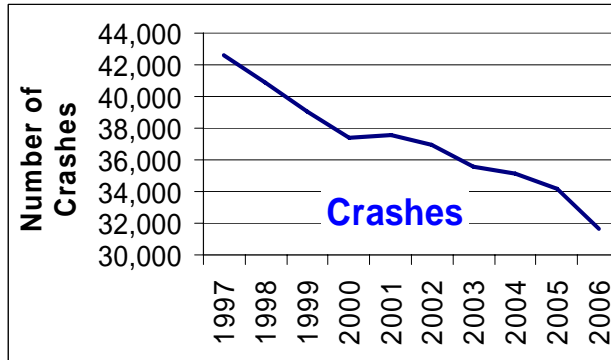
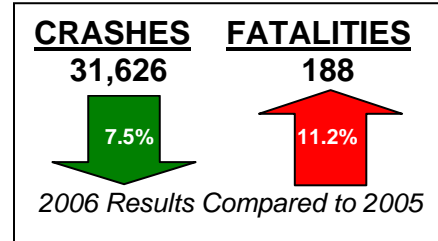


## The Status of Transportation Safety in Maine 2006 Crash Results in Key Areas

The Maine Transportation Safety Coalition reports annually on the state's crash activity in four priority crash topics: **Seat Belts/ Passenger Restraints; Lane Departure Crashes; Younger and Older Drivers; and Illegal/Unsafe Speed** (the core component of Aggressive Driving) plus the other noteworthy areas of **Alcohol/Drugs** and **Motorcycles**.

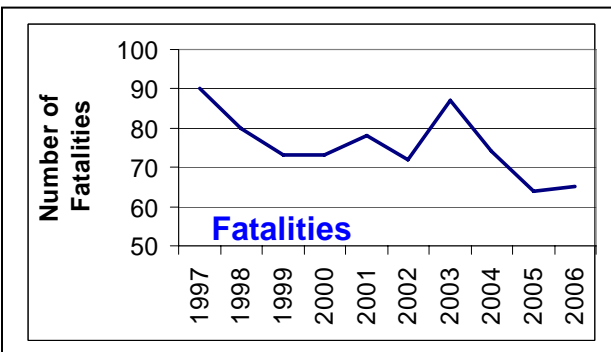
### Overall 2006 CRASH Results

- There were 31,626 crashes in 2006, reflecting a continuing decrease in crashes.
- Crash Rate continues to decrease and is now close to the national average. The crash rate is 211 Crashes/ Hundred Million Vehicle Miles (HMVM). Latest national rate is 206 (2005)<sup>1</sup>.
- There were 188 fatalities on Maine roads, an increase over last year, and roughly average for the last ten.
- Fatality Rate of 1.25 Fatalities/HMVM is an increase over 2005's rate of 1.13 (NHTSA reported data).
- Maine's Fatality Rate continues below the 2005 national rate of 1.47.



### SEAT BELT usage improves, but 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. Maine's seat belt usage rate in 2006 was 77.2% compared to the national average usage rate of 81%. Non-use of seat belts will be part of the safety story in some of the following sections.



<sup>1</sup> National crash and fatality rates are from USDOT Bureau of Transportation Statistics

- Maine did pass a primary seat belt law in 2007
- Note: An ongoing media and enforcement campaign aimed at increasing seat belt usage has increased usage rate from the 59% level in 2002.

Data Notes: 1. Total **Fatality** counts are from Maine Fatal Accident Report System (FARS).

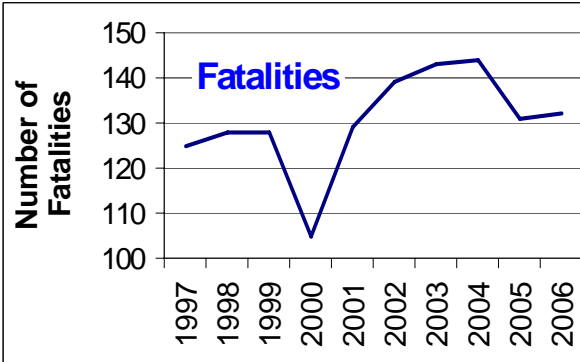
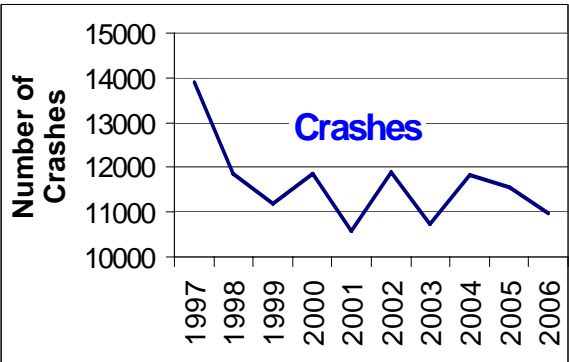
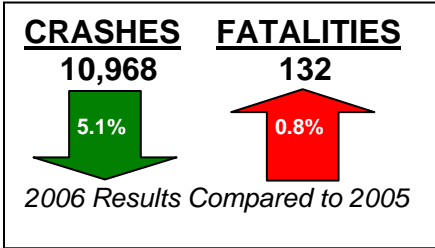
**Crash** data is from MaineDOT systems. Some reduction in number of crashes may be due to improved data quality, such as elimination of duplicate records.

