

# HOW SAFE ARE OUR ROADS?

Annual data report on the impact of drunk driving on road safety in the metropolitan Washington region in 2020

December 2021



## **HOW SAFE ARE OUR ROADS? ANNUAL DATA REPORT ON THE IMPACT OF DRUNK DRIVING ON ROAD SAFETY IN THE METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON REGION IN 2020**

Prepared for the Washington Regional Alcohol Program by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments.

December 14, 2021

### **ABOUT WRAP**

The Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP) is a coalition of diverse interests using effective education, innovative programs, and targeted advocacy to end alcohol-impaired driving and underage drinking in the Washington, D.C. metro area. Through public education, innovative health education programs and advocacy, WRAP is credited with keeping the metro-Washington area's alcohol-related traffic deaths historically lower than the national average. WRAP, however, may best be known to area residents via the organization's popular free safe ride service to prevent drunk driving, SoberRide®.

### **ABOUT COG**

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) is an independent, nonprofit association that brings area leaders together to address major regional issues in the District of Columbia, suburban Maryland, and Northern Virginia. COG's membership is comprised of 300 elected officials from 24 local governments, the Maryland and Virginia state legislatures, and U.S. Congress.

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Cover photo caption: "Even one death is too many," said Maryland Governor Larry Hogan referring to lives lost on Maryland's roadways due to drunk driving and as part of the virtual, 17th-annual "Maryland Remembers" ceremony held online on November 23, 2020. (Photo courtesy of the Executive Office of the Governor. The nonprofit WRAP serves as project director of Maryland's annual "Maryland Remembers" event.) (WRAP)

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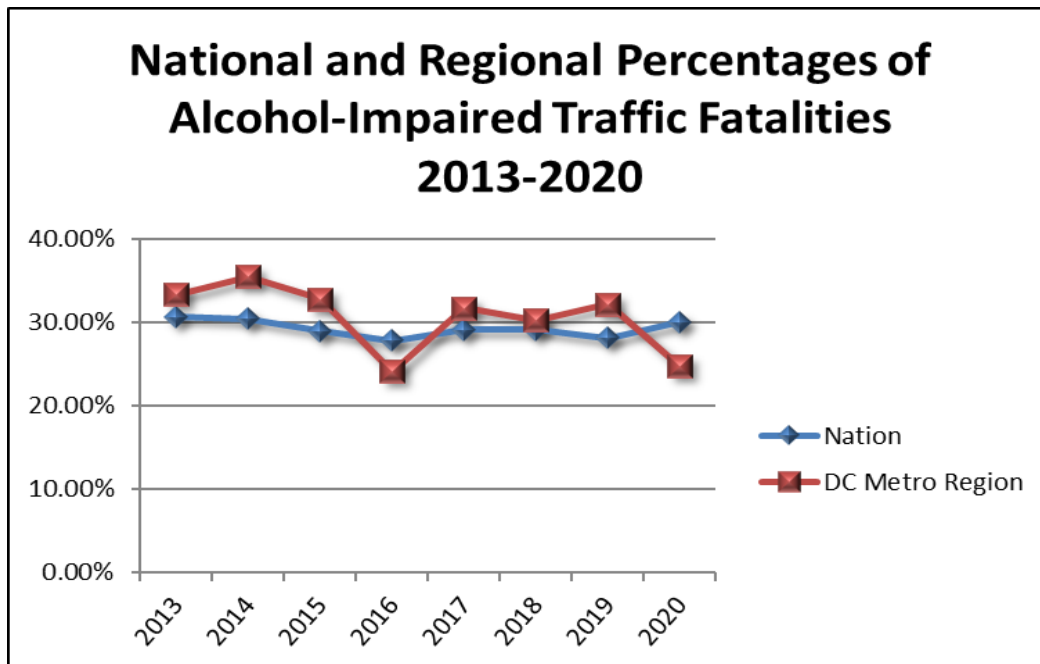
## A LOOK AT REGIONAL AND NATIONAL FIGURES

The metropolitan Washington region has experienced a decrease in alcohol and/or drug-impaired fatalities, crashes, arrests, and injuries in 2020.

Regional alcohol and/or drug-impaired traffic fatalities have decreased 20 percent of total crash fatalities in the region in 2020 from 2019, compared with an increase of 5.88 percent in 2019 from 2018. Nationally, alcohol-impaired fatality rates increased in 2020 to 30% of total crash fatalities (compared to 28.09% in 2019<sup>1</sup>).

Jurisdictions differ in collection and categorization methods for alcohol-impaired driving, therefore, some of the data in this report may include both alcohol and alcohol/drug-impaired driving numbers. These regional totals include U.S. National Park Service data.

**Figure 1. National & Regional Percentages of Alcohol-Impaired Traffic Fatalities, 2013-2020**



<sup>1</sup> For additional information, see NHTSA Overview of Motor Vehicle Crashes in 2020.

