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Violence Policy Center

Gun Deaths Outpace Motor Vehicle Deaths in 35 States and the District of Columbia in 2022

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GUN DEATHS OUTPACED MOTOR VEHICLE DEATHS IN 35 STATES AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA IN 2022

Firearm fatalities exceeded motor vehicle fatalities in 35 states and the District of Columbia in 2022 according to the most recent state-level data available for both products from the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).¹ That year, gun deaths (including gun suicide, homicide, and fatal unintentional shootings) outpaced motor vehicle deaths in Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, District of Columbia, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming. In just over a decade, the number of states plus the District of Columbia where gun deaths exceed motor vehicle deaths has increased from just 13 in 2010 to 36 in 2022 — a jump of 177 percent.

IN 2010, GUN DEATHS EXCEEDED MOTOR VEHICLE DEATHS IN ONLY 12 STATES AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

2010 Gun Deaths and Motor Vehicle Deaths by State²

State	Gun Deaths	Gun Death Rate	Motor Vehicle Deaths	Motor Vehicle Death Rate
Alabama	782	16.36	933	19.52
Alaska	144	20.28	71	10.00
Arizona	931	14.56	795	12.44
Arkansas	419	14.37	610	20.92
California	2,935	788	2,943	790
Colorado	555	11.04	487	9.68
Connecticut	209	5.85	331	9.26
Delaware	88	9.80	111	12.36
District of Columbia	99	16.45	38	6.32
Florida	2,268	12.06	2,547	13.55
Georgia	1,223	12.62	1,327	13.70
Hawaii	45	3.31	126	9.26
Idaho	198	12.63	215	13.72
Illinois	1,064	8.29	1,042	8.12
Indiana	709	10.94	774	11.94
Iowa	213	6.99	401	13.16
Kansas	300	10.52	485	17.00
Kentucky	555	12.79	823	18.97
Louisiana	864	19.06	722	15.93
Maine	113	8.51	171	12.87
Maryland	538	9.32	514	8.90
Massachusetts	270	4.12	388	5.93
Michigan	1,076	10.89	1,063	10.76

¹ Source: WISQARS database, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

² In 2010 there were 31,672 gun deaths nationwide for a rate of 10.26 per 100,000 and 35,498 motor vehicle deaths (both occupant and pedestrian) nationwide for a rate of 11.50 per 100,000. Source: WISQARS database, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

State	Gun Deaths	Gun Death Rate	Motor Vehicle Deaths	Motor Vehicle Death Rate
Minnesota	365	6.88	520	9.80
Mississippi	475	16.00	683	23.01
Missouri	846	14.13	875	14.61
Montana	164	16.58	192	19.41
Nebraska	152	8.32	213	11.66
Nevada	395	14.63	289	10.70
New Hampshire	118	8.96	135	10.26
New Jersey	456	5.19	583	6.63
New Mexico	301	14.62	331	16.07
New York	1,011	5.22	1,330	6.86
North Carolina	1,123	11.78	1,383	14.50
North Dakota	65	9.66	99	14.72
Ohio	1,148	9.95	1,259	10.91
Oklahoma	538	14.34	716	19.09
Oregon	458	11.96	324	8.46
Pennsylvania	1,307	10.29	1,445	11.38
Rhode Island	49	4.65	92	8.74
South Carolina	648	14.01	812	17.56
South Dakota	75	9.21	144	17.69
Tennessee	932	14.69	1,103	17.38
Texas	2,714	10.79	3,343	13.29
Utah	314	11.36	274	9.91
Vermont	70	11.19	76	12.15
Virginia	875	10.94	728	9.10
Washington	609	9.06	554	8.24
West Virginia	273	14.73	311	16.78
Wisconsin	501	8.81	628	11.04
Wyoming	92	16.32	139	24.66
U.S. Total	31,672	10.26	35,498	11.50

