

## Oklahoma Highway Safety Office

NHTSA Performance Measures Survey

July, 2021

### **Background and Methodology**

In order to comply with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the Oklahoma Highway Safety Office (OHSO) commissions an annual performance measure survey to be conducted during the late spring/early summer months among licensed drivers over the age of 18 in the state of Oklahoma. For the years 2010, 2011, and 2012, this survey was conducted in early- to mid-July in the state of Oklahoma. In 2013 and 2018, the survey was conducted in early May, and in 2014 and 2017 the survey was conducted in later May. In 2015 it was conducted in late May and early June. In 2020, the study was conducted (fielded) at the end of June.

For the current year, 2021, the study was conducted July 10 - 26, 2021.

In past years, surveys were conducted using an online methodology. This year an online methodology was conducted as well, from July 10 - 26, 2021. Each year, a target of five hundred respondents are randomly selected from across Oklahoma and asked to complete a short online survey about driving behavior and awareness (margin of error =  $\pm 4.38\%$ ). In 2021, 501 people responded. Table 1 summarizes data collection methods since the inception of the performance measures survey.

**Table 1: Survey Dates, Completed Responses and Methodology by Year**

Year	Dates Data Collected	Number of Respondents*	Methodology
2010	July 12-27	500	Online
2011	July 18-21	517	Online
2012	July 2-9	505	Online
2013	May 7-12	502	Online
2014	May 20-25	501	Online
2015	May 26 - June 3	500	Online
2016	June 8 - 13	500	Online
2017	May 12 - 19	500	Online
2018	May 4 - 7	503	Online
2020	June 25 - 30	500	Online
2021	July 10 - 26	501	Online

\*In an online survey methodology, the web portal is open until the target number of respondents is collected. When more than 500 respondents are shown as having completed surveys, it is because there were active surveys being completed when the target number was reached. Rather than shut the web portal and generate incomplete surveys, the portal remains open until active surveys are completed.

As in past years, this year respondents were screened to ensure they are over the age of eighteen, are not employed by a law enforcement agency or advertising or public relations company, and have a current, valid Oklahoma driver’s license. The results were collected, compiled, tabulated and analyzed by Kimberling Consulting, Inc. What follows are the results of the survey for the 2021 wave, with comparison to the data collected annually in waves conducted 2010 - 2020 (where appropriate). Kimberling Consulting, Inc. did not conduct the survey in 2019.

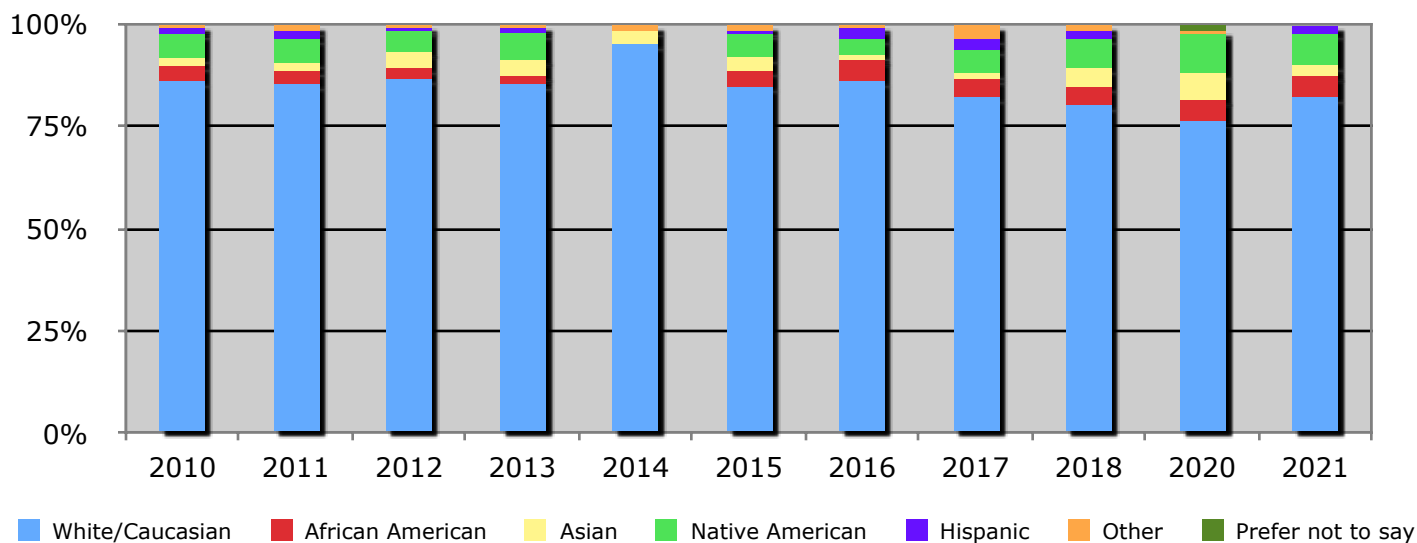
**Changes from past survey(s):**

No changes were made from the survey conducted in 2020. The 2021 survey included the block of questions relating to motorcycle riding behavior that was introduced in 2020.

**2021 Demographics**

As in the majority of years past, respondents to the randomly sampled population of Oklahoma drivers accurately reflect the overall demographic profile of the state. The gender and racial breakdown of respondents in 2021 is within the margin of error of the gender and race profiles of the state of Oklahoma. This year, just as last year, 40% of respondents were male and 60% were female. Racial distributions are also as expected for the state, as seen in Table 2 and Figure 1.

