

Factors in Texas Wrong-Way Car Accidents

It's every driver's nightmare: an oncoming car going the wrong way and colliding head-on.

The number of wrong-way accidents has been rising for years, according to new research by the [AAA Foundation](#). About 500 people die every year due to wrong-way crashes, AAA says. Wrong-way crashes on highways are often deadly because they are usually head-on and at high speeds.

In Texas, the situation is serious. [The Lone Star State is often a national leader](#) in the number of total wrong-way crashes reported per year. In a typical year, more than 70 people die per year in Texas wrong-way accidents.

You might think the silver lining is that the legal situation is clear-cut – someone was going the wrong way, so they're at fault – but wrong-way accident injury claims are surprisingly complex. Injuries sustained in head-on, wrong-way [car accidents](#) tend to be severe. About half of all wrong-way accidents in Texas end in a debilitating injury or death. And witnesses can be tough to find, or they may disagree on what they saw.

People in car, truck, and motorcycle accidents often have many questions after the dust settles. In the case of wrong-way accidents, one of the main questions is "How did this happen?" The [AAA Foundation](#) study has a lot to say about the causes and factors associated with wrong-way crashes. Years ago, [Texas Transportation Institute](#) did its own research on the wrong-way driver problem, leading to some illuminating conclusions we'll summarize here.

Where do wrong-way accidents happen?

This type of crash is concentrated in urban areas. When the TTI study was done, more than half of all wrong-way accidents in the state happened in either Houston, Dallas/Fort Worth, or San Antonio.

Texas wrong-way accidents are most likely to occur in the inside lane (furthest to the left) of a divided highway, according to TTI's "Wrong-way Driving on Freeways in Texas: Problems, Issues, and Countermeasures." Left-side exit ramps and one-way streets that transition into freeways are frequent sites of wrong-way crashes, as well.

In Texas, wrong-way accidents are five times more likely to happen in non-daylight hours, especially the early morning hours following midnight.

Wrong-way drivers

The national AAA study identifies [multiple factors](#) that may elevate someone's risk of driving the wrong way on a highway. Factors that increase crash risk include:

- **Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) level** — Driving impaired by drugs or alcohol.

- **Age** — People ages 20-29 are the most likely out of any age group to cause a wrong-way crash. As drivers age, they become less likely to cause a wrong-way accident — up to a point. People ages 70 and older involved in this type of accident are far more likely to be the cause.
- **Gender** — Males make up about two-thirds of wrong-way drivers in crashes.
- **License status** — Wrong-way drivers are more likely than right-way motorists to be driving on a suspended, revoked, or expired license at the time of the accident.
- **Residence** — When a Texan and out-of-state driver collide in a wrong-way accident, it is usually the out-of-towner that caused the crash, due to unfamiliarity with local roads.
- **Vehicle type** — At least one passenger vehicle, such as a sedan or SUV, is involved in almost every wrong-way crash. Motorcycles, buses, and large trucks account for less than 5 percent of wrong way drivers nationwide.
- **Driving solo** — Alert passengers can warn drivers they are about to or are already driving in the wrong lane.

Help for crash victims

Wrong-way car accidents often cause [serious, life-changing injuries](#) and permanent disabilities. Some of the more common crash injuries are whiplash, shoulder pain, spinal cord damage, numbness, blurred vision, traumatic brain injuries, broken ribs, blunt force trauma to internal organs like the liver and spleen, broken jawbone, concussions, paralysis, or loss of brain function. Maintaining recovery after such a bad accident requires years of regular care and therapy.

Paying for necessary, life-preserving treatments has left more than 40 percent of working-age American adults in [medical debt](#) or struggling to pay bills. Accident victims shouldn't have to worry about looming medical bankruptcy. Therefore, it's important that car accident victims consult with a personal injury law firm as soon as possible after a crash to get the most out of their injury claims.

A lawyer can help you pursue the money you need to get your life back on track by:

- Investigating the accident
- Discovering new evidence
- Calculating the full cost of your recovery and property replacement or repairs
- Filing persuasive claim and legal documents
- Keeping you from missing state, local, and federal deadlines for compensation
- Negotiating with insurance adjusters
- If necessary, filing a civil lawsuit on your behalf

Texas has a statute of limitations when it comes to filing for accident compensation. A lawyer can explain which legal timelines apply to your case and when the clock will run out on your

chance to make a claim. Texas doesn't mess around when it comes to deadlines. Miss one, and it could ruin your entire case.

Don't leave money on the table

If you were injured in an accident, there is too much at stake for you to try to do this on your own and heal from a serious injury at the same time. There is no room for error or gambling on an inexperienced attorney. You only get one shot at this. You must make it count.

[Smith & Hassler, Attorneys at Law](#) is a trusted Houston car accident law firm with a strong reputation for getting our clients maximum value.

We take your accident seriously and will fight hard to get you justice. Established in the 1980s, our firm has decades of experience holding negligent drivers and their insurance companies responsible. Our savvy car accident lawyers are aggressive and tireless with insurance providers while being compassionate and responsive with our clients.

Smith & Hassler, Attorneys at Law offers [free case consultations](#) to accident victims in the greater metro region and beyond. We also represent injured people [on contingency](#), which means our fee is covered by the insurance companies and we only get paid when we win.

[Contact Smith & Hassler, Attorneys at Law](#) to schedule a free case consultation at one of our Houston offices. We are ready to hear from you now.