Myth V. Fact

Myth – If red-light cameras reduce intersection crashes, the cost for these crashes should also decrease.

Fact: The need to reduce traffic crashes is always present, but from a cost perspective the need for more effective safety measures is especially timely because costs per crash are rising even though the number of crashes is declining. From 2005 to 2012, total fatalities have decreased 21.6%, yet the cost per fatal crash has risen 100%.

Fact: The cost of a traffic crash on the community is on the rise. When adjusted for inflation, a traffic fatality will cost society $6.42 million in 2013, a 100 percent increase from $3.2 million 2005.
Source: AAA. Amount is based on 11 cost components selected by Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) including workplace, medical costs, property damage and emergency services. One fatality in 2009 cost $6 million.

Fact: Injury crash costs are on the same upward trajectory. The community’s cost of an injury crash is up from $68,170 in 2005 to $134,843 in 2013, a 97.8% increase from 2005.
Source: AAA. Amount is based on 11 cost components selected by FHWA including workplace, medical costs, property damage and emergency services.

Private insurance companies pay 50% of the societal costs associated with every traffic crash, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The 33,780 estimated traffic fatalities in 2012 cost society $216 billion at $6.4 million per fatality and cost insurance companies $108 billion. If red-light and speed safety cameras reduced total fatalities by an additional 25%, the savings to the insurance industry as a whole would amount to:

- A $27 billion reduction in costs for 8,445 fewer traffic fatalities in 2012.
- An $8.1 billion reduction in costs for 2,534 fewer speeding fatalities in 2012.
- A $559 million savings in expenses for 178 lives saved from the 714 red light running fatalities in 2011.
- A $1.9 billion reduction in expenses from 29,500 fewer red-light running crash-related injuries at $133,555 per injury cost to society.
Studies

According to FHWA, the cost of a single motor vehicle fatality is **$6 million** in 2009 dollars.

*Source: AAA. Amount is based on 11 cost components selected by FHWA including workplace, medical costs, property damage and emergency services.*

According to NHTSA, private insurers pay approximately **50%** of all vehicle crash costs.

*Source: NHTSA. The Economic Impact of Motor Vehicle Crashes, 2000.*

Red-light safety cameras **saved 159 lives** and reduced red-light running fatalities by **24 percent** in 14 of the largest populated U.S. cities.


Crash Facts

**Fatal traffic crashes increased 4.4%** from 32,367 in 2011 to 33,780 in 2012, the first increase in total traffic fatalities since 2005, according to the latest estimates from NHTSA.


In 2012, **93 people died each day** in a traffic crash.

An estimated **10,134 people were killed** in speed-related crashes in 2012, up from 9,944 in 2011, according to the latest NHTSA estimates.


Speed-related traffic crashes killed an estimated **28 people each day** in 2012.

An estimated **845 people died each month** in 2012 in speed-related traffic crashes.

On average, **27 people died in speed-related crashes each day** in 2011. That’s 829 people each month and 9,944 people for the year, according to the NHTSA’s National Center for Statistics and Analysis.

NHTSA estimates that the economic cost of speed-related collisions is **$40.4 billion each year** - $76,865 per minute or $1,281 per second.