Figure 2. Regional Totals of Alcohol-Related Injuries, Crashes, & Arrests, 2013-2020

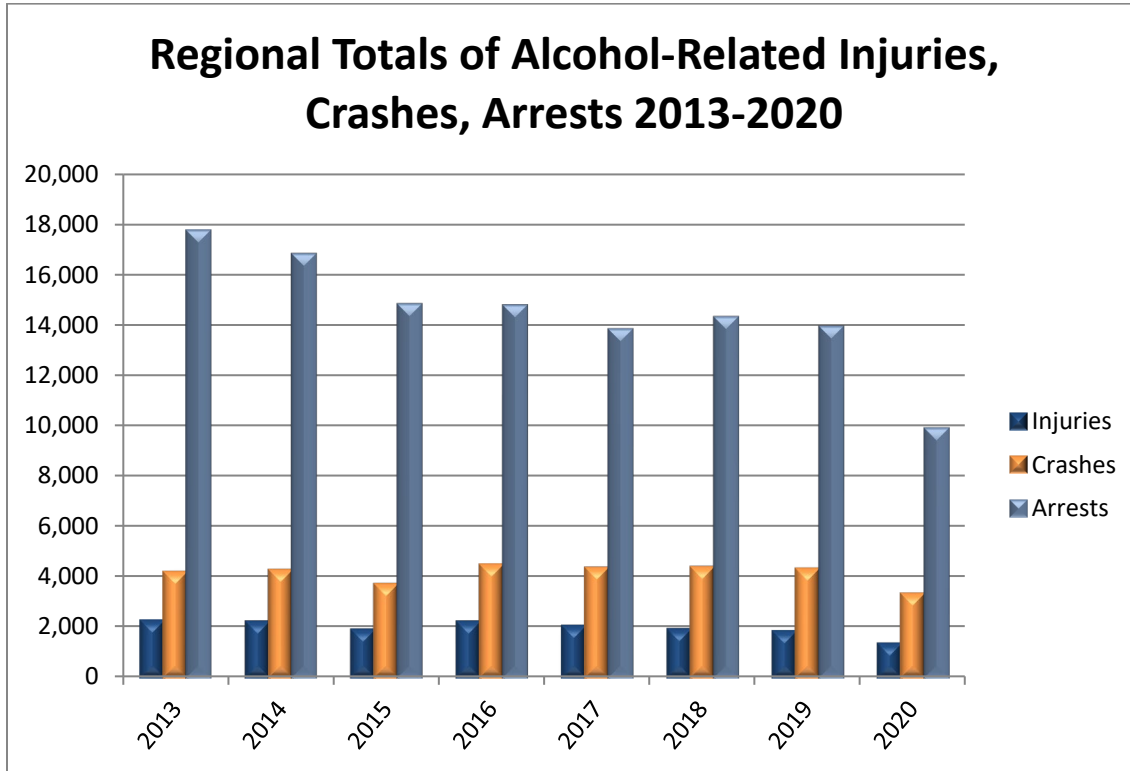
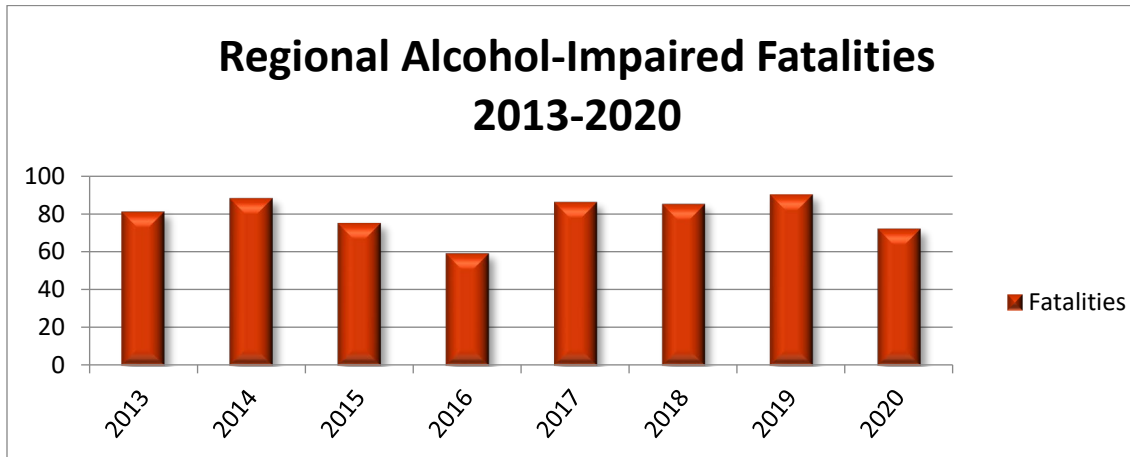


Figure 3. Regional Alcohol-Impaired Fatalities, 2013-2020



# HOW SAFE ARE OUR ROADS? 2021 REPORT

## OVERVIEW

Findings in the 2021 report (2020 data) include:

**FATALITIES:** Local alcohol and/or drug-impaired traffic fatalities **decreased** by 20 percent between 2019 and 2020 (from 90 to 72 such fatalities).

- The total average number of regional (DC Metro region and National Parks) alcohol and/or drug-impaired traffic fatalities over the last five years (2016-2020) is 78.
- Three of the last five years has had more alcohol and/or drug-impaired traffic fatalities than the average.
- 2016 and 2020 were below the average for alcohol and/or drug-impaired traffic fatalities.