2. Crashes can be caused by a combination of factors, so one crash may have relationships to several of the categories listed in this report.

# The Status of Transportation Safety in Maine - 2006

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

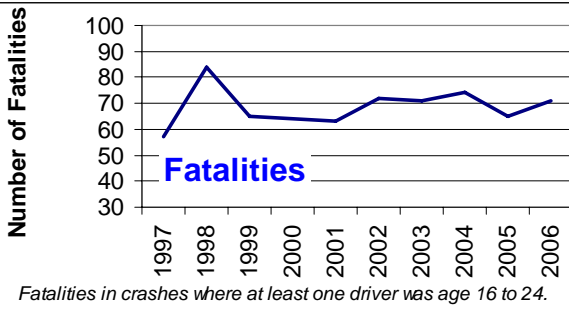
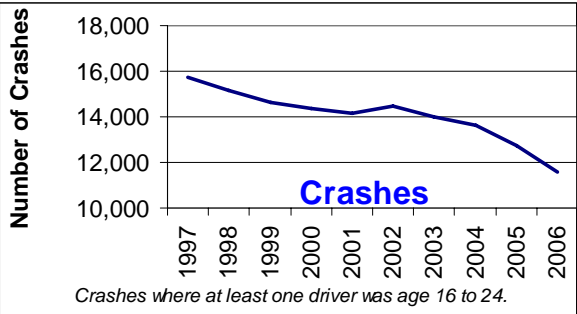
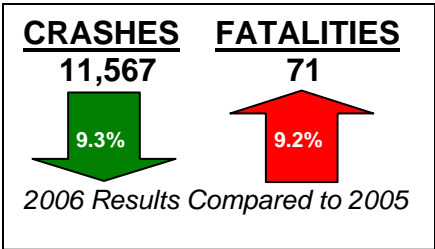
- Lane Departure crashes are 35% of Maine's crash total.
- 132 fatalities resulted from Lane Departure crashes (42 were Head On, 90 were Run Off Road). This is 70% of Maine's total crash fatalities.
- 60 (45%) of these fatalities were speed related.
- Weather plays a role in Lane Departure crashes – 4,300 crashes occurred on wintry road surfaces, 1,700 on wet roads.



**YOUNGER DRIVERS.** (defined here as between the ages of 16 and 24) Fifty-nine young drivers aged 16 to 24 were involved in fatal crashes that resulted in 71 fatalities (38% of total Maine traffic deaths). In those crashes, 38 young drivers and occupants died. Forty-four of these fatal crashes were Lane Departure. A particular concern is safety for teen drivers.

Crash facts about teen drivers:

- 26 teen drivers were involved in fatal crashes that resulted in 30 deaths.
- 17 teen drivers died
- 190 alcohol (underage) or drug-related crashes (10% of all alcohol related crashes).
- In fatal crashes, there were 5 teen drivers with positive BAC
- Of the 30 teen occupant deaths, 8 wore seat belts.