**Figure 1: Race Distribution by Year**



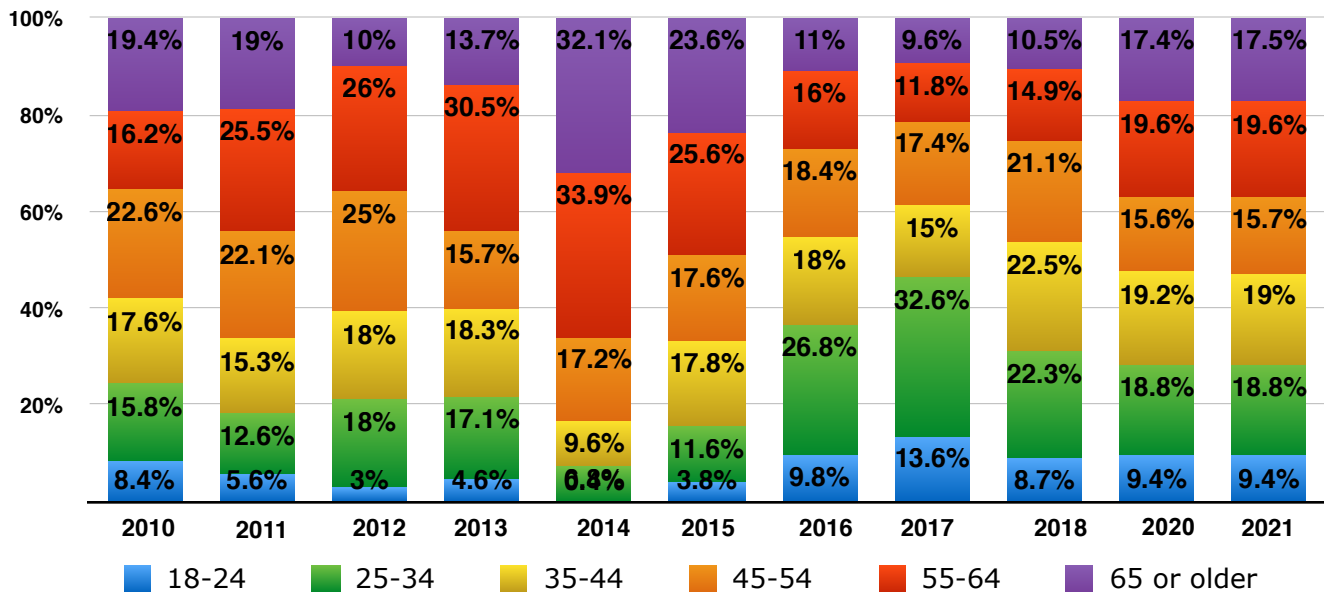
According to the United States Census Bureau, 2020 estimates of the racial breakdown of the state of Oklahoma are as follows: 74% White/Caucasian alone, 7.8% Black or African American alone, 2.4% Asian alone, 9.4% Native American (including Alaska native), and 10.1% Hispanic. (Hispanic ethnicity is asked separately on this survey, and is assessed differently with the US Census, accounting for the discrepancy in racial/ethnic comparisons for this survey.)

The 2021 data do not represent any significant departures from past year statistics regarding demographics; including race, gender, and age reported. Self-reported racial identification has fluctuated somewhat over time; for example, in 2020 nearly 7% of respondents self-identified as Asian, up from 1% in 2017, and this reportage dropped to 2.9% in 2021, but these minor fluctuations over time are not statistically significant, nor are they reflected in any radical departures in the breadth of the data collection overall.

	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
White/Caucasian	85.6%	85.1%	87.0%	85.1%	87.2%	84.6%	86.0%	82%	80.1%	76%	81.7%
African American	4.4%	3.1%	3.0%	2.2%	3.0%	3.6%	4.8%	4.6%	4.2%	5.2%	5.2%
Asian	1.6%	2.1%	4.0%	3.8%	2.6%	3.4%	1.6%	1.0%	4.6%	6.6%	2.9%
Native American	5.6%	6.0%	5.0%	6.6%	5.4%	5.6%	3.6%	6.2%	7.4%	9.4%	7.5%
Hispanic	1.8%	1.7%	1.0%	1.4%	0.4%	1.2%	2.6%	2.6%	2.2%	0.6%	2.1%
Other	1.0%	1.9%	1.0%	1.0%	1.4%	1.6%	1.4%	3.6%	1.6%	0.6%	0.0%
Prefer not to say										1.6%	0.6%

The 2021 age distribution is almost completely identical to that of 2020 (Figure 2). The average age distribution of respondents over time for this project is within the margin of error of the Census predictions.

**Figure 2: Age Distribution by Year**



Compared to 2020, those reporting drive a car are up almost 10 percentage points, SUV drivers decreased, and motorcycle decreased a nearly indiscernible amount (see Table 3).

	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
Car (2-door or 4-door)	55.2%	51.5%	50.0%	52.4%	50.7%	45.6%	49.2%	51.4%	48.3%	43.8%	51.9%
Van or minivan	8.2%	9.1%	6.0%	5.6%	6.2%	5.0%	5.2%	7.6%	6.6%	4.8%	4.3%
Sport-utility vehicle (SUV)	21.5%	21.3%	31.0%	27.7%	29.9%	31.6%	30.2%	24.6%	26.2%	30.2%	25.4%
Pickup truck	14.3%	16.1%	13.0%	13.5%	12.8%	17.2%	14.6%	15.6%	18.1%	15.4%	16.0%
Motorcycle										1.2%	0.9%
Don't know/other	0.8%	2.2%	0.0%	0.8%	0.4%	0.6%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	4.6%	1.6%

**Seat Belt Use and Attitudes**

Seat belt use has not deviated much at all from year to year. Since the inception of the study, the vast majority of Oklahomans report always or nearly always wearing their seatbelt when they drive or ride in a vehicle, with minuscule percentages over time (one percent or less) reporting they rarely or never wear their safety restraint.