**INJURIES:** Regional alcohol and/or drug-related traffic injuries **decreased** 26.96 percent between 2019 and 2020 (from 1,777 to 1,298 such injuries).

- The average number of DC Metro regional alcohol and/or drug-impaired related traffic injuries over the last five years (2016-2020) is 1,815.
- Three of the last five years has had more alcohol and/or drug-impaired traffic injuries than the average.
- 2019 and 2020 were below the average for alcohol and/or drug-impaired traffic injuries.

**CRASHES:** Area traffic crashes attributed to alcohol and/or drugs **decreased** 22.96 percent between 2019 and 2020 (from 4,273 to 3,292 such crashes).

- The average number of DC Metro regional alcohol and/or drug-impaired related traffic crashes over the last five years (2016-2020) is 4,129.
- Four of the last five years has had more alcohol and/or drug-impaired traffic crashes than the average.
- 2020 was below the average of alcohol and/or drug-impaired traffic crashes.

**ARRESTS:** Local arrests for either driving under the influence (DUI) or driving while impaired (DWI) **decreased** 29.01 percent between 2019 and 2020 (from 13,920 to 9,882 such arrests).

- The average number of DC Metro regional alcohol and/or drug-impaired related arrests over the last five years (2016-2020) is 13,332.
- Four of the last five years has had more alcohol and/or drug-impaired traffic arrests than the average.
- 2020 was below the average for alcohol and/or drug-impaired traffic arrests.

Of the metropolitan Washington region's 290 total traffic fatalities for 2020, 72 (or 25%) were due to drivers who were alcohol and/or drug-impaired (Blood Alcohol Concentration [BAC] = .08+).

## Background

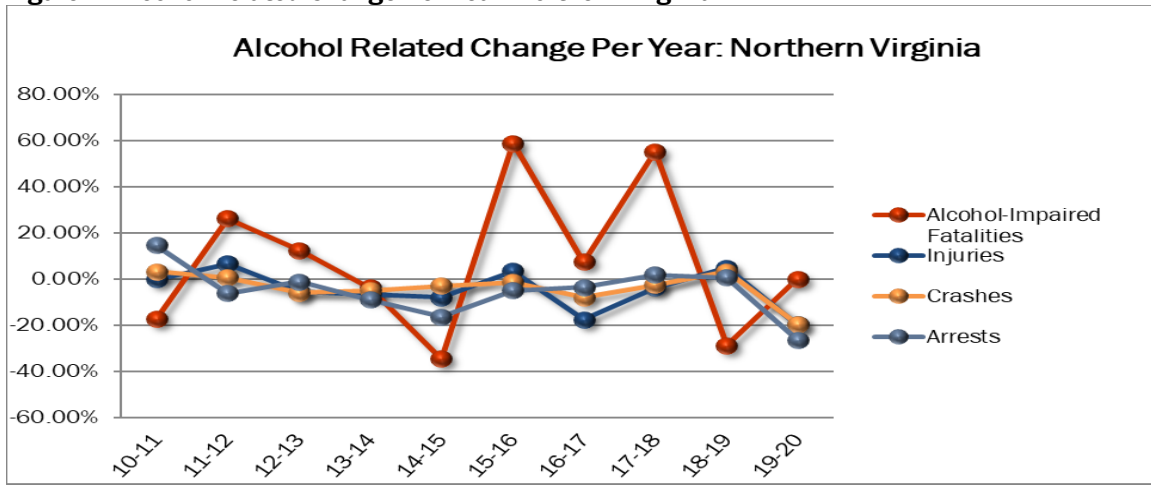
Data compiled in this report comes from national, state, and local sources including the U.S. Census Bureau, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), U.S. National Park Service (NPS), Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), District Department of Transportation (DDOT), Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (VA DMV), Maryland National Study Center for Trauma and Emergency Medical Systems (MD NSC), and local police departments of each jurisdiction.

Jurisdictional data in this report does not always include State Police data. The State Police in Maryland and Virginia are charged with enforcing traffic laws on state highways and interstate expressways; inclusion of this data would likely increase the number of incidents in all categories. It is possible that some jurisdictional data may include State Police figures because local police often respond to highway incidents when State Police are unavailable. In some jurisdictions, the data reported were provided by the state, and most likely include state police data.

