

Crashes by Number of Units Involved

While crashes involving a single vehicle occur less frequently than crashes involving multiple vehicles, the resulting injuries are often more severe. Single-vehicle crashes were 2.1 times as likely to result in a fatality as multiple-vehicle crashes were in 2021. Table 6 shows the number of crashes and injuries involving both single and multiple vehicles by the severity of the crash and injury. Multiple-vehicle crashes include crashes between more than one motorized vehicle and crashes between a motor vehicle and a pedestrian, bicyclist, train, or equestrian.

Type of Crash	Single Vehicle		Multiple Vehicles	
	Crashes	Injuries	Crashes	Injuries
Fatal	116	122	128	149
Suspected Serious Injury	458	535	653	832
Suspected Minor Injury	1,012	1,232	2,227	3,161
Possible Injury	999	1,299	3,316	5,557
Property Damage	5,694		12,944	
Total	8,279	3,188	19,268	9,699

In 2021, single-vehicle crashes represented only 30% of all crashes, yet accounted for nearly 48% of all fatal crashes. Of the 116 fatal single-vehicle crashes, 87 (75%) occurred on rural roadways.

Of the 128 multiple-vehicle fatal crashes, 22 involved a pedestrian, 3 involved a bicycle, and 1 involved a train. The other 102 (80%) involved two or more motor vehicles. Of the 128 fatal multiple-vehicle crashes, 79 (or 62%) occurred on rural roadways.

Figures 2 and 3, on the following page, show the most prevalent contributing circumstances for single- and multiple-vehicle crashes. The “all other contributing circumstances” category combines the remaining contributing circumstances, i.e., contributing circumstances with percentages less than 2%. Contributing circumstances of none, not applicable and unknown were excluded from the total in the percentage calculation.

Speed played the biggest role in single-vehicle crashes, contributing to 22% of single-vehicle crashes and contributed to 5% of multiple-vehicle crashes. Animal(s) in the Roadway was the second most prevalent contributing circumstance for single-vehicle crashes at 18%. Fail to Maintain Lane was the third most prevalent contributing circumstance for single-vehicle crashes at 15%, as well as contributing to 4% of multiple vehicle crashes.

Fail to Yield was the most prevalent contributing circumstance for multiple vehicle crashes, followed closely by Inattention/Distraction and Follow Too Close. Inattention/Distraction also contributed to 10% of single vehicle crashes.

Impaired driving contributed to 9% of single vehicle crashes and 3% of multiple vehicle crashes.