Reported seat belt use in 2021 remains very high, with very minimal pattern deviations from 2020. As shown in Table 4, in 2021, again more than nine in ten Oklahomans (93.5%) report wearing a seatbelt “always” or “nearly always” (please see note on answer option changes for this question below table) when driving or riding in a motor vehicle, with 2.4% reporting “sometimes” usage. In years past, less than two percent reported wearing a seatbelt either rarely or never, but this year the rarely or never responses were 3.7%.

**Table 4: How often do you use safety belts when you drive or ride in a car, van, sport utility vehicle or pick up?**

	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
<b>Always*</b>	91.0%	93.4%	93.0%	95.8%	95.0%	94.8%	91.6%	92.6%	93.4%	91.6%*	93.5%
<b>Sometimes</b>	7.2%	4.6%	4.0%	3.4%	4.6%	4.2%	6.6%	6.2%	5%	3.2%	2.4%
<b>Rarely</b>	1.0%	0.8%	2.0%	0.8%	0.4%	0.6%	1.0%	0.6%	1%	2.0%	2.8%
<b>Never</b>	0.6%	1.0%	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	0.8%	0.6%	0.6%	2.2%	0.9%
<b>Don't know</b>	0.2%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0.3%

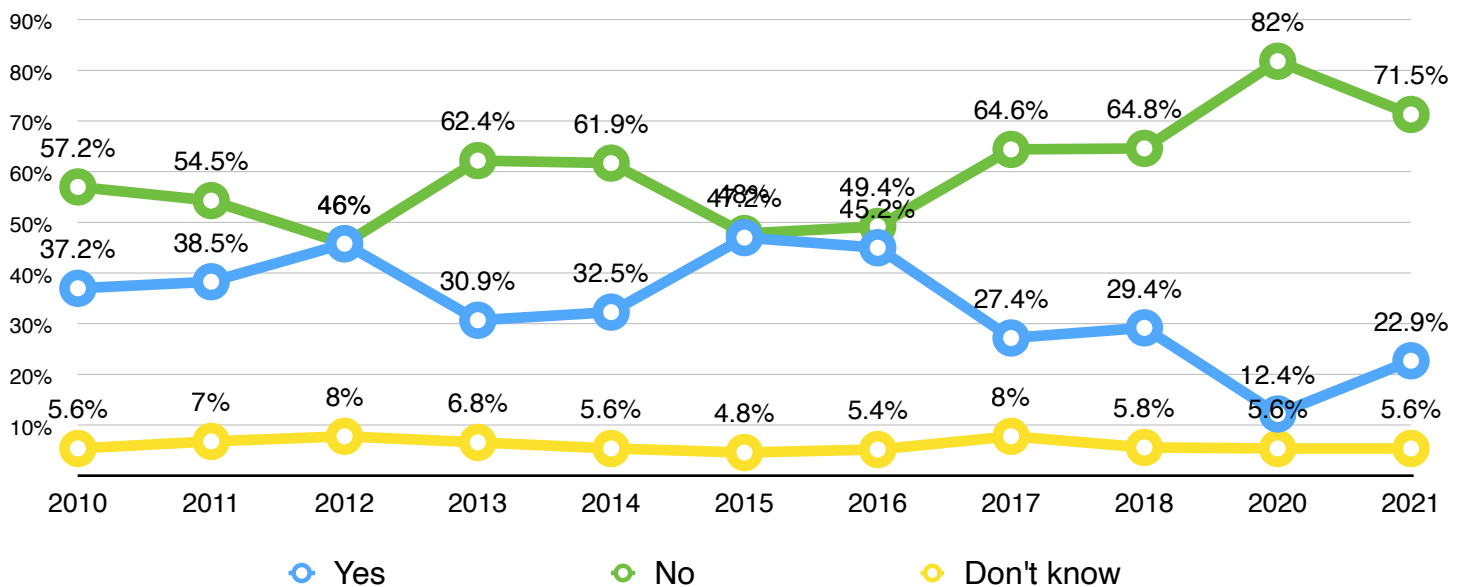
\* In 2020, the answer option of “Nearly Always” was added to this question for consistency in question measurement scales. This number in 2020 represents the combined responses of “always” and “nearly always.”

Breakdowns of seatbelt use by age demographic show some marked changes from last year. Table 5 shows 2021 data for reported seatbelt use by age group and gender, with comparisons to 2020 (percentages from 2020 are represented in parentheses). Those aged 18-24 have a 100% response to "always or nearly always" wearing their seatbelt as a driver, an increase of nearly thirty percentage points from the previous year. The next age group up (25-34 years old), however, had an almost ten percent *decrease* in reporting always or nearly always wearing a seatbelt while driving. The majority of demographic subgroups (age and gender) have exhibited the same pattern in seatbelt usage compared to data collected in 2020, with the exception of the 18 to 24 year age group.