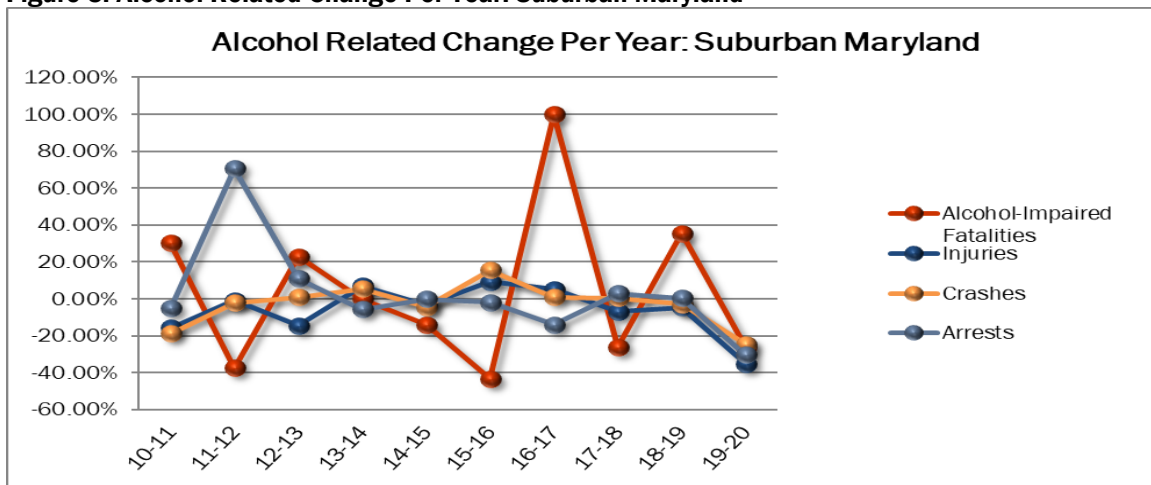


# SUB-REGIONAL TRENDS

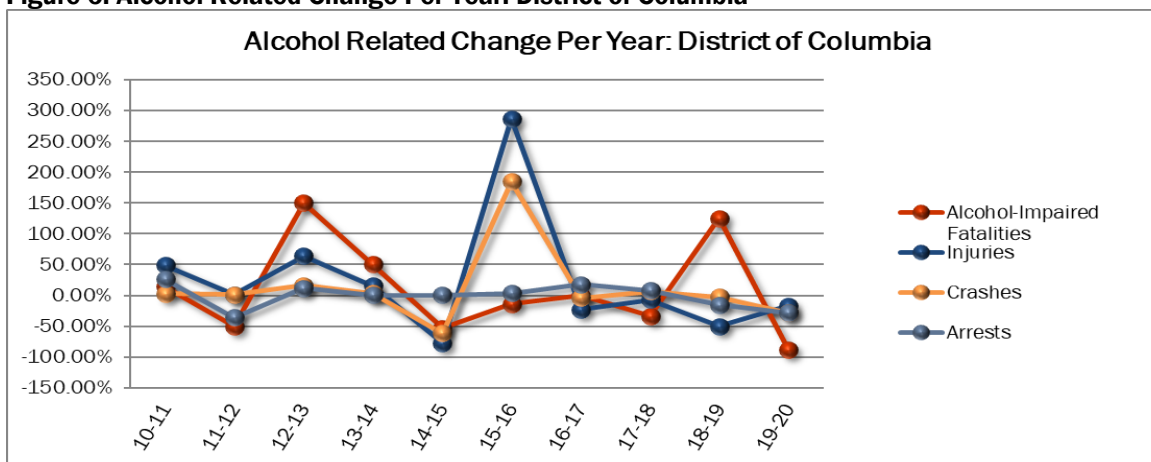
**Figure 4. Alcohol-Related Change Per Year: Northern Virginia**



**Figure 5: Alcohol-Related Change Per Year: Suburban Maryland**



**Figure 6. Alcohol-Related Change Per Year: District of Columbia**



# TOTAL TRAFFIC FATALITIES

Total Traffic Fatalities 2013-2020									
Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Percent Change 2019-2020
<b>DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA</b>									
Washington	29	26	26	28	33	36	27	37	37.04%
<b>MARYLAND</b>									
Montgomery County	41	40	47	42	33	34	37	46	24.32%
Prince George's County	87	98	95	78	99	103	112	110	-1.79%
MD Regional Total	128	138	142	120	132	137	149	156	4.70%
<b>VIRGINIA</b>									
Arlington County	6	5	5	1	5	2	6	4	-33.33%
Fairfax County	40	32	30	36	35	47	45	37	-17.78%
Loudoun County	13	12	11	12	22	11	13	12	-7.69%
Prince William County	19	23	11	30	22	24	14	18	28.57%
City of Alexandria	3	0	4	4	4	5	5	7	40.00%
City of Fairfax	2	0	0	4	0	2	2	1	-50.00%
City of Falls Church	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
City of Manassas	0	0	0	0	2	4	1	1	0.00%
City of Manassas Park	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
Northern Virginia Total	83	73	61	87	90	95	86	80	-6.98%
DC Metro Regional Total	240	237	229	235	255	268	262	273	4.20%
National Parks in Region	3	N/A	17	10	16	13	18	18	0.00%
Regional Total Adjusted	243	N/A	246	245	271	281	280	291	3.93%
National	32,893	32,744	35,484	37,806	37,473	36,835	36,355	38,824	6.79%

