

# HOW SAFE ARE OUR ROADS?

2017 annual data report on the impact of drunk driving on road safety in the Washington D.C. metropolitan region

December 2018



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

Prepared for the Washington Regional Alcohol Program by the Metropolitan Council of Governments.  
December 2018

### **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.

### **CREDITS**

Cover photo caption: "While we have continued to reduce the amount of fatalities on our roads, those statistics are cold comfort to the families who have lost loved ones to drunk driving. The work we do over the next few months will be to save lives—plain and simple." —Virginia Governor Ralph Northam in launching the Commonwealth's 2018 anti-drunk driving Checkpoint Strikeforce campaign. August 13, 2018. (WRAP)

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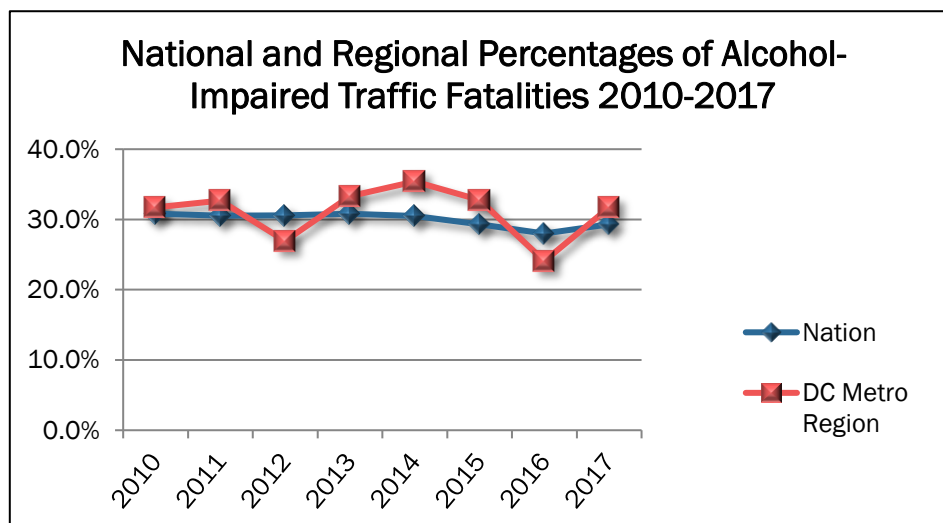
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## A LOOK AT REGIONAL AND NATIONAL FIGURES

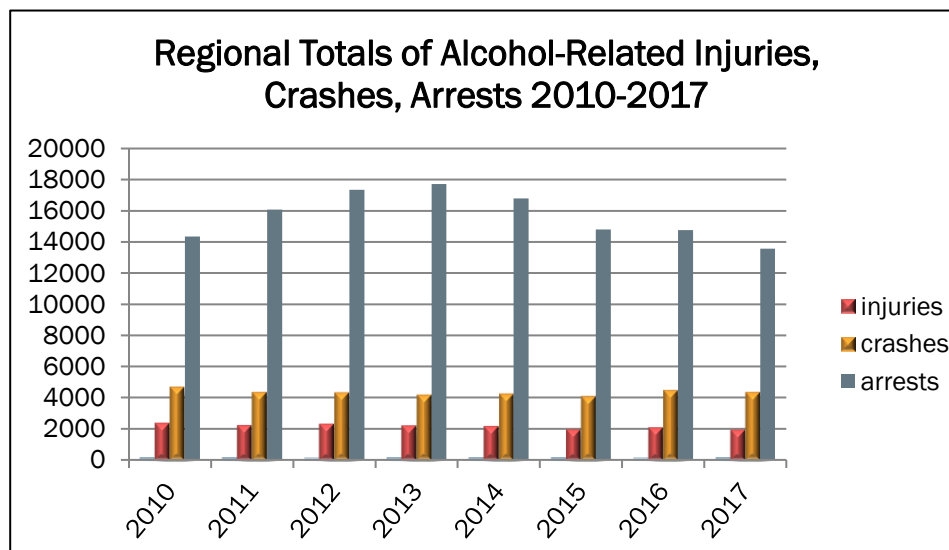
The metropolitan Washington region has experienced an increase in alcohol and/or drug-related fatalities and a decrease in alcohol and/or drug-impaired injuries, crashes, and arrests.

