



Outdoor Advertising Association of America

What does the Traffic Accident Data Say?

Traffic accident data is a valued, standard tool for policy makers. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) sums up this point:

“Traffic records are the basis for defining, managing, and evaluating traffic safety and performance.”

Did you know that crash-data studies show no increase in accidents near digital billboards? Industry in these markets reviewed:

- **Cuyahoga County, OH (2007)**
 - Accident reports **3 years** before and after installation of digital billboards
 - **7 digital billboards** located along Interstates
 - **33,000 accident records** from the Ohio Department of Transportation.
- **Rochester, MN (2009)**
 - Accident reports spanning more than **4 years** before and after installation
 - **5 digital billboards** located along local roads
 - **18,000 accident records** from the local police department.
- **Cuyahoga County, OH (2009)**

This study updated the 2007 report, evaluating more time and data:

 - Accident reports **4 years** before and after installation
 - **7 digital billboards** along Interstates (same structures as 2007 study)
 - **60,000+ accident records** from the Ohio DOT
- **Albuquerque, NM (2010)**
 - Accident reports spanning **3½ years** before and after the installation
 - **17 digital billboards** located along local roads
 - **7,000+ accident records** from the local police department
- **Reading, PA (2010)**
 - Accident reports spanning **4 years** before and after installation
 - **26 digital billboard faces** on 20 structures along expressways and local roads
 - **35,000 accident records** from Pennsylvania DOT and local police

Key Findings

- There is no statistically significant relationship between accidents and digital billboards; digital billboards are “safety neutral”
- More than 120,000 accident records in proximity to 55 digital billboard faces were analyzed
- *Circumstances different . . . conclusion the same*
 - Size of digital billboards were different:
 - Standardized bulletins in Cuyahoga County (14'x48')
 - Standardized bulletins in Rochester (10'6"x36')
 - Standardized posters in Albuquerque (12'x24')
 - Variety of bulletins, posters, and miscellaneous sizes in Reading
 - Digital billboard locations were different:
 - Along **Interstates** in the Cuyahoga County
 - Along **local roads** in Rochester and Albuquerque
 - Along **local roads and expressways** in Reading
 - Combined traffic counts exceed one-half billion cars per year
- *The age of driver is a neutral factor*
 - Younger drivers (under 21) show no increases in accident rates
 - Older drivers (over 65) show no increases in accident rates

The researchers said: “For comparisons of younger, older or nighttime drivers, there are no increases in accident rates near these digital billboards”
- *Time of day is a neutral factor*
 - Daytime and nighttime comparisons show no increases in rates in the area surrounding the digital billboards

The consistent outcome from these studies:

Digital Billboards are NOT Linked to Accidents