ODOT Crash Data Disclaimers

General Crash Data Disclaimer

Disclaimer: ODOT crash data is compiled from individual driver and police crash reports submitted to the Oregon Department of Transportation as required in ORS 811.720. The Crash Analysis and Reporting Unit (CAR) is committed to providing the highest quality crash data to customers. However, because submittal of crash report forms is the responsibility of the individual driver, the Crash Analysis and Reporting Unit cannot guarantee that all qualifying crashes are represented, nor can we assure that all details pertaining to a single crash are accurate.

Data Usage and Interpretation Disclaimer

ODOT Crash Data Technicians follow complex rules and guidelines to determine crash location and other crash details entered into the Crash Data System (CDS). The "Motor Vehicle Traffic Crash Coding and Analysis" manual is available on the Crash Analysis and Reporting Unit's web page at: Oregon Department of Transportation : Crash Statistics & Reports : Data & Maps : State of Oregon

Re-Release of ODOT Crash Data

The ODOT CAR Unit releases crash data to local and federal governments, private consultants, engineering firms, universities, law enforcement agencies, and the public. As a result of this data sharing, ODOT makes no guarantee, and expressly disclaims liability, regarding the content, usage, and interpretation of crash data re-released by our customers.

Spatial Crash Data Disclaimer

Spatial data for crashes for all public roads are available for years 2007 and later. However, ODOT's Linear Referencing System (LRS) allows crashes on ODOT-maintained state highways to be geo-referenced for all years for which data is available from the crash data file.

Crashes are located on ODOT road data. Prior-year crashes were located to the vintage of road data for the year the crash occurred. *If a newer version of ODOT road data, a different road network layer, or a different geographic projection is used, the crash points may not match exactly to your road data*.

Vehicle-vs-Animal

Some collisions with large animals are very serious and reported. However, a majority of crashes with animals are under-reported to ODOT due to lower damage to vehicle and no injury to a person. These factors limit their representation in the State Crash Data Database.

Citizen Driver Self-Reporting Considerations

Oregon is a crash self-reporting state by statute. This means not all crashes are attended by law enforcement. Local and state law enforcement agencies do not have enough resources to cover all crashes, nor are they required by law to do so. Officers strive to attend all fatal, serious injury and

major crashes that block traffic ways and create unsafe circumstances for other drivers. On average, 58% of crash report packets received included a police crash report, for the most recent five full years of crash data (2017-2021). Information from those reports is included in the data. Due to the nature of driver self-reporting, some contributing causes, locations, and driver issues will be under-reported. Examples are crashes involving:

- Cell phone use / texting / handheld devices
- Distraction
- Alcohol and/or drugs
- Bicycle vs. vehicle collisions that require no medical transport or emergency response
- Hit-and-run crashes with parked vehicles or fixed objects, because there is no driver information available for DMV to assign the crash to a driver record
- Driver license status
- Crashes in rural parts of the state

Periodic Changes to State Reporting Requirements Impact ODOT's Crash Data File

Changes to the Oregon Revised Statutes that affect the reporting threshold for submitting traffic crash reports directly impact the Crash Data file. This may result in a significant difference in the number of crash reports received for analysis and entry into ODOT's CDS for the year following the change, until the change in the law becomes well known. Statistically significant reductions or increases in annual crash data may result. The CAR Unit recommends that users refer to the Oregon Revised Statutes and their effective dates, when analyzing crash data for significant changes.

Prior to 09/01/1997, legally reportable motor vehicle traffic crashes were those involving death, bodily injury, or damage to personal property in excess of $500. The threshold for damage to personal property increased to $1,000 for crashes that occurred between 9/01/1997 and 12/31/2003.

As of 01/01/2004, drivers were required to file an Accident and Insurance Report Form with DMV within 72 hours of a crash, when:

- damage to the driver's vehicle was over $1,500;
- damage to any vehicle was over $1,500 and any vehicle is towed from the scene as a result of damage from the accident;
- if injury or death resulted from the accident; or
- if damage to any one person's property other than a vehicle involved in the accident was over $1,500.

As of 01/01/2018, the bulleted "damage" limits listed above were increased to $2,500.

For more information on filing requirements, please contact DMV www.oregon.gov/odot/dmv.

Effective for 2011 Data

A higher number of crashes may be reported for 2011 and later years compared to earlier years. This is not due to an actual increase in crashes. The higher numbers result, in part, from a change to an internal departmental process that allows the CAR Unit to include previously unavailable, non-fatal crash reports to the annual data file. Please keep this change in mind when comparing pre-2011 crash statistics.

