

Older Pedestrians at Risk

And How States Can Make it Safer and Easier for Older Residents to Walk

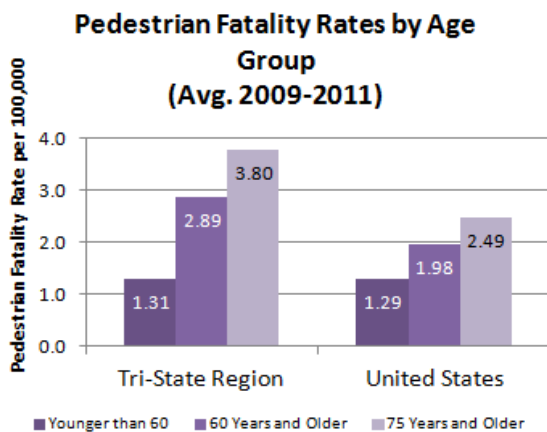
Key Findings

- 413 older pedestrians (60 years and older) have been killed in collisions with cars in our region from 2009 through 2011.
- Older pedestrians in the tri-state region represent 18.7 percent of the population, but account for 33.3 percent of all pedestrian fatalities.
- Older pedestrians in the tri-state region are more than 2.2 times as likely to be killed in a collision with a vehicle than those under 60.
- Almost 60 percent of older pedestrian fatalities occurred on arterial roads.

Introduction

Pedestrians 60 years and older are disproportionately at risk of being killed in collisions with vehicles while walking. In the United States, those 60 and older make up 18.5 percent of the population but 25.7 percent of the pedestrian fatalities. **In New Jersey, Connecticut and downstate New York, those 60 and older comprise 18.7 percent of the region's population, yet 33.3 percent of the pedestrian fatalities.**

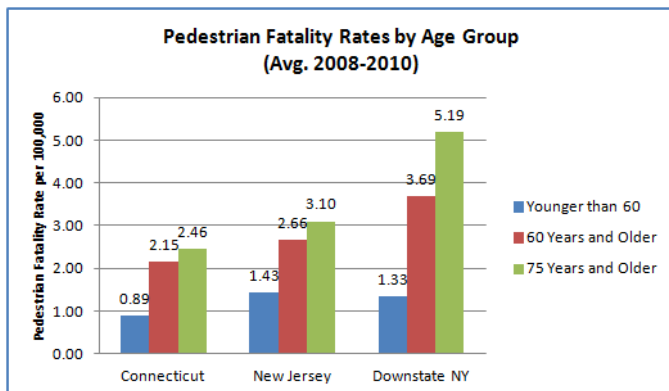
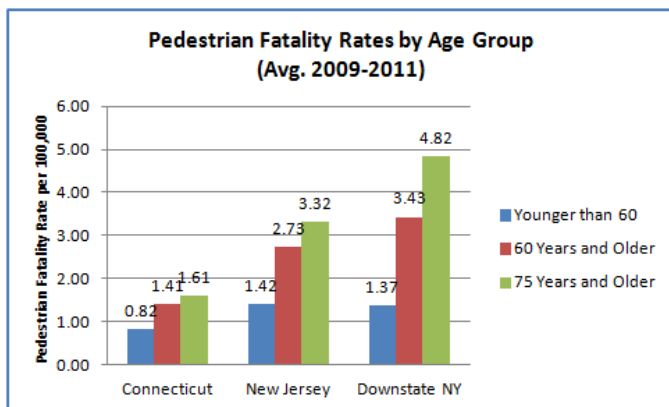
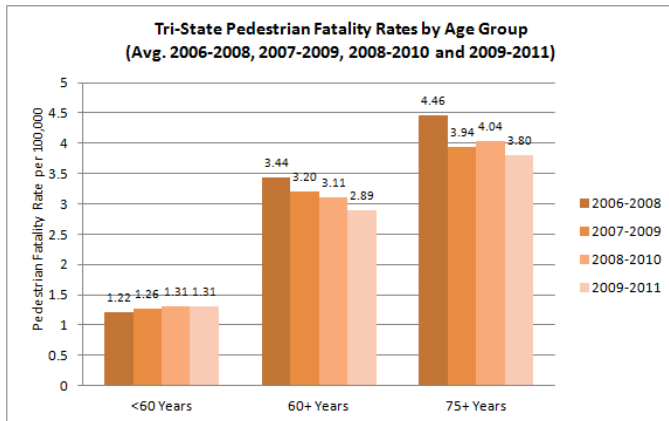
While older pedestrians remain disproportionately represented among pedestrian fatalities overall, fatality rates for older pedestrians in the region have decreased since TSTC's first *Older Pedestrians at Risk* report in 2010 (which examined pedestrian fatality data from 2006 through 2008). While this is encouraging news, more can be done to reduce pedestrian fatalities in this age group, especially in New Jersey. Older pedestrian fatality rates have dropped in Connecticut and downstate New York since TSTC's 2012 report, but the fatality rates for pedestrians 60 years and older and those 75 and older have increased slightly in New Jersey.