# ALCOHOL-IMPAIRED TRAFFIC FATALITIES

Alcohol-Impaired Traffic Fatalities by Jurisdiction with BAC=.08+ 2013-2020									
Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Percent Change 2019-2020
<b>DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA</b>									
Washington	10	15	7	6	6	4	9	1	-88.89%
<b>MARYLAND</b>									
Montgomery County	12	11	10	4	8	7	10	10	0.00%
Prince George's County	31	32	27	17	34	24	32	21	-34.38%
MD Regional Total	43	43	37	21	42	31	42	31	-26.19%
<b>VIRGINIA</b>									
Arlington County	1	2	2	0	2	1	2	1	-50.00%
Fairfax County	18	12	9	12	12	18	17	18	5.88%
Loudoun County	4	6	2	4	7	7	5	7	40.00%
Prince William County	4	5	2	9	6	14	6	3	-50.00%
City of Alexandria	0	0	2	1	1	3	2	2	0.00%
City of Fairfax	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0.00%
City of Falls Church	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
City of Manassas	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	1	N/A <sup>2</sup>
City of Manassas Park	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
Northern Virginia Total	27	26	17	27	29	45	32	32	0.00%
DC Metro Region Total	80	84	61	54	77	80	83	64	-22.89%
National Parks in Region	1	4	14	5	9	5	7	8	14.29%
Regional Total Adjusted	81	88	75	59	86	85	90	72	-20.00%
National	10,076	9,967	10,320	10,497	10,908	10,710	10,196	11,654	14.30%

<sup>2</sup> A percent cannot be calculated due to the original value being zero.

# TOTAL TRAFFIC INJURIES

Total Traffic Injuries by Jurisdiction 2013-2020									
Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Percent Change 2019-2020
<b>DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA</b>									
Washington	6,929	7,474	8,638	3,878	3,612	3,437	2,403	<b>2,027</b>	-15.65%
<b>MARYLAND</b>									
Montgomery County	5,417	6,196	6,365	7,045	7,000	6,753	6,453	<b>4,252</b>	-34.11%
Prince George's County	6,532	6,549	6,746	7,715	7,787	7,351	7,285	<b>5,168</b>	-29.06%
MD Regional Total	11,949	12,745	13,111	14,760	14,787	14,104	13,738	<b>9,420</b>	-31.43%
<b>VIRGINIA</b>									
Arlington County	1,090	1,094	978	1,048	1,036	998	1,125	<b>590</b>	-47.56%
Fairfax County	7,608	7,649	7,677	7,564	6,418	6,000	6,032	<b>3,733</b>	-38.11%
Loudoun County	1,917	2,123	2,143	2,289	2,081	2,299	2,079	<b>1,317</b>	-36.65%
Prince William County	3,030	2,915	2,747	2,785	2,652	2,811	2,899	<b>1,889</b>	-34.84%
City of Alexandria	681	757	731	721	576	699	673	<b>420</b>	-37.59%
City of Fairfax	227	440	338	294	242	147	164	<b>92</b>	-43.90%
City of Falls Church	132	241	160	133	177	154	150	<b>92</b>	-38.67%
City of Manassas	560	646	626	773	711	756	541	<b>480</b>	-11.28%
City of Manassas Park	41	29	48	60	26	63	36	<b>31</b>	-13.89%
Northern Virginia Total	15,286	15,894	15,448	15,667	13,919	13,927	13,699	<b>8,644</b>	-36.90%
DC Metro Region Total	34,164	36,113	37,197	34,305	32,318	31,468	29,840	<b>20,091</b>	-32.67%
National Parks in Region	570	N/A	603	532	492	496	496	<b>195</b>	-60.69%
Regional Total Adjusted	34,734	N/A	37,800	34,837	32,810	31,964	30,336	<b>20,286</b>	-33.13%

# ALCOHOL-RELATED TRAFFIC INJURIES

Alcohol-Related Traffic Injuries by Jurisdiction with BAC=.01+ 2013-2020									
Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Percent Change 2019-2020
<b>DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA</b>									
Washington	228	263	59	228	176	163	81	67	-17.28%
<b>MARYLAND</b>									
Montgomery County	316	343	366	401	492	423	357	263	-26.33%
Prince George's County	474	501	451	492	448	451	476	277	-41.81%
MD Regional Total	790	844	817	893	940	874	833	540	-35.17%
<b>VIRGINIA</b>									
Arlington County	117	78	84	91	94	79	89	53	-40.45%
Fairfax County	524	476	442	459	331	290	329	270	-17.93%
Loudoun County	115	150	128	144	117	133	124	107	-13.71%
Prince William County	223	204	182	182	163	181	187	147	-21.39%
City of Alexandria	71	60	52	53	53	48	44	35	-20.45%
City of Fairfax	17	26	25	12	17	7	6	8	33.33%
City of Falls Church	6	4	10	11	11	7	10	8	-20.00%
City of Manassas	49	47	41	38	33	35	33	27	-18.18%
City of Manassas Park	1	5	2	9	5	13	9	11	22.22%
Northern Virginia Total	1,123	1,050	966	999	824	793	831	666	-19.86%
DC Metro Region Total	2,141	2,157	1,842	2,120	1,940	1,830	1,745	1,273	-27.05%
National Parks in Region	51	N/A	N/A	33	46	33	32	25	-21.88%
Regional Total Adjusted	2,192	N/A	N/A	2,153	1,986	1,863	1,777	1,298	-26.96%