Figure 3
Single-Vehicle Crashes – Contributing Circumstances: 2021

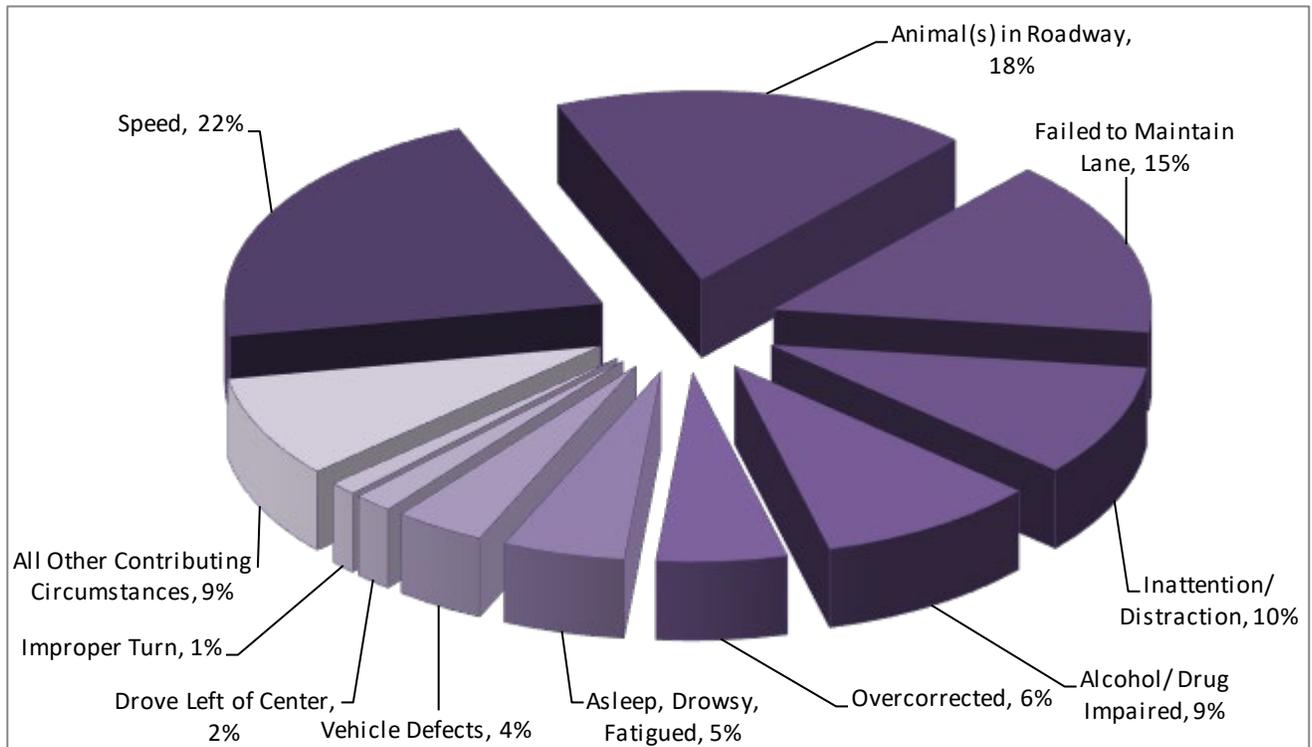


Figure 4
Multiple-Vehicle Crashes – Contributing Circumstances: 2021

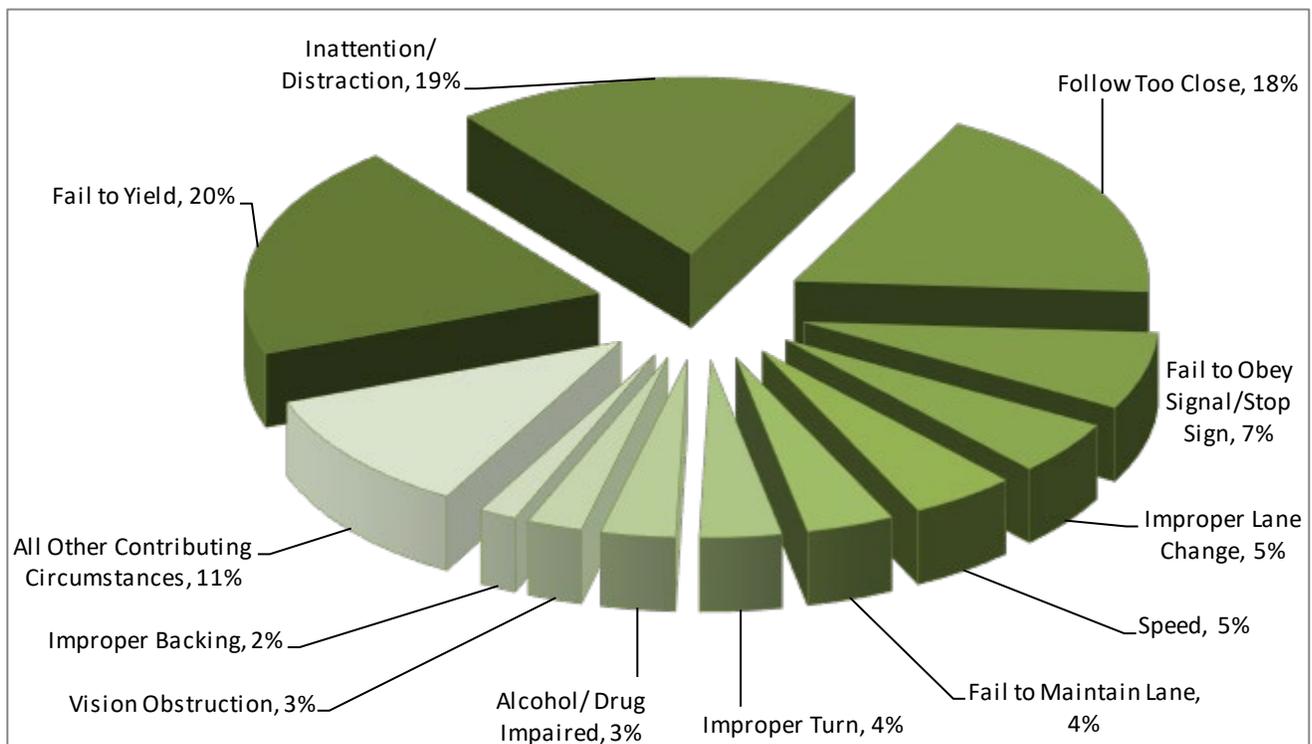


Table 7 shows the most harmful events for fatal single- and multiple-vehicle crashes.

Table 7	
Most Harmful Events for Fatal Crashes Involving Single and Multiple Vehicles: 2021	
Single-Vehicle Crashes	Multiple-Vehicle Crashes*
Overturn (68.1%)	Head On (26.5%)
Tree (11.2%)	Angle (18.0%)
Ditch (3.4%)	Pedestrian (14.6%)
Immersion (2.6%)	Rear-End (11.2%)
Embankment (1.7%)	Angle - Turning (8.8%)
Fire/Explosion (1.7%)	Side Swiped Opposite (4.1%)
Guardrail Face (1.7%)	Overturn (3.1%)
Utility/Light Support (1.7%)	Pedalcycle (2.0%)
Animal - Wild (0.9%)	Side Swiped - Same Direction (2.0%)
Culvert (0.9%)	Other (1.7%)
Curb (0.9%)	Parked Car (1.7%)
Fell/Pushed/Jumped (0.9%)	Struck by Falling/Shifting Cargo (1.7%)
Non-Collision Injury (0.9%)	Fire / Explosion (0.7%)
Other Object Not Fixed (0.9%)	Cargo Loss/Shift (0.3%)
Overpass (0.9%)	Concrete Traffic Barrier (0.3%)
Parked Car (0.9%)	Delineator Post (0.3%)
Traffic Signal Support (0.9%)	Embankment (0.3%)
	Jackknifed (0.3%)
	Non-Contact Unit (0.3%)
	Railroad Train (0.3%)
	Rear-End Turning (0.3%)
	Traffic Sign Support (0.3%)
	Utility / Light Support (0.3%)
	Vehicle Equipment (Blown Tire/Brake Failure) (0.3%)

*The percentages represent the number of vehicles the most harmful event was attributed to. Multiple units involved in a single crash may not have the same most harmful event. In 2021, there were 294 units involved in the 128 fatal multiple vehicle crashes.

Overturn was the leading most harmful event for fatal single-vehicle crashes. Single-vehicle rollovers accounted for 65% of the single vehicle fatalities and 29% of all fatalities in 2021.

Of the 52 passenger motor vehicle occupants killed in single-vehicle rollovers, 6 (or 12%) were wearing seat belts or were in a child safety seat. Of the 46 passenger motor vehicle occupants who were killed in single-vehicle rollovers and not wearing a seat belt, 41 (or 89%) were totally or partially ejected from their vehicle.

Seat belts are estimated to be more effective in preventing fatalities in rollover crashes. Seat belt use reduces fatalities by 74% in rollover crashes involving passenger cars and by 80% in rollover crashes involving light trucks³. By these estimates, 36 of the 46 unbelted passenger motor vehicle occupants killed in rollover crashes may have survived if they had been wearing their seat belt.