	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-54	55 and older
<b>Always/Nearly Always</b>	93% (92.5%)	93.9% (91%)	100% (72.3%)	85.8% (95.7%)	94.8% (94.5%)	93.2% (91.3%)
<b>Sometimes</b>	4% (2%)	1.3% (4%)	0% (10.6%)	4.4% (0%)	1.7% (4.1%)	1% (4.3%)
<b>Rarely/Never</b>	2.5% (3%)	4.2% (1.7%)	0% (6.4%)	6.9% (2.1%)	1.7% (0%)	4.4% (1.6%)

Awareness of efforts on behalf of law enforcement to increase seatbelt use is different from last year (2020), most likely due to the fact that the survey this year was conducted immediately after the 4th of July holiday, the pandemic restrictions were relaxing, and more residents were traveling. As shown in Figure 3, those who were not aware of law enforcement efforts to increase seatbelt use dropped slightly more than ten percentage points (82% to 71.5%), and respondents who were aware nearly doubled, from 12.4% to 22.9%.

**Figure 3: Awareness of Law Enforcement Efforts to Increase Seatbelt Use**



## **Motorcycles**

For the current 2021 survey, just as in the 2020 project, a block of questions targeted directly at motorcycle operators was included. These represented a bank of eight (8) additional questions, with a screen/skip pattern at the beginning (meaning those who answered they are *not* a regular operator of a motorcycle would skip over this bank of questions). These questions were as follows:

12. Do you ride or drive motorcycles on a hard surface road (not "off road") on a regular basis (at least once a month for the past year)? In other words, do you consider yourself a regular operator of a motorcycle (not a passenger)?
13. If you ride motorcycles, how long have you been riding motorcycles?
14. If you ride motorcycles, do you have your M endorsement?
15. If you ride (operate) a motorcycle, how many times have you done any of the following in the past 30 days?
  - Drinking one or more alcoholic beverages
  - Ride without a helmet
  - Ride faster than five miles over the speed limit
  - Split lanes
  - Used phone or factory-built entertainment system

There was a slight increase in regular motorcycle riders from 2020 - up to 9.2% in 2021 from 6% in 2020. Only a few of the regular motorcycle riders were less experienced (Table 6), with only 15.3% saying they had been riding for fewer than two years. More than a third (36.9%) reported being quite experienced, having ridden for more than eight years.

Of the motorcycle operators in 2021, eighty one percent reported having their M endorsement, while 11.7% say they do not, and 7.3% are not sure.

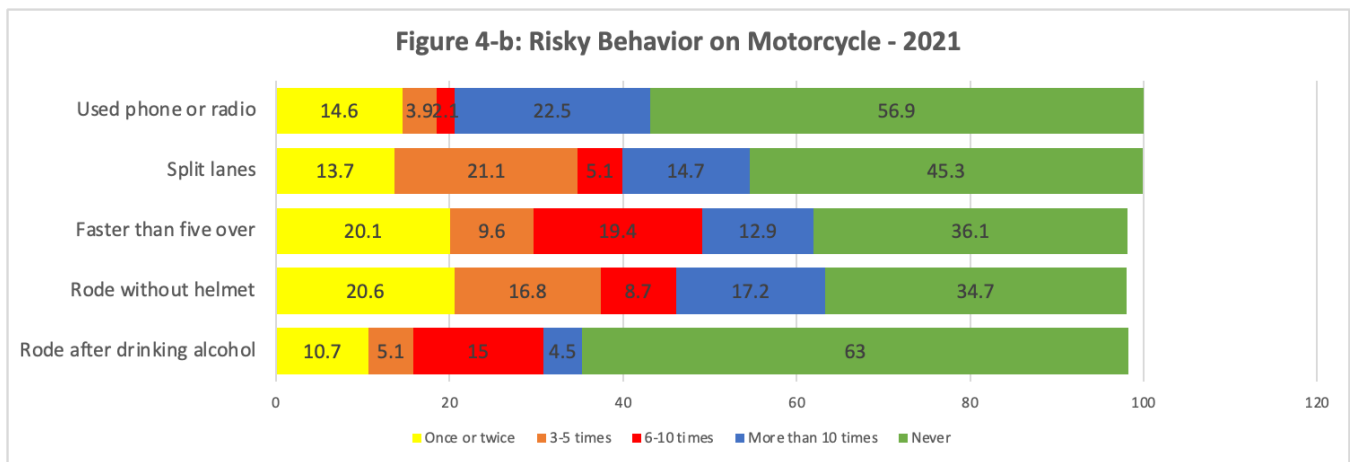
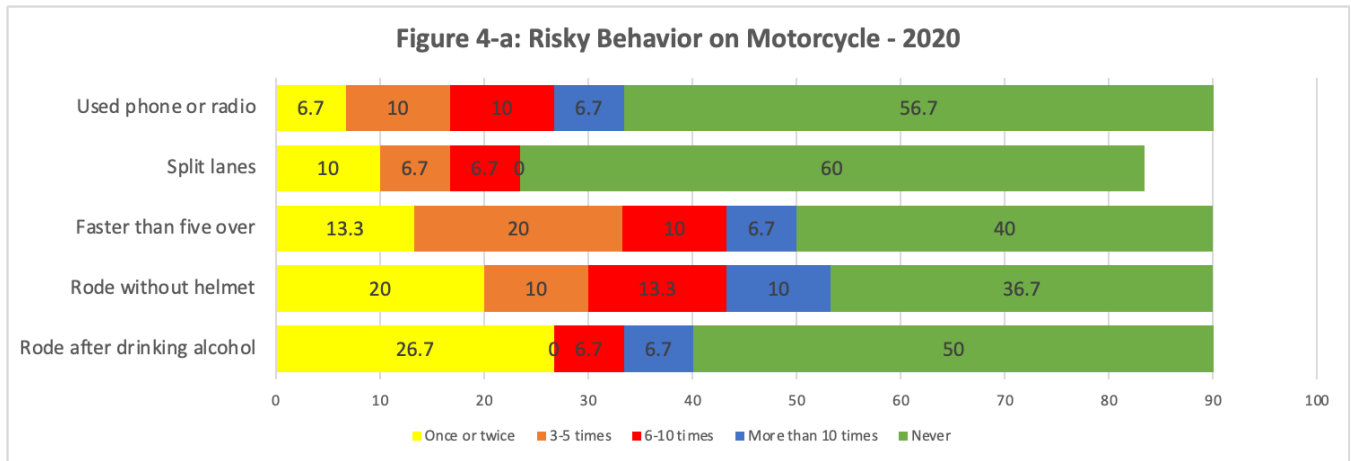
Among male respondents, 16.1% report being regular motorcycle operators, compared to 4.5% of female respondents.