BY 2022, GUN DEATHS EXCEEDED MOTOR VEHICLE DEATHS IN 35 STATES AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

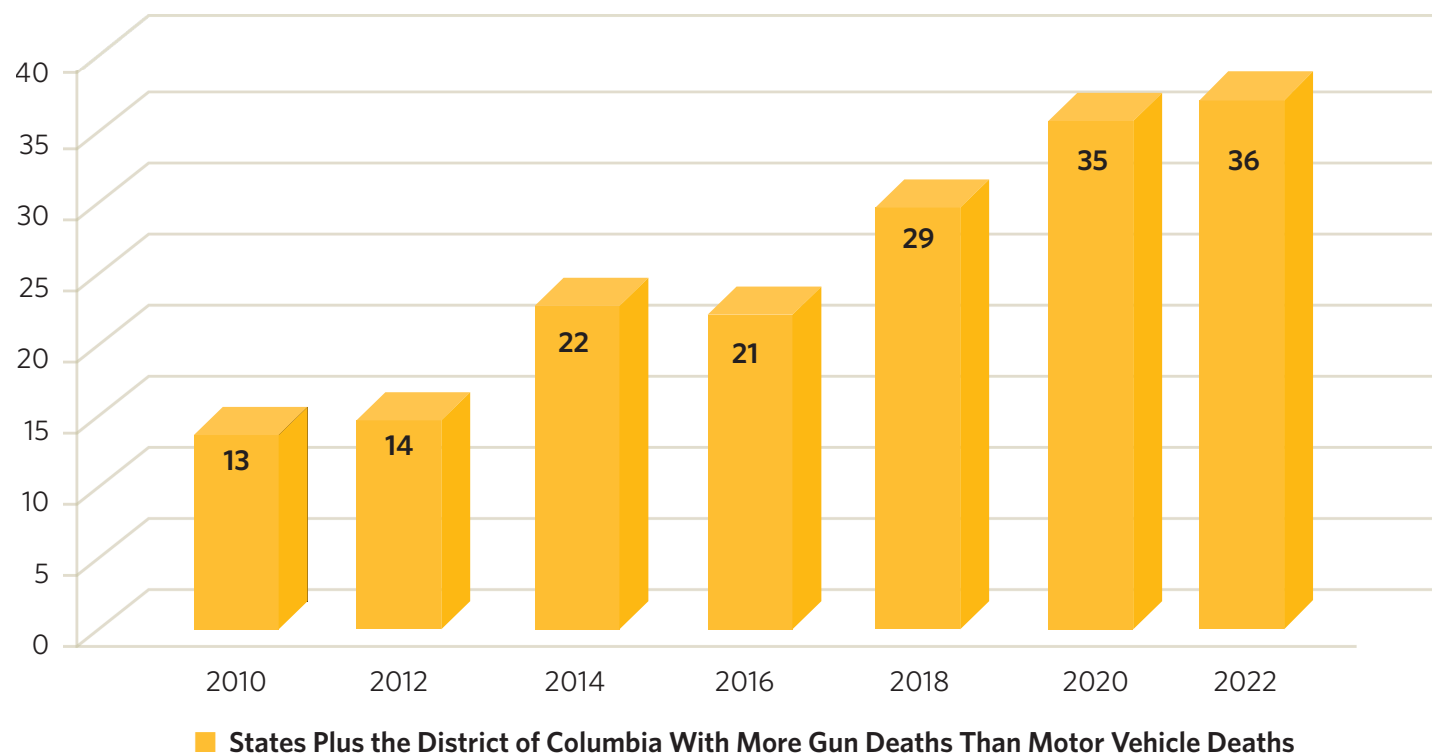
2022 Gun Deaths and Motor Vehicle Deaths by State³