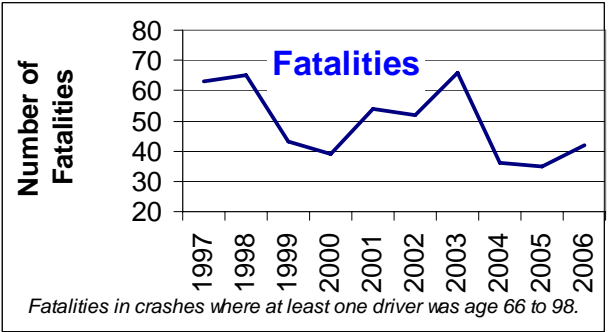
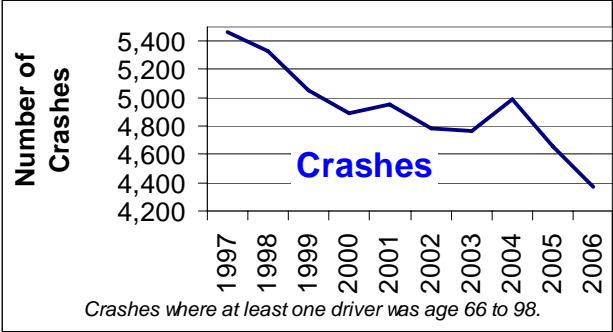
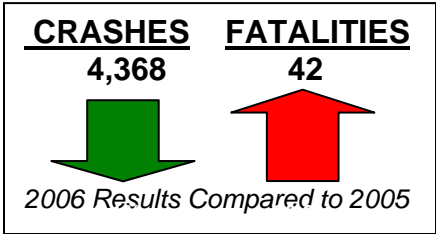


*Note: See additional background on these topics in MTSC's **The Status of Transportation Safety in Maine**. Lane Departure is a crash where at least one vehicle leaves its proper lane of travel – Run Off Road and Head On crashes – data development has been modified slightly in 2006.*

# The Status of Transportation Safety in Maine - 2006

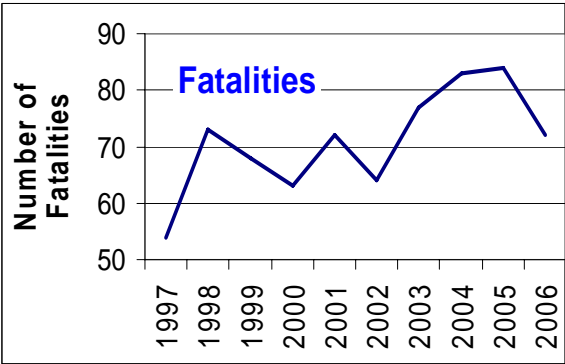
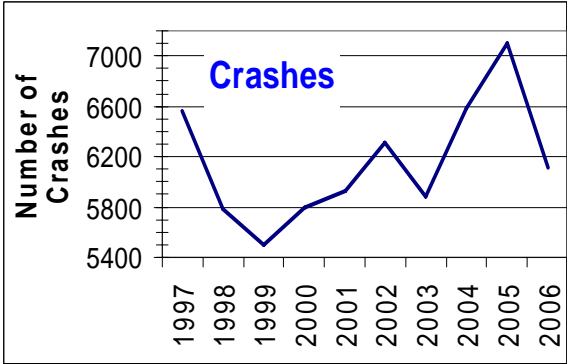
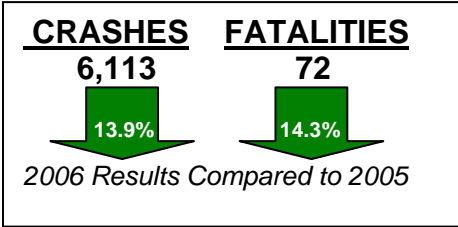
**OLDER DRIVERS.** (defined as age 65 and older) Thirty-eight drivers over 65 years of age were involved in fatal crashes. Twenty-six drivers and 8 passengers over the age of 65 died in these crashes. Twenty-one fatal crashes were Lane Departure. Leading crash characteristics are different than those for younger drivers. They were:

- Not wearing a seat belt (15)
- Failure to Keep in Proper Lane (11)
- Failure to Yield the Right of Way (6)
- Inattention (3)
- Medical Condition (3)
- Drowsy/Sleepy (3)



**ILLEGAL/UNSAFE SPEED**, a core element of Aggressive Driving (especially Speed-related) showed a decrease in crashes and fatalities in 2006. Speed-related crashes account for 19.3% of the total crashes and 38.1% of total fatalities.

- Adjusting speed for road conditions is a problem. Unsafe speed was noted in 3,180 crashes on snowy, slushy or icy road surfaces, and another 853 occurred on wet road surfaces.