Regional alcohol and/or drug-impaired traffic fatalities have increased 45.76% of total crash fatalities in the region in 2017 from 2016, compared with a decrease of 24.08% in 2016 from 2015. Nationally, alcohol-impaired fatality rates rose slightly in 2017 to 29% (compared to 28% in 2016).

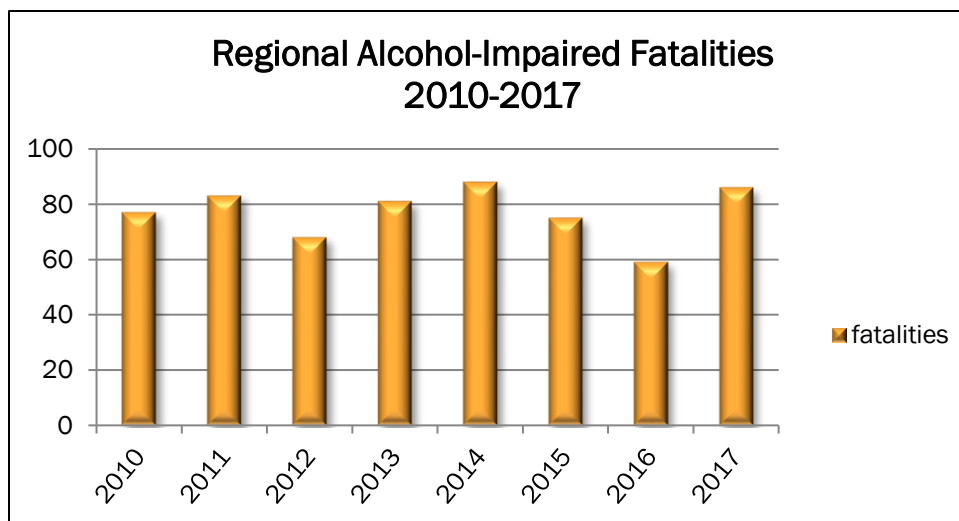
Jurisdictions differ in collection and categorization methods for alcohol-impaired driving, therefore, some of the data in this report may include both alcohol and alcohol/drug-impaired driving numbers. These regional totals include U.S. National Park Service data.



**Figure 1. National & Regional Percentages of Alcohol-Impaired Traffic Fatalities, 2010-2017**



**Figure 2. Regional Totals of Alcohol-Related Injuries, Crashes, & Arrests, 2010-2017**



**Figure 3. Regional Alcohol-Impaired Fatalities, 2010-2017**

# HOW SAFE ARE OUR ROADS? 2018 REPORT

## OVERVIEW

Findings in the 2018 report (2017 data) include:

**FATALITIES:** Local alcohol and/or drug-impaired traffic fatalities **increased** by 45.76% between 2016 and 2017 (from 59 to 86 such fatalities).

- The average number of regional total (DC Metro Region and National Parks) alcohol and/or drug-impaired traffic fatalities over the last five years (2013-2017) is 78. Three of the last five years has had more traffic fatalities than the average. 2015 and 2016 were below the average for traffic fatalities.

**CRASHES:** Area traffic crashes attributed to alcohol and/or drugs **decreased** 2.57% between 2016 and 2017 (from 4,438 to 4,324 such crashes).

- The average number of DC Metro Regional alcohol and/or drug-impaired related traffic crashes over the last five years (2013-2017) is 4,208. Three of the last five years has had more traffic crashes than the average. 2013 and 2015 were below the average of traffic crashes.

**INJURIES:** Regional alcohol and/or drug-related traffic injuries **decreased** 7.14% between 2016 and 2017 (from 2,074 to 1,926 such injuries).