<b>Table 6: Experience Operating Motorcycles</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
2 years or less	0%	15.3%
2 to less than 5 years	0%	23.7%
5 to less than 8 years	23.3%	14.9%
8 years or more	66.7%	36.9%
Don't know	0%	9.3%
I don't ride motorcycles	10%	0%

Motorcyclists were asked about risky behavior while operating a motorcycle. These data are presented in Figures 4-a (2020 data) and 4-b (2021 data).

While those who reported *never* using a factory-installed phone or entertainment system stayed relatively the same between the two years, the numbers of those who did report some usage changed. Those who reported doing so "once or twice" more than doubled from 2020 to 2021, from 6.7% in 2020 to 14.6% in 2021. And those who reported "more than ten time" more than tripled over the two years, from 6.7% in 2020 to 22.5% in 2021.

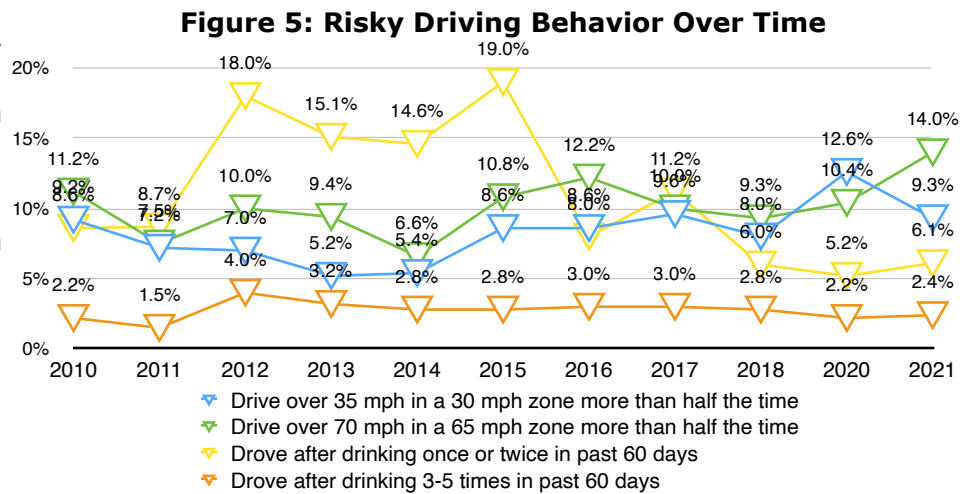
Those who "split lanes" more than ten times increased from 0% to 14.1%, while the "never" respondents *decreased* fifteen points, from 60% down to 45.3%. Speeding is also up among motorcyclists, with those saying they drove faster than five miles over the speed limit 6-10 times nearly doubling (10% in 2020 to 19.4% in 2021), and those doing so more than ten times also doubling (6.7% to 12.9%). Riding without a helmet behavior is mostly increased across the board from 2020 to 2021. While those who report driving after drinking is mostly decreased, those who said they did so 3-5 times increased from 0% to 5.1%, and those who did so 6-10 times in the past 30 days increased from 6.7% to 15%, perhaps due to the 4th of July holiday weekend.



**Risky Behavior (Vehicles)**

Those reporting having driven after a drink or two increased a tiny amount, from 5.2% up to 6.1% (Figure 5). Since 2017, there has been a general decline in drinking and driving self reportage.

Speeding in slower speed zones is down, while speeding in faster zones is up. Those who drive faster than 35 miles an hour in a 30 mile an hour zone dropped from 12.6% in 2020 to 9.3% in 2021, while those who drive faster than 70 miles an hour in a 65 mile and hour zone increased from 10.4% in 2020 to 14.0% in 2021.



Since 2015, a bank of questions has been used to assess use of cellular devices while driving, and has been repeated each year since (Table 7 and Figures 6a and 6b). This question asks about use of cellular devices in various ways while operating a motor vehicle (not a motorcycle). A full list

of the activities is listed in Table 7, along with the percentage of respondents reporting that behavior.

