

## COVID Fatal Crash Special Study Summary

There is no one factor that can explain the increase in the fatality rate during the COVID period. All the attributes that cause increased fatalities were over-represented. These included (in order of criticality):

- Over Speed Limit,
- Aggressive Operation, which most often included increased speed,
- DUI, which often is accompanied by: (1) increased speed, (2) a loss of ability to control the vehicle, (3) lack of proper restraints.
- Wrong Way/Wrong Side, which could be a symptom of the above. However, the extreme over-representation of this attribute (by over 12 times expected) leads us to believe that some (we do not speculate on how many) of these may be cases of vehicular suicide.
- Over Correcting/Over Steering and Ran Off Road are also symptomatic of losing control at high speeds.
- Improper Crossing is a major cause of fatalities in pedestrian crashes. This item was over-represented by over 19 times its expected proportion.

There can be little doubt that one root cause of these Primary Contributing Circumstances has to do with the COVID pandemic. We expect the reason that it results in so many different (albeit interconnected, as indicated) attributes is highly individualized, and there is no one-size-fits-all countermeasure. This study will continue to determine the point, if any, at which the normally expected proportions for these attributes return.