- The average number of DC Metro Regional alcohol and/or drug-impaired related traffic injuries over the last five years (2013-2017) is 2,036. Three of the last five years has had more traffic injuries than the average. 2015 and 2017 were below the average for traffic injuries.

**ARRESTS:** Local arrests for either driving under the influence (DUI) or driving while impaired (DWI) **decreased** 8.08% between 2016 and 2017 (from 14,757 to 13,564 such arrests).

- The average number of DC Metro Regional alcohol and/or drug-impaired related arrests over the last five years (2013-2017) is 15,150. Two of the last five years has had more arrests than the average. Overall, there has been a decrease each year since 2013 for arrests.

Of the metropolitan Washington area's 271 total traffic fatalities for 2017, **86 or 31.73%** of these roadway deaths were due to drivers who were alcohol and/or drug-impaired (Blood Alcohol Concentration [BAC] = .08+). National statistics (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, NHTSA) show that 29% of total U.S. vehicular fatalities in 2017 were reported as alcohol impaired (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), 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

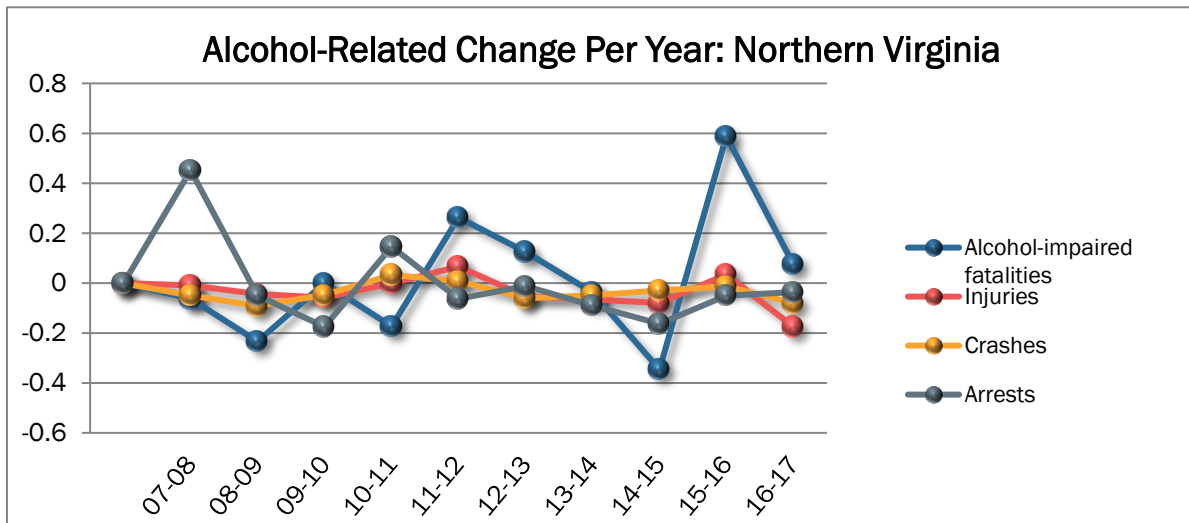


Figure 4. Alcohol-Related Change per Year: Northern VA

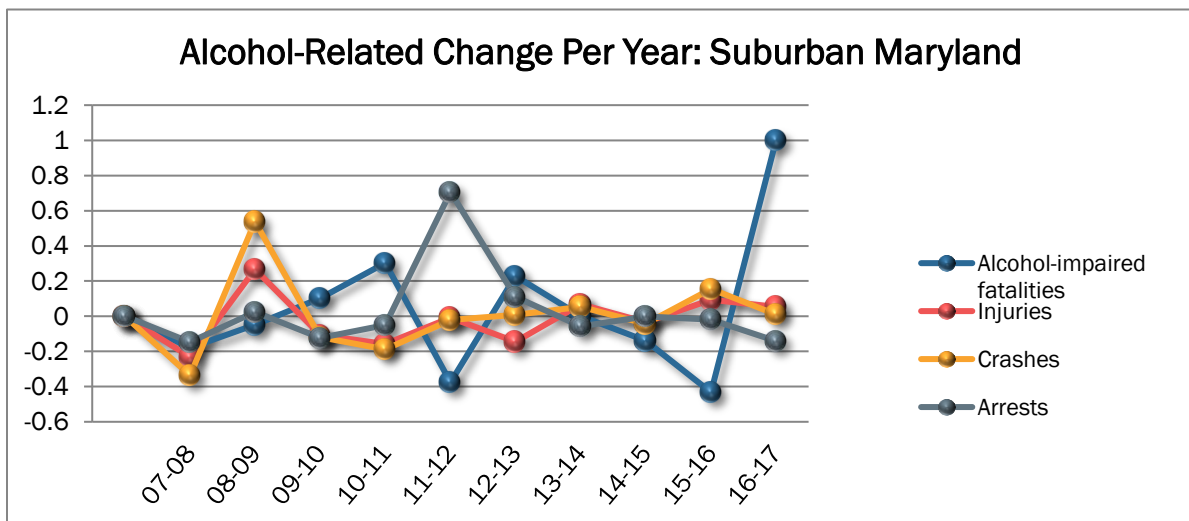


Figure 5. Alcohol-Related Change per Year: Suburban MD

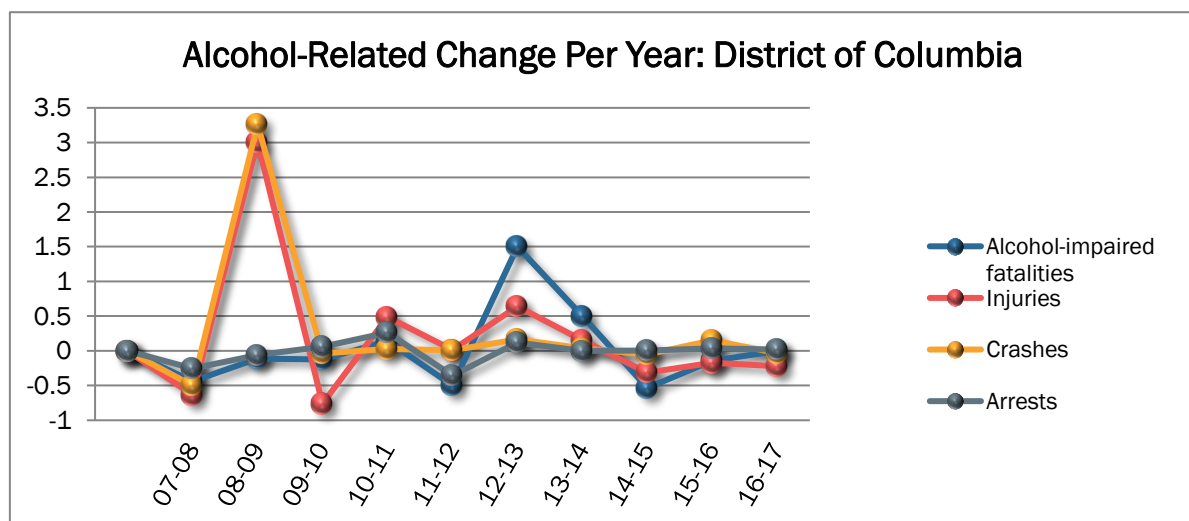


Figure 6. Alcohol-Related Change per Year: District of Columbia

# TOTAL TRAFFIC FATALITIES

Total Traffic Fatalities 2010-2017									
Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Percent Change 2016-2017
<b>DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA</b>									
Washington	24	27	15	29	26	26	28	33	17.86%
<b>MARYLAND</b>									
Montgomery County	47	40	37	41	40	47	42	33	-21.43%
Prince George's County	92	105	83	87	98	95	78	99	26.92%
MD Regional Total	139	145	120	128	138	142	120	132	10.00%