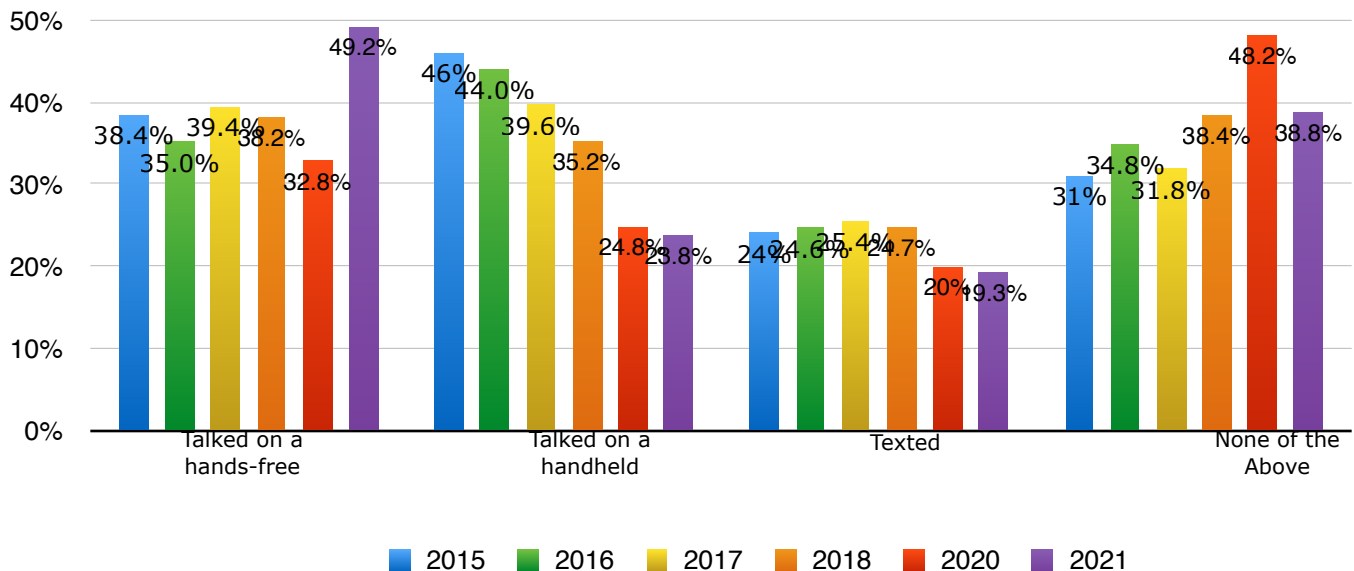
**Table 7: In the past 30 days, have you done any of the following while driving?**

	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
Talked on a hands-free phone	38.4%	35.0%	39.4%	38.2%	32.8%	49.2%
Talked on a hand-held phone	46.0%	44.0%	39.6%	35.2%	24.8%	23.8%
Sent, read or responded to a text message or email	24.0%	24.6%	25.4%	24.7%	20%	19.3%
Checked or updated social media (Facebook, Instagram, SnapChat, Twitter, etc.) on a cellular device	5.6%	9.4%	12.0%	8.7%	9%	6.5%
Used a cellular device to take a photo or video	6.4%	9.4%	10.8%	8.9%	6.6%	10.4%
Video chat or FaceTime on a cellular device	0.8%	2.8%	4.0%	3.8%	2.2%	4.9%
None of the above	31.0%	34.8%	31.8%	38.4%	48.2%	38.8%

(Respondents are permitted to select more than one choice, so percentages will not sum to 100%.)

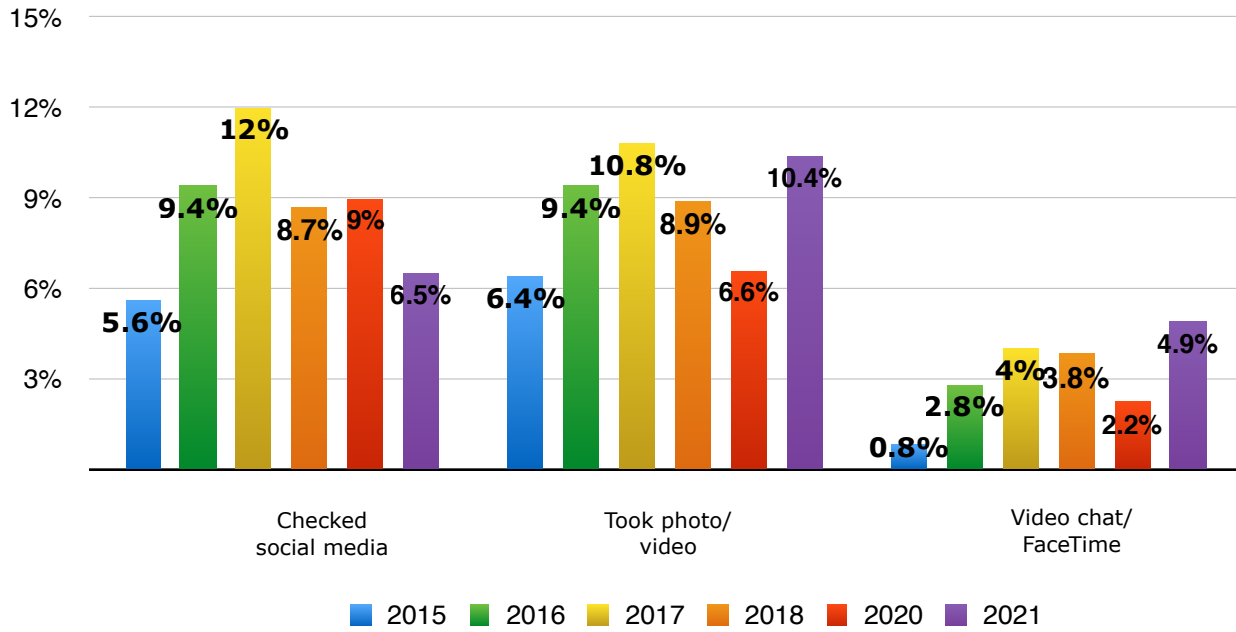
Graphical representation is presented in Figures 6a and 6b. Notice the more than 15 point jump from 2020 to 2021 in using a hands-free phone while driving, and the nearly ten point decrease in reporting none of this behavior while driving over the past year. While there is a significant jump in those reporting using a hands-free phone (from 32.8% in 2020 to 49.2% in 2021), the fact that more and more vehicles are offering this as a factory-installed feature makes this not terribly surprising. The remaining behaviors involving using mobile devices while driving have remained consistently within the margin of error since 2020.