Source: TSTC Analysis of NHTSA's FARS database, 2009-2011, U.S. Census Bureau Population Estimates and 2010 Census. U.S. fatality rates include tri-state.

Tri-State Transportation Campaign
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Source: TSTC Analysis of NHTSA's FARS database, 2009-2011, 2008-2010, 2007-2009 and 2006-2008, U.S. Census Bureau Population Estimates and 2010 Census.

Why is this an Issue?

- The U.S. population of adults 75 years and older is increasing. By 2040, this age group will have grown from approximately 18 million (2011, 6 percent of the U.S. population) to 44 million (12 percent of the population).¹
- Older adults are also increasingly choosing to give up their car keys and relying on walking or public transit. AARP Public Policy Institute found that "Transit use by people age 65+, as a share of all trips they take, increased by a remarkable 40 percent between 2001 and 2009." According to AARP, "In 2009, older adults took more than 1 billion trips on public transportation (a 55 percent increase over trips recorded in 2001)."²
- The lack of pedestrian amenities along our region's roads puts all pedestrians at risk, but puts older pedestrians disproportionately so.
- Older pedestrians may face a greater risk of being in a fatal collision with a vehicle because they may be less able to react quickly to an on-coming vehicle and once struck, may be less likely to recover than those younger than them.

1 "Motor Vehicle Traffic-Related Pedestrian Deaths — United States, 2001–2010." Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. April 19, 2013 / 62(15);277-282. <<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6215a1.htm>>.

2 Lynott, Jana and Carlos Figueiredo. "How the Travel Patterns of Older Adults Are Changing: Highlights from the 2009 National Household Travel Survey." AARP Public Policy Institute. Fact Sheet 218, April 2011. <<http://assets.aarp.org/rgcenter/ppi/liv-com/fs218-transportation.pdf>>. (pg. 3.)

What Can be Done?

- Dangerous roads can be made safer for pedestrians of all ages.
- Improvements such as curb ramps, well-marked crosswalks, pedestrian crossing islands and pedestrian countdown clocks help all road users safely cross the street, from older pedestrians to parents with young children, to teenagers.
- In the tri-state region, some examples of recent road improvement projects include:

The Connecticut Department of Transportation is adding crosswalks and filling in gaps in the sidewalk network on Post Road East (Route 1), Connecticut’s most deadly road for pedestrians.

The New York City Department of Transportation has put in place traffic calming measures and pedestrian improvements such as left turn bans and wider pedestrian crossing islands on segments of Brooklyn’s 4th Avenue.

The New York State Department of Transportation is making Long Island’s Hempstead Turnpike safer by installing raised medians, altering traffic signals and adding crosswalks.

The New Jersey Department of Transportation’s Safe Streets to Transit program awarded Delran Township \$250,000 to build sidewalks on Route 130, a road Tri-State has found to be New Jersey’s most dangerous road for pedestrians. The Attorney General’s Office, the Division of Highway Traffic Safety and 12 Burlington County municipalities and county agencies have established Operation 130 Safe Passage, which aims to make Route 130 safer for pedestrians through enforcement activities.

Tri-State Pedestrian Fatalities, 2009-2011

State	Pedestrian Fatalities (2009-2011)	Older (60+ yrs) Pedestrian Fatalities (2009-2011)	Avg. Older Pedestrian Fatality Rate per 100,000* (2009-2011)
Connecticut	100	30	1.41
New Jersey	440	137	2.73
Downstate New York	702	246	3.43
Tri-State	1,242	413	2.89

Source: TSTC Analysis of NHTSA’s FARS database, 2008-2010, U.S. Census Bureau Population Estimates and 2010 Census.
 *Fatality rates are calculated according to the population of the relevant age group (i.e., population aged 60 years and older, population under 60 years).