# TOTAL TRAFFIC CRASHES

Total Traffic Crashes by Jurisdiction 2013-2020									
Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Percent Change 2019-2020
<b>DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA</b>									
Washington	19,482	21,752	2,400	25,850	25,712	25,818	26,823	<b>18,311</b>	-31.73%
<b>MARYLAND</b>									
Montgomery County	10,825	12,279	13,006	14,160	14,239	14,231	13,843	<b>9,728</b>	-29.73%
Prince George's County	12,580	13,355	14,758	17,185	18,297	19,562	20,516	<b>17,134</b>	-16.48%
MD Regional Total	23,405	25,634	27,764	31,345	32,536	33,793	34,359	<b>26,862</b>	-21.82%
<b>VIRGINIA</b>									
Arlington County	2,463	2,469	2,483	2,711	2,508	2,535	2,558	<b>1,516</b>	-40.73%
Fairfax County	13,675	13,680	14,024	13,781	13,631	13,368	13,301	<b>8,735</b>	-34.33%
Loudoun County	4,186	4,281	4,824	4,921	4,875	5,149	4,951	<b>3,421</b>	-30.90%
Prince William County	5,671	5,856	5,660	5,564	5,540	5,757	5,880	<b>4,416</b>	-24.90%
City of Alexandria	1,695	1,777	1,912	1,736	1,441	1,566	1,499	<b>957</b>	-36.16%
City of Fairfax	615	700	561	565	596	417	528	<b>325</b>	-38.45%
City of Falls Church	83	165	169	144	121	130	121	<b>80</b>	-33.88%
City of Manassas	567	568	595	633	573	607	438	<b>412</b>	-5.94%
City of Manassas Park	66	71	81	97	55	71	80	<b>64</b>	-20.00%
Northern Virginia Total	29,021	29,567	30,309	30,152	29,340	29,600	29,356	<b>19,926</b>	-32.12%
DC Metro Region Total	71,908	76,953	60,473	87,347	87,588	89,211	90,538	<b>65,099</b>	-28.10%
National Parks in Region	1,281	4,164	4,621	4,049	3,486	1,600	1,462	<b>1,018</b>	-30.37%
Regional Total Adjusted	73,189	81,117	65,094	91,396	91,074	90,811	92,000	<b>66,117</b>	-28.13%

# ALCOHOL-RELATED TRAFFIC CRASHES

Alcohol-related Traffic Crashes by Jurisdiction with a BAC=.01+ 2013-2020									
Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Percent Change 2019-2020
<b>DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA</b>									
Washington	657	682	260	740	710	756	735	529	-28.03%
<b>MARYLAND</b>									
Montgomery County	690	807	815	905	954	881	827	651	-21.28%
Prince George's County	1,041	1,017	933	1,116	1,085	1,166	1,163	850	-26.91%
MD Regional Total	1,731	1,824	1,748	2021	2,039	2,047	1,990	1,501	-24.57%
<b>VIRGINIA</b>									
Arlington County	232	235	218	199	203	162	192	121	-36.98%
Fairfax County	829	740	708	701	621	580	589	496	-15.79%
Loudoun County	213	236	222	259	227	251	244	181	-25.82%
Prince William County	337	319	332	305	296	333	343	284	-17.20%
City of Alexandria	111	99	99	94	83	88	87	68	-21.84%
City of Fairfax	26	35	29	19	26	10	15	16	6.67%
City of Falls Church	4	9	8	12	10	4	8	8	0.00%
City of Manassas	44	35	40	30	33	35	27	31	14.81%
City of Manassas Park	3	3	4	19	9	6	10	14	40.00%
Northern Virginia Total	1,799	1,711	1,660	1,638	1,508	1,469	1,515	1,219	-19.54%
DC Metro Region Total	4,095	4,217	3,668	4,399	4,257	4,272	4,240	3,249	-23.37%
National Parks in Region	51	N/A	N/A	33	54	63	33	43	30.30%
Regional Total Adjusted	4,146	N/A	N/A	4,432	4,311	4,335	4,273	3,292	-22.96%

# ALCOHOL-RELATED TRAFFIC ARRESTS

Total Alcohol Related Traffic Arrests by Jurisdiction 2013-2020									
Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Percent Change 2019-2020
<b>DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA</b>									
Washington	1,498	1,501	1,508	1,561	1,834	1,978	1,680	<b>1,202</b>	-28.45%
<b>MARYLAND</b>									
Montgomery County	3,983	3,723	3,973	4,101	3,406	3,442	3,253	<b>1,960</b>	-39.75%
Prince George's County	3,314	3,153	2,894	2,629	2,379	2,506	2,715	<b>2,193</b>	-19.23%
MD Regional Total	7,297	6,876	6,867	6,730	5,785	5,948	5,968	<b>4,153</b>	-30.41%
<b>VIRGINIA</b>									
Arlington County	850	874	742	692	494	445	438	<b>382</b>	-12.79%
Fairfax County	3,628	3,116	2,387	2,457	2,536	2,424	2,400	<b>1,669</b>	-30.46%
Loudoun County	828	733	667	671	561	709	731	<b>435</b>	-40.49%
Prince William County	2,493	2,372	1,941	1,651	1,613	1,890	1,904	<b>1,535</b>	-19.38%
City of Alexandria	378	372	349	324	397	292	263	<b>178</b>	-32.32%
City of Fairfax	155	107	78	62	59	51	77	<b>33</b>	-57.14%
City of Falls Church	110	103	78	55	43	36	57	<b>62</b>	8.77%
City of Manassas	N/A	N/A	138	124	125	91	117	<b>101</b>	-13.68%
City of Manassas Park	N/A	N/A	46	71	56	58	51	<b>52</b>	1.96%
Northern Virginia Total	8,442	7,677	6,426	6,107	5,884	5,996	6,038	<b>4,447</b>	-26.35%
DC Metro Region Total	17,237	16,054	14,801	14,398	13,503	13,922	13,686	<b>9,802</b>	-28.38%
National Parks in Region	487	740	N/A	359	305	371	234	<b>80</b>	-65.81%
Regional Total Adjusted	17,724	16,794	N/A	14,757	13,808	14,293	13,920	<b>9,882</b>	-29.01%