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 – that can be reflected

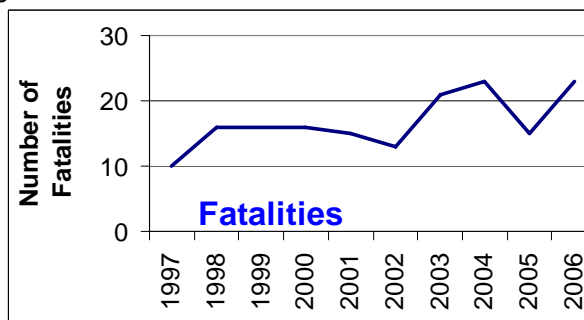
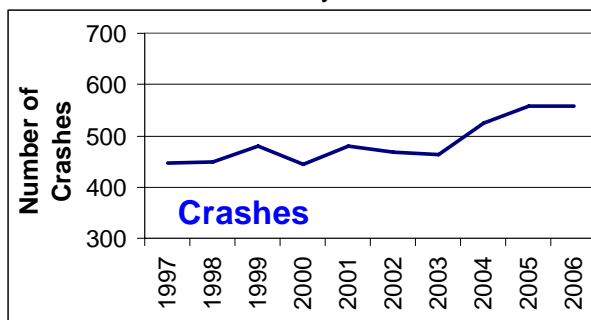
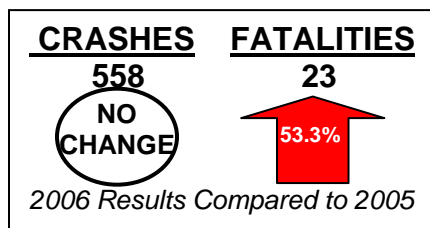
through various driver contributing factors listed on a Police Crash Report. This report will track one of those behaviors – Illegal or Unsafe speed.

## The Status of Transportation Safety in Maine - 2006

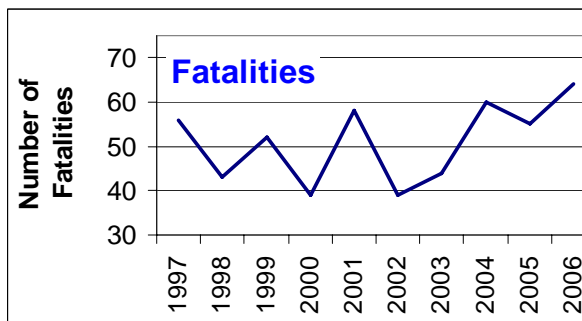
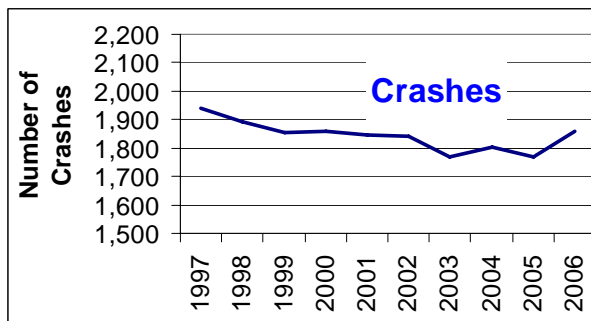
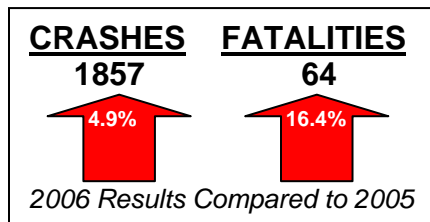
In addition to MTSC's four identified leading crash concern areas, the following two areas continue to be noteworthy for 2006:

### **MOTORCYCLE** crashes resulted in twenty-three fatalities.

- General crash and fatality trends are increasing
- Alcohol or Drugs was a factor for the motorcycle operator in 5 fatal crashes – a decrease from the 8 during 2005.
- Helmets were not worn by 60% of the operators killed.
- Leading age group of motorcycle operator fatalities is in the forties. This reflects a continuing upward shift of driver age related to motorcycle operation and crash involvement, similar to trend that's being seen nationwide.
- Seven fatal motorcycle crashes were single vehicle occurrences.



**ALCOHOL**-related crash fatalities increased in 2006, as did the percentage of Maine's alcohol-related fatal crashes of 34%. This reflects a continuing problem. Maine's percentage of alcohol-related fatal crashes does continue to be below the national rate of 39% (2005). In fatal crashes, fifteen young drivers, age 16 to 24, had positive BAC levels, five 16-19 year olds had positive BAC results.



**A quick comparison.** This report contains 15 performance indicator arrows. In 2005, 13 of the arrows were green (indicating improvement). For 2006, 6 were green, 8 were red.

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and on the web at <http://themtsc.org>