**Figure 6a: Used Cell Phone While Driving - TALK OR TEXT**



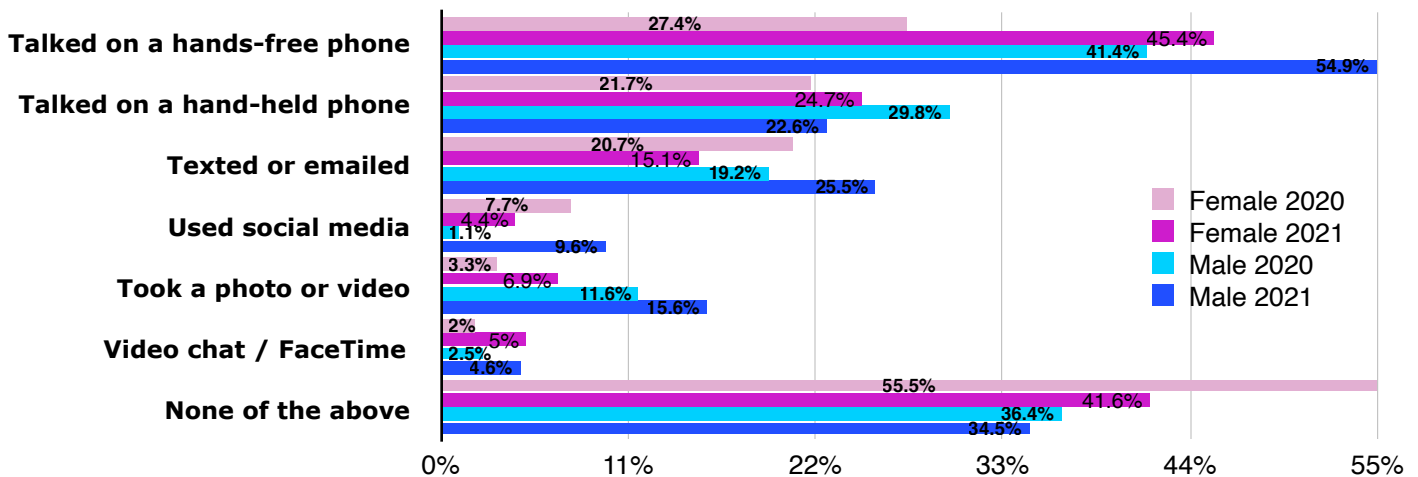


**Figure 6b: Used Cell Phone While Driving - PHOTO/VIDEO/SOCIAL MEDIA**



According to Figure 7, the data for cell use while driving when broken down by gender has changed over the past year. Both women and men are significantly more likely to report using a hands free phone while driving from 2020, but these significant changes could be due to the fact that restrictions due to the pandemic were lifted during the time the 2021 survey was fielded, resulting in more actual driving - and therefore more cell phone use while driving - compared 2020.

**Figure 7: Cell Phone Use While Driving by Sex 2020 and 2021**

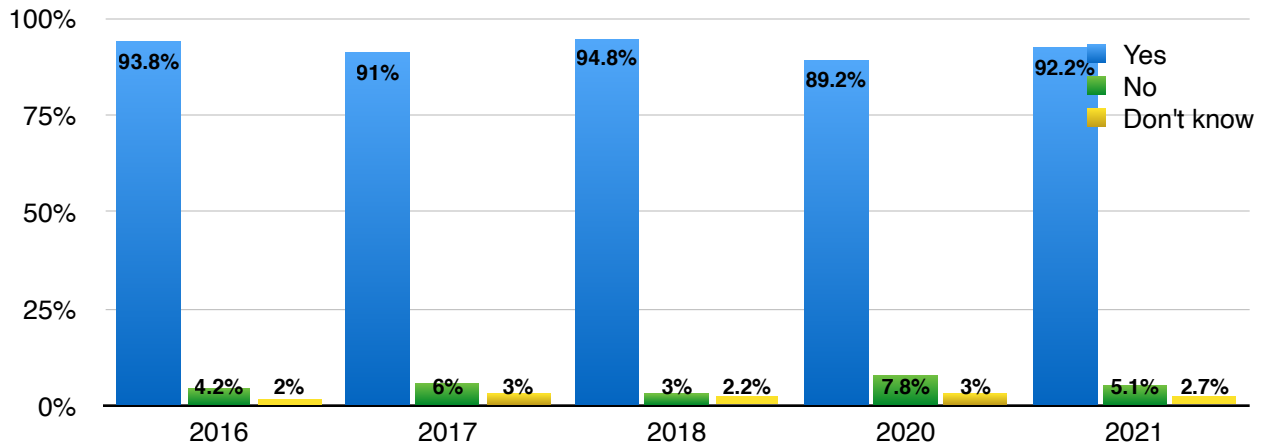


For more information regarding breakdowns of risky driving behavior by various demographic groups, please refer to the cross tabulations included as part of this reporting package.

**Awareness of Distracted Driving Law/Influenced Driving Reduction Efforts**

Awareness of a law prohibiting texting while driving has returned to pre-pandemic levels, back up above the 90% level to 92.2% (see Figure 8).