<b>VIRGINIA</b>									
Arlington County	6	6	4	6	5	5	1	5	400.00%
Fairfax County	35	45	46	40	32	30	36	35	-2.78%
Loudoun County	12	11	17	13	12	11	12	22	83.33%
Prince William County	23	15	19	19	23	11	30	22	-26.67%
City of Alexandria	2	3	4	3	0	4	4	4	0.00%
City of Fairfax	0	1	5	2	0	0	4	0	-100.00%
City of Falls Church	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0.00%
City of Manassas	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	200.00%
City of Manassas Park	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
Northern Virginia Total	80	82	96	83	73	61	87	90	3.45%
<b>DC Metro Regional Total</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>8.51%</b>
National Parks in Region	N/A	N/A	N/A	3	N/A	17	10	16	60.00%
<b>Regional Total Adjusted</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>10.61%</b>
National	32,885	32,367	33,782	32,719	32,675	35,092	37,461	37,133	-0.88%

# ALCOHOL-IMPAIRED TRAFFIC FATALITIES

Alcohol-Impaired Traffic Fatalities by Jurisdiction with BAC=.08+ 2010-2017									
Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Percent Change 2016-2017
<b>DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA</b>									
Washington	7	8	4	10	15	7	6	6	0.00%
<b>MARYLAND</b>									
Montgomery County	13	20	10	12	11	10	4	8	100.00%
Prince George's County	30	36	25	31	32	27	17	34	100.00%
MD Regional total	43	56	35	43	43	37	21	42	100.00%
<b>VIRGINIA</b>									
Arlington County	1	0	1	1	2	2	0	2	200.00%
Fairfax County	8	9	8	18	12	9	12	12	0.00%
Loudoun County	3	4	5	4	6	2	4	7	75.00%
Prince William County	11	3	10	4	5	2	9	6	-33.33%
City of Alexandria	0	1	2	0	0	2	1	1	0.00%
City of Fairfax	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	-100.00%
City of Falls Church	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0.00%
City of Manassas	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	100.00%
City of Manassas Park	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