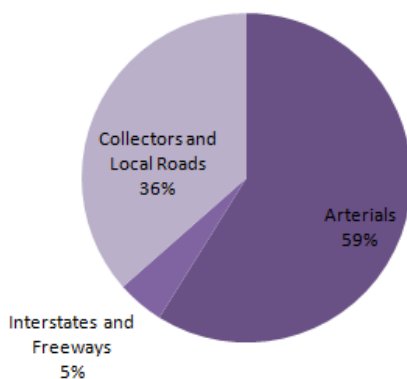
Recommendations

Communities across Connecticut, New Jersey and downstate New York are making progress in creating safer roads. However, with over 1,240 pedestrians killed from 2009 through 2011, more can, and should, be done to make the tri-state's roads safer for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists alike.

New York

- NYSDOT should include new pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure in its "Preservation First" policy, the Agency's new policy for prioritizing the maintenance of existing infrastructure.
- NYSDOT should launch training workshops for engineers, public works employees and advocates to better understand the needs of all road users.
- NYSDOT should expand a statewide SafeSeniors program, modeled on the successful pilot program on Long Island and create a Safe Routes to Transit program that implements pedestrian safety improvements in areas around transit stops.
- The State Legislature should create a state fund dedicated to pedestrian and bicycling infrastructure.

Regional Older Pedestrian Fatalities by Roadway Type



Source: TSTC Analysis of NHTSA's FARS database, 2009-2011. Percentages based on known roadway types. Examples of arterials include U.S. 1 in Connecticut, U.S. 130 (Burlington Pike) in New Jersey and Route 24 (Hempstead Turnpike) in Nassau County, New York.

Dangerous Road Design

The most dangerous roads for older pedestrians in our region are what traffic engineers call "arterials." These roads often have travel speeds of 40 mph and two lanes in each direction, prioritizing moving vehicles as quickly as possible. Throughout the tri-state region, many arterial roads also lack pedestrian and bicyclist safety infrastructure such as sidewalks, crosswalks and bike lanes, despite the fact that these users are common on arterials, which are often lined with businesses, offices and supermarkets. Almost 60 percent of older pedestrian deaths in these three states occurred on these types of roads, even though arterials comprise only 15.3 percent of the lane miles in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut.

New Jersey

- New Jersey and the State's metropolitan planning organizations should allocate funding to regional trails such as The Circuit in Southern New Jersey so that these trails can serve as key transportation corridors. Prioritize pedestrian and bicycle improvements on roads that provide access to these trails to create safe connectivity to the trails and surrounding roads.
- NJDOT should continue to incentivize municipal and county-level adoption of Complete Streets policies that require the design of roads to accommodate the needs of all users, including older pedestrians. Municipalities and counties that have passed Complete Streets policies should create implementation plans and receive funding priority from NJDOT.
- The State Legislature should pass a Vulnerable Users bill that would stiffen penalties for drivers who kill or injure pedestrians, bicyclists, highway workers, or other non-motorists using the roadway and pass a Safe Passing bill that clearly indicates how motorists should act when passing a vulnerable user on the roadway.

Connecticut

- ConnDOT should create and fund Safe Routes for Seniors and Safe Routes to Transit programs that implement pedestrian safety improvements in areas with high concentrations of seniors and areas around transit stops.
- ConnDOT should redesign Connecticut's Highway Design Manual, Connecticut's standard road design reference book, to address the goals and policies set forth in the State's Complete Streets law.
- The State Legislature should pass a Vulnerable Users bill that would stiffen penalties for drivers who kill or injure pedestrians, bicyclists, highway workers, or other non-motorists using the roadway.