**Figure 8: Aware of No Texting While Driving Law by Year**



Again, perhaps due both to pandemic restrictions being lifted and the 4th of July holiday having just occurred prior to the 2021 survey, the data have bounced back from last year's numbers. Perceptions of law enforcement messages or efforts to reduce alcohol-influenced driving increased from 23.8% in 2020 to 37% in 2021 (Figure 9).

**Figure 9: Aware of Law Enforcement Efforts to Reduce Influenced Driving by Year**

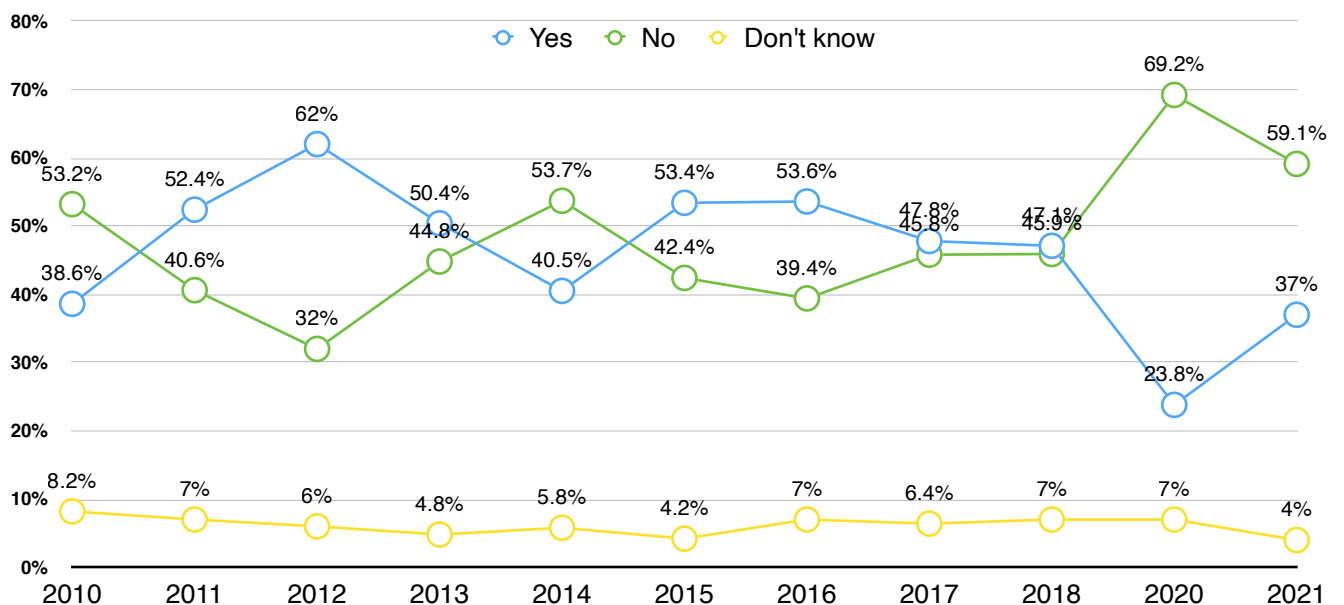


Table 8 displays awareness of law enforcement efforts to reduce drinking and driving by risky driving behavior on behalf of the respondent - either speeding more than 5 miles an hour over the posted speed limit, or having driven after consuming alcoholic beverages. Awareness of such efforts was down across the board from 2018 to 2020, and has increased across the board from 2020 to 2021, again perhaps explained both by fewer "going out" restrictions due to the global pandemic, and also the immediate 4th of July holiday prior to the 2021 survey.

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2020	2021
<b>35+ in a 30 zone MORE than half</b>	46.6%	62.2%	41.8%	43.2%	55.7%	59.2%	45.7%	53.0%	26.0%	40.1%
<b>35+ in a 30 zone LESS than half the</b>	54.8%	63.4%	53.5%	42.8%	53.6%	52.0%	52.4%	46.4%	28.0%	39.5%
<b>35+ in a 30 zone NEVER</b>	52.1%	56.1%	44.4%	26.4%	49.3%	50.0%	36.8%	43.3%	13.7%	23.2%
<b>70+ in a 65 zone MORE than half</b>	46.8%	64.7%	47.3%	40.2%	54.0%	59.3%	55.6%	57.3%	33.3%	39.3%
<b>70+ in a 65 zone LESS than half</b>	55.6%	62.2%	54.9%	43.1%	54.9%	54.1%	48.0%	44.0%	28.4%	43.0%
<b>70+ in a 65 zone NEVER</b>	51.1%	58.4%	38.2%	31.9%	45.7%	42.9%	38.2%	43.0%	11.3%	20.4%
<b>Drove after drinking in past 60 days</b>	56.7%	70.0%	62.5%	51.5%	59.3%	54.0%	57.9%	63.3%	23.9%	36.6%
<b>Did not drive after drinking in past 60 days</b>	52.1%	59.8%	47.5%	38.2%	51.3%	53.5%	46.1%	45.7%	0.0%	100.0%

While the summer of 2020 was unusual and unprecedented, and could explain deviations from past patterns in the data, the data for 2021 is returning to more "normal" numbers collected from surveys conducted prior to the onset of the global pandemic. Future trends will be interesting to track in response to many factors including: continued progress being made in combatting the virus, states relaxing restrictions on travel (or becoming stricter if the virus surges again), and some of the generational changes in driving behavior that may occur as we move into the next decade.