Northern Virginia Total	23	19	27	27	26	17	27	29	7.41%
<b>DC Metro Region Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>42.59%</b>
National Parks in Region	4	0	3	1	4	14	5	9	80.00%
<b>Regional Total Adjusted</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>45.76%</b>
National	10,136	9,878	10,336	10,076	9,967	10,320	10,497	10,874	3.59%

# TOTAL TRAFFIC INJURIES

Total Traffic Injuries by Jurisdiction 2010-2017									
Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Percent Change 2016-2017
<b>DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA</b>									
Washington	4,473	5,812	6,515	6,929	7,474	7,986	8,342	2,969	-64.41%
<b>MARYLAND</b>									
Montgomery County	6,510	6,095	6,051	5,417	6,196	6,365	7,045	7,000	-0.64%
Prince George's County	6,084	6,422	6,411	6,532	6,549	6,746	7,715	7,787	0.93%
MD Regional total	12,594	12,517	12,462	11,949	12,745	13,111	14,760	14,787	0.18%
<b>VIRGINIA</b>									
Arlington County	1,007	1,005	1,252	1,090	1,094	978	1,048	1,036	-1.15%
Fairfax County	7,600	7,767	8,185	7,608	7,649	7,677	7,564	6,418	-15.15%
Loudoun County	1,764	1,869	1,837	1,917	2,123	2,143	2,289	2	-99.91%
Prince William County	2,741	2,826	2,763	3,030	2,915	2,747	2,785	2,652	-4.78%
City of Alexandria	614	601	609	681	757	731	721	576	-20.11%
City of Fairfax	178	205	243	227	440	338	294	242	-17.69%
City of Falls Church	193	183	232	132	241	160	133	177	33.08%
City of Manassas	328	447	612	560	646	626	773	711	-8.02%
City of Manassas Park	26	24	24	41	29	48	60	26	-56.67%
Northern Virginia Total	14,451	14,927	15,757	15,286	15,894	15,448	15,667	11,840	-24.43%
<b>DC Metro Region Total</b>	<b>31,518</b>	<b>33,256</b>	<b>34,734</b>	<b>34,164</b>	<b>36,113</b>	<b>36,545</b>	<b>38,769</b>	<b>29,596</b>	<b>-23.66%</b>
National Parks in Region	826	555	541	570	N/A	603	532	492	-7.52%
<b>Regional Total Adjusted</b>	<b>32,344</b>	<b>33,811</b>	<b>35,275</b>	<b>34,734</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>37,148</b>	<b>39,301</b>	<b>30,088</b>	<b>-23.44%</b>