State	Gun Deaths	Gun Death Rate	Motor Vehicle Deaths	Motor Vehicle Death Rate
Alabama	1,278	25.47	1,040	20.02
Alaska	164	22.24	117	15.61
Arizona	1,535	20.13	1,377	17.90
Arkansas	666	21.91	653	20.85
California	3,484	8.61	5,080	12.46
Colorado	1,036	17.00	846	13.86
Connecticut	252	6.95	392	10.29
Delaware	124	11.90	155	14.89
District of Columbia	154	21.62	59	8.36
Florida	3,232	13.95	3,722	15.92
Georgia	2,163	19.62	1,912	17.10
Hawaii	66	4.54	115	7.44
Idaho	338	17.05	272	13.63
Illinois	1,798	14.38	1,359	10.37
Indiana	1,211	17.37	1,021	14.64
Iowa	367	11.10	386	11.40
Kansas	492	16.77	462	15.45
Kentucky	840	18.80	792	16.92
Louisiana	1,266	28.15	953	20.48
Maine	179	11.68	201	13.71
Maryland	813	13.48	631	9.79
Massachusetts	263	3.65	485	6.34
Michigan	1,504	14.98	1,239	11.87
Minnesota	561	9.62	558	9.36
Mississippi	848	29.68	769	26.07
Missouri	1,489	24.13	1,118	17.40
Montana	274	23.99	233	20.04
Nebraska	244	12.29	283	14.37
Nevada	618	18.88	445	13.41
New Hampshire	156	10.01	154	9.95
New Jersey	468	4.99	723	7.35
New Mexico	571	27.32	492	23.44
New York	1,044	5.27	1,395	6.66
North Carolina	1,831	16.77	1,856	16.69
North Dakota	125	16.30	109	13.68
Ohio	1,831	15.64	1,409	11.64
Oklahoma	797	19.84	780	18.96
Oregon	655	14.40	621	13.88

³ In 2022 there were 48,204 gun deaths nationwide for a rate of 14.21 per 100,000 and 46,316 motor vehicle deaths (both occupant and pedestrian) nationwide for a rate of 13.38 per 100,000. Source: WISQARS database, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

State	Gun Deaths	Gun Death Rate	Motor Vehicle Deaths	Motor Vehicle Death Rate
Pennsylvania	1,941	14.74	1,344	9.81
Rhode Island	37	3.15	78	6.45
South Carolina	1,105	20.81	1,147	21.42
South Dakota	141	15.65	169	18.58
Tennessee	1,480	20.50	1,341	18.50
Texas	4,630	15.25	4,603	15.15
Utah	446	13.68	329	9.89
Vermont	84	11.98	82	11.39
Virginia	1,316	14.83	1,093	11.84
Washington	1,022	12.38	848	10.37
West Virginia	311	16.19	290	15.11
Wisconsin	830	14.01	666	10.63
Wyoming	124	20.14	112	19.19
U.S.Total	48,204	14.21	46,316	13.38

STATES PLUS THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA WITH MORE GUN DEATHS THAN MOTOR VEHICLE DEATHS



These numbers are all the more shocking when one stops to think about the average American's exposure to motor vehicles as opposed to firearms. Nine out of 10 American households have access to a motor vehicle⁴ while approximately four out of 10 American households contain a gun.⁵

As Dr. David Hemenway, director of the Harvard Injury Control Research Center, noted in his 2004 book *Private Guns, Public Health*: "[T]he time Americans spend using their cars is orders of magnitudes greater than the time spent using their guns. It is probable that per hour of exposure, guns are far more dangerous. Moreover, we have lots of safety regulations concerning the manufacture of motor vehicles; there are virtually no safety regulations for domestic firearms manufacture."⁶

CONCLUSION

Thirty-five states and the District of Columbia already experience gun death rates that exceed their motor vehicle death rates. Gun death and injury is an accelerating public health crisis fueled by an unregulated industry that works to develop increasingly lethal firearms and ammunition. It then touts this firepower in its marketing efforts. As with motor vehicles, until the gun industry is held accountable for the harm caused by its products only limited progress can be made to reduce firearms death and injury. Such measures would include comprehensive health and safety regulation of the firearms industry and repeal of the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act (PLCAA).

4 Household Size by Vehicles Available, U.S. Census Bureau, downloaded June 24, 2024 (<https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDT1Y2022.B08201?q=B08201:%20Household%20Size%20by%20Vehicles%20Available>).

5 According to the Pew Research Center, "About four-in-ten U.S. adults say they live in a household with a gun, including 32% who say they personally own one." *Key facts about Americans and guns*, Pew Research Center, July 24, 2024 (<https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2024/07/24/key-facts-about-americans-and-guns/>).

6 David Hemenway, *Private Guns, Public Health*, University of Michigan Press, 2004, p. 182.



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