# YOUTH DATA

Alcohol-Related Crashes, Injuries, and Arrests for Persons Under 21 Years of Age by Region, 2020												
	Fatalities	Alcohol-Related Fatalities	% of Alcohol-Related Fatalities	Crashes	Alcohol-Related Crashes	% of Alcohol-Related Crashes	Injuries	Alcohol-Related Injuries	% of Alcohol-Related Injuries	Arrests	Alcohol-Related Arrests	% of Alcohol-Related Arrests
<b>DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA</b>												
Washington	1	0	0.00%	1,934	4	0.21%	222	0	0.00%	281	20	7.12%
<b>MARYLAND</b>												
Montgomery County	3	0	0.00%	2,176	85	3.91%	693	26	3.75%	2,413	67	2.78%
Prince George's County	8	2	25.00%	3,307	92	2.78%	778	33	4.24%	3,505	40	1.14%
MD Regional Total	11	2	18.18%	5,483	177	3.23%	1,471	59	4.01%	5,918	107	1.81%
<b>VIRGINIA</b>												
Arlington County	0	0	0.00%	176	10	5.68%	57	8	14.04%	1,364	14	1.03%
Fairfax County	1	0	0.00%	1,500	59	3.93%	439	32	7.29%	5,804	88	1.52%
Loudoun County	0	0	0.00%	712	22	3.09%	243	12	4.94%	2,588	29	1.12%
Prince William County	2	0	0.00%	1,005	51	5.07%	278	18	6.47%	5,200	100	1.92%
City of Alexandria	0	0	0.00%	113	5	4.42%	35	5	14.29%	581	11	1.89%
City of Fairfax	0	0	0.00%	62	0	0.00%	10	0	0.00%	200	3	1.50%
City of Falls Church	0	0	0.00%	16	1	6.25%	15	3	20.00%	69	4	5.80%
City of Manassas	0	0	0.00%	107	4	3.74%	85	1	1.18%	580	3	0.52%
City of Manassas Park	0	0	0.00%	15	3	20.00%	4	2	50.00%	304	4	1.32%
Northern Virginia Total	3	0	0.00%	3,706	155	4.18%	1,166	81	6.95%	16,690	256	1.53%
DC Metro Regional Total	15	2	13.33%	11,123	336	3.02%	2,859	140	4.90%	22,889	383	1.67%
National Parks in Region	0	0	0.00%	1	0	0.00%	7	0	0.00%	0	0	0.00%
Regional Total Adjusted	15	2	13.33%	11,124	336	3.02%	2,866	140	4.88%	22,889	383	1.67%

# METHODOLOGY

## Agencies Providing Local Jurisdictional Data

### DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Metropolitan Police Department (MPD)

District Department of Transportation (DDOT)

### MARYLAND

MD National Study Center for Trauma and Emergency Medical Systems (MD NSC)

Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD)

Prince George's County Police Department (PGPD)

### VIRGINIA

Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (VA DMV)

Arlington County Police Department

Fairfax County Police Department

Loudoun County Sheriff's Office

Prince William County Police Department

City of Alexandria Police Department

City of Fairfax Police Department

City of Falls Church Police Department

City of Manassas Police Department

City of Manassas Park Police Department

### FEDERAL

U.S. National Park Service (NPS)

## Definitions of Data-Related Terms

**NHTSA Alcohol-Impaired Driving Traffic Fatalities:** Any fatality that occurs in motor vehicle traffic crash that involves at least one driver or a motorcycle rider (operator) with a BAC of .08 grams per deciliter or higher; This threshold does not consider the impairment status of non-occupants involved in fatal crashes, such as pedestrians or pedal cyclist.

**WRAP Alcohol-Impaired Driving Traffic Fatalities:** Any person who dies as result of a traffic crash involving alcohol with a BAC level .08 or higher.

**WRAP Alcohol-Related Traffic Fatalities for Persons Under 21:** Any person under the age of 21 who has died as result of an alcohol-related traffic crash involving a driver with a BAC level .01 or higher. This includes drivers, passengers, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

**Alcohol-Related Traffic Injuries:** Where any driver, passenger, bicyclist or pedestrian is listed on the police report to be injured in an alcohol-related crash where the BAC = .01 or higher.

