



Lives Saved in 2014 by Restraint Use and Minimum-Drinking-Age Laws

Findings

In 2014 the use of seat belts in passenger vehicles saved an estimated 12,802 lives (occupants 5 and older), and an estimated 2,396 lives (occupants 13 and older) were saved by frontal air bags. An estimated 252 child occupants 4 and younger were saved by the use of child restraints, and 1,669 lives were saved by the use of motorcycle helmets. An additional 2,814 lives would have been saved in 2014 if all unrestrained passenger vehicle occupants 5 and older involved in fatal crashes had worn their seat belts. If all motorcyclists had been helmeted, then an additional 660 lives would have been saved. An estimated 485 lives were saved due to minimum-drinking-age laws.

Introduction

NHTSA's National Center for Statistics and Analysis has been producing annual estimates of lives saved since 1975. Table 1 presents estimates of lives saved in 2014 by restraint use and as a result of minimum-drinking-age laws. The estimates are calculated using the effectiveness of each device or law. More information on the methodology of lives-saved estimates is available in two NHTSA publica-

tions, *Lives Saved FAQs* (NCSA, 2009), which answers 30 common questions about lives saved and includes references to many other reports on lives saved; and *Lives Saved Calculations for Seat Belts and Frontal Air Bags* (Glassbrenner & Starnes, 2009), which describes in detail the methodology of estimating lives saved by seat belts and frontal air bags.

Results

Table 1 shows that the estimated number of lives saved by seat belt use among occupants 5 and older increased from 12,584 in 2013 to 12,802 in 2014. The estimated number of lives saved by frontal air bags among occupants 13 and older increased from 2,388 in 2013 to 2,396 in 2014. Use of motorcycle helmets contributed to an increase in lives saved from 1,630 in 2013 to 1,669 in 2014. However, the estimated number of lives saved by child restraints among children 4 and younger and the minimum-drinking-age laws both decreased from 2013 to 2014.

Table 1: Lives Saved by Restraint Use, and 21-Year-Old-Minimum-Drinking-Age Laws, and Additional Lives That Would Have Been Saved at 100-Percent Seat Belt and Motorcycle Helmet Use, 2010–2014

Year	Lives Saved, 4 & Younger	Lives Saved, 5 & Older	Lives Saved, 13 & Older	Lives Saved, All Ages	Lives Saved	Additional Lives That Would Have Been Saved at 100-Percent Use	
	Child Restraints	Seat Belts	Frontal Air Bags	Motorcycle Helmets	Minimum-Drinking-Age Law	Seat Belts	Motorcycle Helmets
2010†	303	12,670	2,403	1,551	560	3,356	711
2011†	262	12,071	2,341	1,622	543	3,396	707
2012†	285	12,386	2,422	1,715	537	3,051	782
2013	263	12,584	2,388	1,630	504	2,800	715
2014	252	12,802	2,396	1,669	485	2,814	660

Source: 2010–2012 FARS Final Files and FARS 2013–2014 Annual Report Files

†2010–2012 estimates differ from previously published estimates due to a computational correction. Previous estimates did not properly account for 2010 through 2013 model year passenger vehicles.

Table 2 shows the estimated total number of lives saved in 2014 for all 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. The far left column is the lives saved by child restraints, and the next three columns refer to lives saved by seat belts, lives saved by frontal air bags, and lives saved

by motorcycle helmets, respectively. The numbers in the two far right columns represent the additional lives savable with 100-percent seat belt use and 100-percent helmet use, respectively. Due to rounding, the sum of the State totals may not equal the national total.

Table 2: Lives Saved in 2014 by Child Restraints, Seat Belts, Frontal Air Bags, and Motorcycle Helmets

State	Lives Saved by Child Restraints, 4 and Younger	Lives Saved by Seat Belts, 5 and Older	Lives Saved by Frontal Air Bags, 13 and Older	Lives Saved by Motorcycle Helmets, All Ages	Additional Lives Savable At 100-Percent Restraint Use	
					Seat Belts	Motorcycle Helmets
Alabama	12	288	72	33	76	4
Alaska	0	18	4	3	6	1
Arizona	6	185	42	35	47	26
Arkansas	5	207	39	15	47	14
California	23	1,241	166	293	230	9
Colorado	1	169	33	19	40	22
Connecticut	2	72	17	13	16	13
Delaware	0	55	8	5	10	3
District of Columbia	0	7	1	1	0	0
Florida	10	765	144	147	161	85
Georgia	9	455	92	76	107	3
Hawaii	0	25	3	7	5	5
Idaho	4	69	14	6	17	6
Illinois	4	417	72	21	85	31
Indiana	5	348	59	17	71	36
Iowa	6	152	25	9	31	14
Kansas	3	170	32	11	42	11
Kentucky	6	253	57	22	62	18
Louisiana	6	231	61	43	62	4
Maine	0	85	13	4	16	1
Maryland	4	168	30	36	34	3
Massachusetts	6	84	26	23	21	2
Michigan	5	431	68	33	85	21
Minnesota	0	207	32	6	39	13
Mississippi	3	232	56	21	58	2
Missouri	16	254	65	50	68	3
Montana	1	52	16	6	17	5
Nebraska	0	85	22	11	24	1
Nevada	4	87	17	32	19	3
New Hampshire	0	13	9	2	6	5
New Jersey	0	194	35	34	37	2
New Mexico	3	145	26	6	31	14



Table 2 (Continued): Lives Saved in 2014 by Child Restraints, Seat Belts, Frontal Air Bags, and Motorcycle Helmets

State	Lives Saved by Child Restraints, 4 and Younger	Lives Saved by Seat Belts, 5 and Older	Lives Saved by Frontal Air Bags, 13 and Older	Lives Saved by Motorcycle Helmets, All Ages	Additional Lives Savable At 100-Percent Restraint Use	
					Seat Belts	Motorcycle Helmets
New York	4	417	65	76	76	8
North Carolina	15	554	94	105	118	6
North Dakota	0	40	13	1	13	3
Ohio	7	371	91	26	89	35
Oklahoma	5	271	58	8	67	16
Oregon	2	187	21	25	38	2
Pennsylvania	4	381	94	47	94	39
Rhode Island	0	21	3	2	3	3
South Carolina	8	336	62	15	76	36
South Dakota	3	40	11	3	12	4
Tennessee	6	367	80	65	90	4
Texas	38	1,694	266	124	351	90
Utah	2	96	17	11	20	10
Vermont	0	14	4	4	3	0
Virginia	3	249	59	53	60	0
Washington	6	215	27	41	42	0
West Virginia	3	102	24	11	26	3
Wisconsin	0	222	42	12	48	19
Wyoming	3	61	13	4	16	4
National*	252	12,802	2,396	1,669	2,814	660
Puerto Rico	1	62	15	8	85	12

*Estimates for States may not add up to national total due to independent rounding.

These figures and recent trends can also be found in the State Traffic Safety Information web site at www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/departments/nrd-30/nca/STSI/USA%20WEB%20REPORT.HTM

References

Glassbrenner, D., & Starnes, M. (2009, December). Lives saved calculations for seat belts and frontal air bags (Report No. DOT HS 811 206). Washington, DC: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Available at www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/Pubs/811206.pdf

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