Effective for 2015 Data

"Property Damage Only" (PDO) was discontinued as a "crash severity" option for Pedestrian-Involved or Pedalcyclist-Involved motor vehicle crashes. The decision to include bicycle and pedestrian collisions with motor vehicles, as at least a "possible injury' is based on the circumstance that provide bicyclists and pedestrians no legal reporting requirement or option when involved in crashes with motor vehicles. As vulnerable road users, it was determined that collisions with motor vehicles must result in at least a "possible injury" despite the lack of formal input from the non-motor vehicular participants. Expect data for this injury category to increase.

Effective for 2016 Data

PDO crash data collection was reduced for vehicles and participants. This decision was made to meet customer demands to expedite completion of annual data files. PDO Crash level data is coded in its entirety. PDO Vehicle data is limited to two vehicles, and to these data elements: Vehicle Type, Movement, Action and Safety Equipment Counts. PDO Participant records are limited to the first two drivers, and to their BAC, Alcohol, Drug, and Marijuana Use. The remaining vehicle and participant fields are populated with default or "unknown" codes. Please keep this change in mind when comparing pre-2016 PDO vehicle and participant data.

"Recreational marijuana" use was legalized July 2016 in Oregon. Police reporting for this data element is included in the 2016 data. However, volatility may exist in annual data for a new data element data as data collection and coding practices normalize. Therefore, it's recommended that a minimum of five years is used when querying for trends on new data elements.

Historic Crash Data Considerations

As of 12/31/2023, the three master CDS data entry tables (CRASH, VHCL, and PARTIC) contain 183 data elements, including denormalized fields, system-generated fields, and summary fields. Because database expansion, conversion, and enhancements occur on an ongoing basis, data for recent years is not always comparable to data from many years prior. This is why the CDS differs now from versions that existed in 1985, 1995, 2001, and 2007. Legislation, data standards, and national safety hot topics may influence what and how data is collected.

Consider also that the physical road network across the state changes annually in many areas due to construction, jurisdictional transfers, and natural events such as landslides that require re-routing of a highway. ODOT's Road Inventory and Classification Unit (RICS) uses "negative milepoints', "overlapping (Z) mileage", and "milepoint equations" to account for the addition or loss of milepoint for a historic road. (These concepts are explained in the Motor Vehicle Traffic Crash Analysis and Code Manual, in the "Milepoint" instruction pages). For these reasons, care must be taken when analyzing historic crash data.

Initial, Preliminary, and Published Data Definitions

ODOT crash data has three primary production stages: initial, preliminary, and published.

Initial data is based on information the CAR Unit collects as it's building the crash case file. This initial data (fatal crash information) is shared even though the crash information is still being gathered and analyzed prior to being coded into the CDS, because early access to key crash details is important for ODOT and its safety partners. This initial data is subject to change often or could be removed completely if the crash doesn't meet reporting criteria.

Preliminary data is crash data that has been analyzed and coded into the CDS, but some quality control and assurances have not been performed. This data is made available sometime during the crash data production year via the CAR Unit's data tools.

Published crash data is data that has undergone all quality control and assurance measures and is officially released in reports and publications and made available in the unit's data tools. This is done on one crash year at a time. The release date can vary depending on the number of crashes for a given year, unit resources, and any special projects that may interfere with the production of crash data.

Fatal Crash Reporting Criteria

Some fatal crashes are not accounted for by ODOT as they did not meet the Agency's reporting criteria.

ODOT's CAR Unit strives to include all fatal motor vehicle "traffic" crashes in its crash data. However, notification from official sources may not occur in certain situations, e.g.: for fatal crashes that result from a delayed death if the law enforcement agency wasn't notified; or if the victim was transported out-of-state and succumbed to injuries there.

For purposes of motor vehicle traffic crash classification, the death must have occurred within 30 days from the time of the crash, to be included in CDS. *(See ANSI D16 definition 3.1.3, "Time of Classification".)*

Fatal crashes that occur on private property or on "parking lot ways" are excluded from CDS. However, "driveway" and "driveway-related" crashes that occur within the public trafficway boundaries and involve vehicles entering or exiting a private drive or parking lot *are* included.

All crashes must meet the ANSI D16-2017 "Characteristics of Motor Vehicle Traffic Crashes" criteria to be included in ODOT's Crash Data System. Crashes that result from deliberate intent, suicide, homicide (not negligent homicide), and non-traffic crashes fail to meet the definition of a motor vehicle traffic crash and are therefore excluded from entry into CDS.