Appendix One: Most Dangerous Counties for Older Pedestrians **

Rank	County	Older (60+ yrs) Pedestrian Fatalities (2009-2011)	Avg. Older Pedestrian Fatality Rate per 100,000 * (2009-2011)	Avg. <60 yrs Pedestrian Fatality Rate per 100,000 * (2009-2011)	Rank in 2008-2010
1	Putnam, NY	3	5.44	2.05	11
2	Hudson, NJ	14	4.98	1.45	5
3	Bronx, NY	30	4.78	1.35	6
4	Passaic, NJ	12	4.64	0.97	10
5	Nassau, NY	39	4.56	1.38	2
6	Essex, NJ	16	4.14	2.05	7
7	Queens, NY	51	4.13	1.29	3
8	Brooklyn, NY	51	4.05	1.18	4
9	Manhattan, NY	35	3.87	1.40	7
9	Bergen, NJ	22	3.87	0.89	13
11	Union, NJ	9	3.15	1.83	15
12	Litchfield, CT	4	3.08	0.00	1
13	Mercer, NJ	6	3.06	1.44	23
14	Atlantic, NJ	5	3.02	3.36	18
15	Middlesex, NJ	12	2.84	1.46	19
16	Camden, NJ	8	2.83	1.82	9
17	Ocean, NJ	12	2.53	2.07	14
18	Burlington, NJ	6	2.26	1.02	27
19	Suffolk, NY	17	1.96	2.56	24
20	Fairfield, CT	10	1.92	0.58	26
21	Staten Island, NY	5	1.89	1.38	21
22	Monmouth, NJ	7	1.87	1.24	30
23	Rockland, NY	3	1.68	0.80	36
24	Orange, NY	3	1.66	1.15	20
25	Warren, NJ	1	1.60	0.76	31
26	Windham, CT	1	1.48	1.04	29
27	Westchester, NY	8	1.40	0.57	25
28	Hunterdon, NJ	1	1.30	1.26	Not ranked
28	Gloucester, NJ	2	1.30	1.12	16
30	Hartford, CT	7	1.28	0.85	22
31	Tolland, CT	1	1.25	1.06	33
32	New London, CT	2	1.21	1.08	35
33	Morris, NJ	3	1.06	0.84	32
34	Middlesex, CT	1	0.89	0.77	Not ranked
35	New Haven, CT	4	0.78	1.07	17
36	Somerset, NJ	1	0.58	0.62	28
36	Dutchess, NY	1	0.58	0.56	12

*Fatality rates are calculated according to the population of the relevant age group (i.e., population aged 60 years and older, population under 60 years). ** Counties with no older pedestrian fatalities (Cape May, Cumberland, Salem and Sussex) are not included.

Appendix Two: Most Dangerous Counties for Older Pedestrians by State

Connecticut

Rank	County	Older (60+ yrs) Pedestrian Fatalities (2009-2011)	Avg. Older Pedestrian Fatality Rate per 100,000 * (2009-2011)	Avg. <60 yrs Pedestrian Fatality Rate per 100,000 * (2009-2011)
1	Litchfield	4	3.08	0.00
2	Fairfield	10	1.92	0.58
3	Windham	1	1.48	1.04
4	Hartford	7	1.28	0.85
5	Tolland	1	1.25	1.06
6	New London	2	1.21	1.08
7	Middlesex	1	0.89	0.77
8	New Haven	4	0.78	1.07
n/a	Connecticut	30	1.41	1.07

New Jersey **

Rank	County	Older (60+ yrs) Pedestrian Fatalities (2009-2011)	Avg. Older Pedestrian Fatality Rate per 100,000 * (2009-2011)	Avg. <60 yrs Pedestrian Fatality Rate per 100,000 * (2009-2011)
1	Hudson	14	4.98	1.45
2	Passaic	12	4.64	0.97
3	Essex	16	4.14	2.05
4	Bergen	22	3.87	0.89
5	Union	9	3.15	1.83
6	Mercer	6	3.06	1.44
7	Atlantic	5	3.02	3.36
8	Middlesex	12	2.84	1.46
9	Camden	8	2.83	1.82
10	Ocean	12	2.53	2.07
11	Burlington	6	2.26	1.02
12	Monmouth	7	1.87	1.24
13	Warren	1	1.60	0.76
14	Hunterdon	1	1.30	1.26
14	Gloucester	2	1.30	1.12
16	Morris	3	1.06	0.84
17	Somerset	1	0.58	0.62
n/a	New Jersey	137	2.73	1.42

*Fatality rates are calculated according to the population of the relevant age group (i.e., population aged 60 years and older, population under 60 years). ** Counties with no older pedestrian fatalities (Cape May, Cumberland, Salem and Sussex) are not included.

Downstate New York

Rank	County	Older (60+ yrs) Pedestrian Fatalities (2009-2011)	Avg. Older Pedes- trian Fatality Rate per 100,000 * (2009 -2011)	Avg. <60 yrs Pedestrian Fatality Rate per 100,000 * (2009-2011)
1	Putnam	3	5.44	2.05
2	Bronx	30	4.78	1.35
3	Nassau	39	4.56	1.38
4	Queens	51	4.13	1.29
5	Brooklyn	51	4.05	1.18
6	Manhattan	35	3.87	1.40
7	Suffolk	17	1.96	2.56
8	Staten Island	5	1.89	1.38
9	Rockland	3	1.68	0.80
10	Orange	3	1.66	1.15
11	Westchester	8	1.40	0.57
12	Dutchess	1	0.58	0.56
n/a	Downstate New York	246	3.43	1.37

*Fatality rates are calculated according to the population of the relevant age group (i.e., population aged 60 years and older, population under 60 years).