# ALCOHOL-RELATED TRAFFIC INJURIES

Alcohol-related Traffic Injuries by Jurisdiction with BAC=.01+ 2010-2017									
Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Percent Change 2016-2017
<b>DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA</b>									
Washington	92	137	139	228	263	180	149	116	-22.15%
<b>MARYLAND</b>									
Montgomery County	488	379	393	316	343	366	401	492	22.69%
Prince George's County	617	551	530	474	501	451	492	448	-8.94%
MD Regional total	1,105	930	923	790	844	817	893	940	5.26%
<b>VIRGINIA</b>									
Arlington County	78	71	117	117	78	84	91	94	3.30%
Fairfax County	610	573	594	524	476	442	459	331	-27.89%
Loudoun County	140	149	133	115	150	128	144	117	-18.75%
Prince William County	203	216	203	223	204	182	182	163	-10.44%
City of Alexandria	48	50	66	71	60	52	53	53	0.00%
City of Fairfax	6	15	14	17	26	25	12	17	41.67%
City of Falls Church	3	6	16	6	4	10	11	11	0.00%
City of Manassas	25	29	43	49	47	41	38	33	-13.16%
City of Manassas Park	1	3	0	1	5	2	9	5	-44.44%
Northern Virginia Total	1,114	1,112	1,186	1,123	1,050	966	999	824	-17.52%
<b>DC Metro Region Total</b>	<b>2,311</b>	<b>2,179</b>	<b>2,248</b>	<b>2,141</b>	<b>2,157</b>	<b>1,963</b>	<b>2,041</b>	<b>1,880</b>	<b>-7.89%</b>
National Parks in Region	62	41	51	51	N/A	N/A	33	46	39.39%
<b>Regional Total Adjusted</b>	<b>2,373</b>	<b>2,220</b>	<b>2,299</b>	<b>2,192</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>2,074</b>	<b>1,926</b>	<b>-7.14%</b>

# TOTAL TRAFFIC CRASHES

Total Traffic Crashes By Jurisdiction 2010-2017									
Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Percent Change 2016-2017
<b>DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA</b>									
Washington	16,739	18,002	18,276	19,482	21,752	24,193	26,495	26,402	-0.35%
<b>MARYLAND</b>									
Montgomery County	11,536	11,093	10,562	10,825	12,279	13,006	14,160	14,239	0.56%
Prince George's County	13,013	12,818	12,049	12,580	13,355	14,758	17,185	18,297	6.47%
MD Regional total	24,549	23,911	22,611	23,405	25,634	27,764	31,345	32,536	3.80%
<b>VIRGINIA</b>									
Arlington County	2,192	2,494	2,469	2,463	2,469	2,483	2,711	2,508	-7.49%
Fairfax County	13,726	14,580	14,500	13,675	13,680	14,024	13,781	13,631	-1.09%
Loudoun County	3,798	4,066	4,164	4,186	4,281	4,824	4,921	5	-99.90%
Prince William County	4,984	5,221	5,265	5,671	5,856	5,660	5,564	5,540	-0.43%
City of Alexandria	1,594	1,631	1,711	1,695	1,777	1,912	1,736	1,441	-16.99%
City of Fairfax	655	650	648	615	700	561	565	596	5.49%
City of Falls Church	190	180	154	83	165	169	144	121	-15.97%
City of Manassas	590	594	610	567	568	595	633	573	-9.48%
City of Manassas Park	40	73	63	66	71	81	97	55	-43.30%
Northern Virginia Total	27,769	29,489	29,584	29,021	29,567	30,309	30,152	24,470	-18.84%
<b>DC Metro Region Total</b>	<b>52,318</b>	<b>53,400</b>	<b>70,471</b>	<b>71,908</b>	<b>76,953</b>	<b>82,266</b>	<b>87,992</b>	<b>83,408</b>	<b>-5.21%</b>
National Parks in Region	2,762	2,811	2,644	1,281	4,164	4,621	4,049	3,486	-13.90%
<b>Regional Total Adjusted</b>	<b>55,080</b>	<b>56,211</b>	<b>73,115</b>	<b>73,189</b>	<b>81,117</b>	<b>86,887</b>	<b>92,041</b>	<b>86,894</b>	<b>-5.59%</b>