**Alcohol-Related Traffic Injuries for Persons Under 21:** Any person under the age of 21 who receives injuries because of an alcohol-related crash where the BAC = .01 or higher; this includes drivers, passengers, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

**Alcohol-Related Traffic Crashes:** The driver, passenger, bicyclist, or pedestrian is listed on the police report as drinking before the crash with a BAC = .01 or higher. At least one driver in the crash was reported to be under the influence of alcohol and/or other drugs.

**Alcohol-Related Traffic Crashes for Persons Under 21:** Any person under the age of 21 who was involved in a traffic crash involving a driver with a BAC = .01 or higher. This data includes drivers, passengers, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

**Drunk Driving Arrests/Citation:** A general reference to those criminal cases prior to and/or after adjudication and sentencing that are called DUI, DWI, OUI, OWI or other acronyms that generally describe three types of cases:

The driver is sufficiently impaired by alcohol, drugs or a combination of the two, and cannot drive safely, and has a BAC level of .01 or higher.

The driver is a “Drunk Driver”, as defined by the driver being above that state’s legal limit of BAC .08.

A driver under the age of 21 is under the influence of alcohol at a BAC level of .02 or higher.

**DWI/DUI Arrests:** A driver is listed on the police report as arrested for operating a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol with a BAC level of .01 or higher.

**DWI/DUI Arrests for persons under 21:** Any person/driver under the age of 21 listed on the police report as arrested for operating a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol with a BAC level of .01 or higher.

## Data Analysis

The findings in this report are based on data collected from organizations and agencies from across the Washington Metro region. Data tables provide totals within the Washington Metro region as well as individual jurisdictions. Analysis focuses on changes in motor vehicle fatalities, injuries, crashes, and arrests. Results are reported as numbers and percentage of alcohol-related incidents to total numbers across time.

## Data Limitations

It is important to note limitations that affected collection and analysis of this data, as they may limit comparability across jurisdictions and influence the level of reasonable analysis. Whenever possible, limitations are noted within the tables and figures.

It should be noted that the researchers constructing this report utilized data from the National Study Center for Trauma and EMS (NSC) at the University of Maryland, for data pertaining to crashes, injuries, and arrests. Regarding the alcohol-related crash and injury data, the variable identifies a driver or pedestrian under the influence of alcohol, drugs, both, or none. Within the NSC data reported, researchers analyzed drivers reported as under the influence of *alcohol or both*, to capture alcohol-related crashes and injuries. That variable is created using several others on the report (such as driver condition, BAC, etc.) so it does not specify only those with BAC 0.01+, and comparisons to previous year's data should be made with caution. In addition, because this report tracks just two jurisdictions in Maryland, regional totals could also be affected.

Additionally, there is no standardization for data definitions, collection, or recording within the Washington Metro region. Each agency has its own system of data collection, coding, and management. In addition, the range and type of data collected may not be consistent across jurisdictions. The data reported and analyzed in this report reflect data as reported by contact agencies. Independent verification of data to ensure accuracy is not within the scope of this report.

Information on data collection and management systems and changes within jurisdictions was not solicited. In addition, changes in laws or judicial priorities may result in increased attention to specific data (e.g., blood alcohol level in driver fatalities related to stricter server laws). In some cases, this may result in missing data or data that appears inconsistent when examined against the same values for previous years. It is beyond the scope of this report to identify data methodology or priority changes for each jurisdiction.

Data on alcohol-related driver involvement in motor vehicle fatalities, injuries, crashes and arrests was requested for alcohol-related (BAC= .01+) only, however, due to differences between jurisdictions in reporting on impaired data, some cases may involve drug use.

The number of incidents, total and related to alcohol impairment, is very small for some jurisdictions. Due to the small numbers, jurisdictional analysis might easily misrepresent the problem. For example, an increase of one alcohol-related fatality would have little impact in a jurisdiction that saw 50 alcohol-related fatalities the previous year but would appear to represent a significant change in a small jurisdiction with only one or two alcohol-related fatalities the previous year.

Data are reported and analyzed by absolute numbers only. At this time, information that would allow identification of comparable rates is unavailable. It is assumed that people involved in motor vehicle crashes and arrests may live within or outside the Washington Metro region. Collection of data on driver or passenger residence versus jurisdiction of crash is beyond the scope of this report. Calculating rates based on the Washington Metro region's population or number of licensed drivers would not accurately represent the problem since drivers may be from outside the jurisdiction.

Data on people under the age of 21 years is collected in an inconsistent manner among jurisdictions. Caution must be used in evaluation of this data due to varied definitions and missing data.

Each chart displays two regional total numbers. The first, "DC Regional Total" is the total of the District of Columbia, the Maryland Region, and the Northern Virginia Region. The second regional number, "Regional Total Adjusted," includes data from the United States Park Police. Because the Park Police information has only been recently collected, it is shown separately, and the two regional totals are shown so that comparisons with previous years can be done.

## Credits

How Safe Are Our Roads? Report was prepared for the Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP) by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG). COG works with WRAP and other partners to compile the data and develop the report.