

Chicago Road Safety

Navigating Chicago's bustling streets can be challenging, and ensuring everyone's safety is paramount. Analyzing car crash data from 2019 to 2022 reveals surprising trends that challenge our assumptions about when and why accidents occur. This report dissects these insights, offering actionable steps for drivers and city officials alike to work towards a safer driving environment.

Risky Times & Surprising Trends:

Our analysis debunks the myth that evenings with less traffic are inherently safer. While the afternoon commute (2-5 PM) sees the most crashes, **nights pose a higher risk of severe accidents due to limited visibility**. Weekends also paint a complex picture, with **Fridays experiencing the most crashes but Saturdays recording the most fatalities**.

Addressing Key Contributors:

Specific driving behaviours significantly contribute to accidents. **Right-of-way violations, following too closely, risky overtaking, improper speed adjustments, and unsafe backing manoeuvres** demand targeted education and stricter enforcement. Additionally, crashes peak in **spring and early summer**, not during the typically assumed riskier autumn months.

Actionable Steps for Everyone:

Drivers can play a crucial role by exercising **extra caution during peak hours and at night**, while remaining vigilant on **Fridays and Saturdays**. Addressing the mentioned common mistakes and being aware of seasonal trends are equally important.

City officials can make a significant impact by:

- Launching targeted public awareness campaigns focusing on identified high-risk periods and specific challenges.
- Strengthening law enforcement efforts to address key violations.
- Evaluating and improving road infrastructure, especially at intersections and areas prone to fixed object collisions.
- Implementing traffic management strategies, such as adjusting signal timings during peak hours and at night.
- Collaborating with local communities to gather insights and feedback, fostering community engagement, and contributing to the development of context-specific solutions.

Here are some specific examples of what city officials can do:

- Launch a public awareness campaign about the dangers of driving at night, emphasizing the importance of using headlights and staying alert.
- Increase police patrols during peak hours and on weekends, when crashes are more likely to occur.
- Install new traffic lights and signs at dangerous intersections.
- Repair potholes and other road hazards that can cause accidents.
- Work with community groups to develop neighbourhood traffic safety plans.

By taking these steps, city officials can make a real difference in reducing the number of car crashes and fatalities in their communities.

Conclusion:

By understanding the nuances revealed in the data and taking collaborative action, we can create a safer driving environment for everyone in Chicago. Prioritising responsible driving behaviours, targeted interventions, and data-driven strategies will make our roads safer for all.