# ALCOHOL-RELATED TRAFFIC CRASHES

Alcohol-related Traffic Crashes By Jurisdiction with a BAC=.01+ 2010-2017									
Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Percent Change 2016-2017
<b>DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA</b>									
Washington	542	558	564	657	682	647	746	723	-3.08%
<b>MARYLAND</b>									
Montgomery County	891	749	737	690	807	815	905	954	5.41%
Prince George's County	1,271	1,006	980	1,041	1,017	933	1,116	1,085	-2.78%
MD Regional total	2,162	1,755	1,717	1,731	1,824	1,748	2021	2,039	0.89%
<b>VIRGINIA</b>									
Arlington County	213	218	242	232	235	218	199	203	2.01%
Fairfax County	919	903	910	829	740	708	701	621	-11.41%
Loudoun County	210	230	239	213	236	222	259	227	-12.36%
Prince William County	319	344	337	337	319	332	305	296	-2.95%
City of Alexandria	102	110	97	111	99	99	94	83	-11.70%
City of Fairfax	32	38	27	26	35	29	19	26	36.84%
City of Falls Church	6	10	12	4	9	8	12	10	-16.67%
City of Manassas	32	36	34	44	35	40	30	33	10.00%
City of Manassas Park	8	12	16	3	3	4	19	9	-52.63%
Northern Virginia Total	1,841	1,901	1,914	1,799	1,711	1,660	1,638	1,508	-7.94%
<b>DC Metro Region Total</b>	<b>4,545</b>	<b>4,214</b>	<b>4,195</b>	<b>4,095</b>	<b>4,217</b>	<b>4,055</b>	<b>4,405</b>	<b>4,270</b>	<b>-3.06%</b>
National Parks in Region	92	101	94	51	N/A	N/A	33	54	63.64%
<b>Regional Total Adjusted</b>	<b>4,637</b>	<b>4,315</b>	<b>4,289</b>	<b>4,146</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>4,438</b>	<b>4,324</b>	<b>-2.57%</b>

