

# **Definitions**

## **Accident:**

An event involving a motor vehicle occurring on a public roadway that results in death, injury, or property damage over \$500.

## **Alcohol-related accident:**

Motor vehicle accidents where the reporting officer indicates “alcohol contributed” to the cause and / or a Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) is recorded. This only applies as it relates to the **driver**. For example, this would not include accidents where a drinking pedestrian is involved with a non-drinking driver of a vehicle.

## **Accident Costs**

By using the methodology provided in a Technical Advisory from the Federal Highway Administration, “Motor Vehicle Accident Costs” (1994), it is possible to assign a comprehensive cost (in dollars) to each traffic accident based on the injury severities of the persons involved.

In accidents involving one or more injured persons, each person possibly injured augments the cost assigned to the accident by \$23,600; each person with a non-disabling injury augments the cost by \$44,750; each person with a disabling injury augments the cost by \$223,700; and each person fatally injured augments the cost by \$3,231,300. If all persons involved in an accident were unharmed (i.e. the accident was a property damage only accident), then a cost of \$2500 is assigned to the accident.

For example, the cost assigned to an accident involving two persons with non-disabling injuries and one person with disabling injury is \$313,200 (2 times 44,750, plus 223,700). The per-person cost figures are adjusted annually according to the Consumer Price Index for the month of January of the year following the accident. The Technical Advisory may be viewed on the Internet at <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/legsregs/directives/techadvs/t75702.htm> .

## **Contributing Circumstances:**

The factors which the investigating officer determines contributed to the cause of the accident.

## **Crossover:**

A paved or unpaved area between roadway lanes which allows vehicles to cross over from one direction of travel to another.

## **Fatality:**

A person (excluding a baby in the womb) who dies as the result of a motor vehicle traffic accident. (By state statute, the death must occur within 30 days of the accident date to be counted as a fatality)

## **Fatal Accident:**

A motor vehicle traffic accident which causes the death of one or more persons.

# **Definitions** (cont'd)

## **First Harmful Event:**

The first event (often in a series of events) involving a motor vehicle which causes death, injury, or property damage.

## **Injury:**

Includes vehicle occupants or pedestrians receiving a severe wound, other visible injury, or complaint of pain (possible injury) as the result of a motor vehicle traffic accident. Deaths are excluded in injury statistics.

## **Large/Heavy Truck:**

Trucks over 4 tires and 10,100 lbs. intended for commercial use including single trucks, truck and trailer(s), or tractor-trailer(s).

## **Motor Vehicle:**

Any mechanically or electrically powered motorized mode of transport excluding vehicles designed specifically for rails, water, or air.

## **Other Non-collision:**

An event during an accident sequence which does not involve a collision with another vehicle or object.

Examples:

- collapse of a bridge
- passenger inhalation of gas
- fire or explosion within a vehicle.

## **Overturn Accident:**

Included are accidents where the reporting officer recorded a vehicle overturn as the "first harmful event." Excluded are many accidents where the vehicle overturns after the "first harmful event." Example: A vehicle strikes an embankment (1st event) and then overturns.

## **Pedalcycle:**

A non-motorized vehicle propelled by pedaling (bicycle, tricycle, etc.)

## **Pedestrian:**

A person who is not an occupant of a motor vehicle that is in transport. (includes pedalcyclists, riders of animals, occupants of animal-drawn vehicles, injured occupants of a vehicle not in transport (legally parked), and machine operators or passengers of a machine when such machine is being used for its intended purpose).

## **Rural (or Rural Area):**

Location with less than 5,000 inhabitants, except those classified as urban by the U.S. Census Bureau.

## **Single-Vehicle Accidents:**

An accident involving only one motor vehicle and no pedestrians.

## **Definitions** (cont'd)

### **Snow & Ice Accidents:**

An accident coded with at least one of the following conditions:

*On Road Surface Condition* = Snow or Slush, Ice or Snowpacked

*Weather* = Sleet, Snow, Freezing Rain, Sleet & fog, Snow & Wind

*On\At Road Contributing Circumstance* = Icy or Slushy

*Environment Contributing Circumstance* = Sleet, Hail, or Freezing Rain

### **Speed-Related:**

An accident in which the reporting officer recorded either “too fast for conditions” or “exceeded posted speed limit” as a contributing circumstance.

### **Type of Accident:**

The category that best describes the first harmful event.

### **Urban (or Urban Area):**

All places of 5,000 or more inhabitants, and the towns, townships, and other areas classified as urban by the U.S. Census Bureau.

### **Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT):**

The estimated total number of miles driven during the year by all vehicles within the state.

### **Work Zone Accident:**

An accident occurring within a construction zone or a road maintenance zone.