

Idaho

Speed Limits: 1994 and 2004

State	Limited Access Rural Interstates		Limited Access Urban Interstates		Other Limited Access Roads		Truck Speed (Y or N)
	1994	2004	1994	2004	1994	2004	
Idaho	65	75	65	65	65	65	Y

Idaho reported the 2004 speed limits apply to all the roadways within the state. The speed limit for trucks is 65 mph on both urban and rural interstates.

Speeding-related Data

Idaho collects speed data through approximately 120 permanent speed counters. The counters collect data by speed and vehicle type (cars or trucks) and time of day. The state also has portable counters that are set out on an annual basis and by request. In 2004, speed data was collected at 70 locations. Additionally, highway and transportation district traffic operation offices regularly perform speed studies to verify that speed limits are appropriately set. While there is no centralized tracking of the number of speed studies undertaken, the state estimated a conservative annual number of one hundred.

In addition to speed data, Idaho also collects speeding-related crash data through the state's motor vehicle crash report form, using driving too fast for conditions and exceeding posted limits data elements.

Idaho's highway safety office believes speeding is just one symptom of aggressive driving. From the state's perspective, if a driver is speeding, the driver is usually also running red lights, rolling through stop signs and following too close. Idaho believes if the state can intervene to stop a driver from committing one of these aggressive driving behaviors, that driver is more likely to cease exhibiting most of the other behaviors. As a performance measure, the state calculates a statewide five-year aggressive driving fatal and serious injury crash rate per 100 million Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT).

Idaho also collects aggressive driving data. Based on crash data, the state calculates a statewide, five-year aggressive driving fatal and serious injury crash rate. Idaho statute does not define aggressive driving. However, in 1998, the state identified aggressive driving as one of the leading causes of traffic crashes. Idaho subsequently implemented an Aggressive Driving Program and has included aggressive driving as one of the state's Section 402 Focus Areas each year for the past six years. Idaho bases the definition used for aggressive driving on factors contributing to a traffic crash. These factors include failure to yield right of way; following too close; passed stop sign; disregarded signal; exceeded posted speed; and driving too fast for conditions.

Idaho makes a distinction between aggressive driving and road rage. In practice, the state defines road rage incidences as deliberate intentional acts that, if they lead to injury, are considered felonies. If an investigating officer establishes that the crash was a result of road rage, it is considered a crime not a traffic crash, and no vehicle crash report is taken.

Efforts to Reduce Excessive Speeding

Idaho highway safety office includes speeding as a component of the Selective Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP) efforts; however, STEP teams are only funded when a local law enforcement jurisdiction has multiple crash problems. The state tracks total crashes, fatal and injury crashes and impaired driving crashes, and STEP teams are responsible for reducing those types of crashes. The state assists the STEP officers by identifying high crash corridors and high accident locations, thereby increasing the effectiveness of STEP teams.

Idaho's highway safety office does not identify or fund speeding as a distinct category, but does incorporate speeding as a component of aggressive driving programs. In federal fiscal year (FFY) 2003, 18.8 percent of Section 402 funds were targeted for aggressive driving countermeasures; in FFY 2004, aggressive driving received 12.6 percent; and in FFY 2005, the percentage is 15.9. The state estimated over 80 percent of the STEP funds target aggressive driving behaviors.

The impact of Idaho's aggressive driving program has been positive. Over the last 5 years the rate of fatal and serious injury crashes that involved aggressive driver behaviors has decreased from 8.31 crashes per 100 million Annual Vehicle Miles Traveled (AVMT) to 6.71 crashes per 100 million AVMT. With the exception of 2002 there was a decrease in rate every year. The state acknowledged a number of other factors that also have contributed to the decline. The state reported factors such as vehicle safety features, engineering improvements, occupant restraint usage, demographic changes, traffic volume and weather all play a role in traffic crashes and may have contributed to the change in rates over the past few years in addition to Idaho's aggressive driving program.

Public Perception

Idaho's state highway safety office felt the motoring public believes police give at least a 5 mph cushion in enforcing the posted speed limit. Idaho believes a factor linked to speeding is that most drivers perceive their risk of getting caught speeding, or engaging in any other aggressive driving behavior, is very small.