# ALCOHOL-RELATED TRAFFIC ARRESTS

Total Alcohol Related Traffic Arrests by Jurisdiction 2010-2017									
Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Percent Change 2016-2017
<b>DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA</b>									
Washington	1,648	2,081	1,340	1,498	1,501	1,508	1,561	1,590	1.86%
<b>MARYLAND</b>									
Montgomery County	2,647	2,247	3,892	3,983	3,723	3,973	4,101	3,406	-16.95%
Prince George's County	1,416	1,609	2,688	3,314	3,153	2,894	2,629	2,379	-9.51%
MD Regional total	4,063	3,856	6,580	7,297	6,876	6,867	6,730	5,785	-14.04%
<b>VIRGINIA</b>									
Arlington County	609	789	963	850	874	742	692	494	-28.61%
Fairfax County	3,407	3,887	3,343	3,628	3,116	2,387	2,457	2,536	3.22%
Loudoun County	939	847	845	828	733	667	671	561	-16.39%
Prince William County	2,394	2,856	2,745	2,493	2,372	1,941	1,651	1,613	-2.30%
City of Alexandria	348	412	360	378	372	349	324	397	22.53%
City of Fairfax	187	202	175	155	107	78	62	59	-4.84%
City of Falls Church	72	121	113	110	103	78	55	43	-21.82%
City of Manassas	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	138	124	125	0.81%
City of Manassas Park	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	46	71	56	-21.13%
Northern Virginia Total	7,956	9,114	8,544	8,442	7,677	6,426	6,107	5,884	-3.65%
<b>DC Metro Region Total</b>	<b>13,667</b>	<b>15,051</b>	<b>16,464</b>	<b>17,237</b>	<b>16,054</b>	<b>14,801</b>	<b>14,398</b>	<b>13,259</b>	<b>-7.91%</b>
National Parks in Region	689	1,027	877	487	740	N/A	359	305	-15.04%
<b>Regional Total Adjusted</b>	<b>14,356</b>	<b>16,078</b>	<b>17,341</b>	<b>17,724</b>	<b>16,794</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>14,757</b>	<b>13,564</b>	<b>-8.08%</b>



## YOUTH DATA

Alcohol-Related Crashes, Injuries, and Arrests for Persons Under 21 Years of Age By Region, 2017												
	Fatalities	Alcohol-Related Fatalities	Percentage of Alcohol-Related Fatalities	Crashes	Alcohol-Related Crashes	Percentage of Alcohol-Related Crashes	Injuries	Alcohol-Related Injuries	Percentage of Alcohol-Related Injuries	Arrests	Alcohol-Related Arrests	Percentage of Alcohol-Related Arrests
<b>District of Columbia</b>												
Washington	3	0	0.00%	3,082	13	0.42%	312	11	3.53%	289	27	9.34%
<b>Maryland</b>												
Montgomery County	2	0	0.00%	3,290	51	1.55%	1,138	83	7.29%	5,142	97	1.89%
Prince George's County	8	2	25.00%	4,166	43	1.03%	1,286	64	4.98%	5,142	43	0.84%
MD Regional Total	10	2	20.00%	7,456	94	1.26%	2,424	147	6.06%	10,284	140	1.36%
<b>Virginia</b>												
Arlington County	0	0	0.00%	246	19	7.72%	85	2	2.35%	1,337	21	1.57%
Fairfax County	2	0	0.00%	2,377	61	2.57%	801	29	3.62%	12,306	122	0.99%
Loudoun County	2	0	0.00%	990	23	2.32%	369	11	2.98%	3,805	36	0.95%
Prince William County	3	0	0.00%	1,313	43	3.27%	465	25	5.38%	8,404	100	1.19%
City of Alexandria	1	0	0.00%	146	6	4.11%	44	4	9.09%	1,250	17	1.36%
City of Fairfax	0	0	0.00%	138	1	0.72%	27	1	3.70%	731	2	0.27%
City of Falls Church	0	0	0.00%	19	0	0.00%	16	0	0.00%	125	1	0.80%
City of Manassas	1	1	100.00%	160	6	3.75%	143	6	4.20%	611	9	1.47%
City of Manassas Park	0	0	0.00%	13	4	3.75%	2	1	50.00%	406	6	1.48%
Northern Virginia Total	9	1	11.11%	5,402	163	3.02%	1,952	79	4.05%	28,975	314	1.08%
DC Metro Regional Total	22	3	13.64%	15,940	270	1.69%	4,688	237	5.06%	39,548	481	1.22%
National Parks in Region	1	0	0.00%	153	4	2.61%	96	4	4.17%	17	1	5.88%
Regional Total Adjusted	23	3	13.04%	16,093	274	1.70%	4,784	241	5.04%	39,565	482	1.22%

# METHODOLOGY

Following is a listing of the agencies providing local jurisdictional data:

## District of Columbia:

Metropolitan Police Department (MPD)

## State of 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 year 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 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 accident 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.