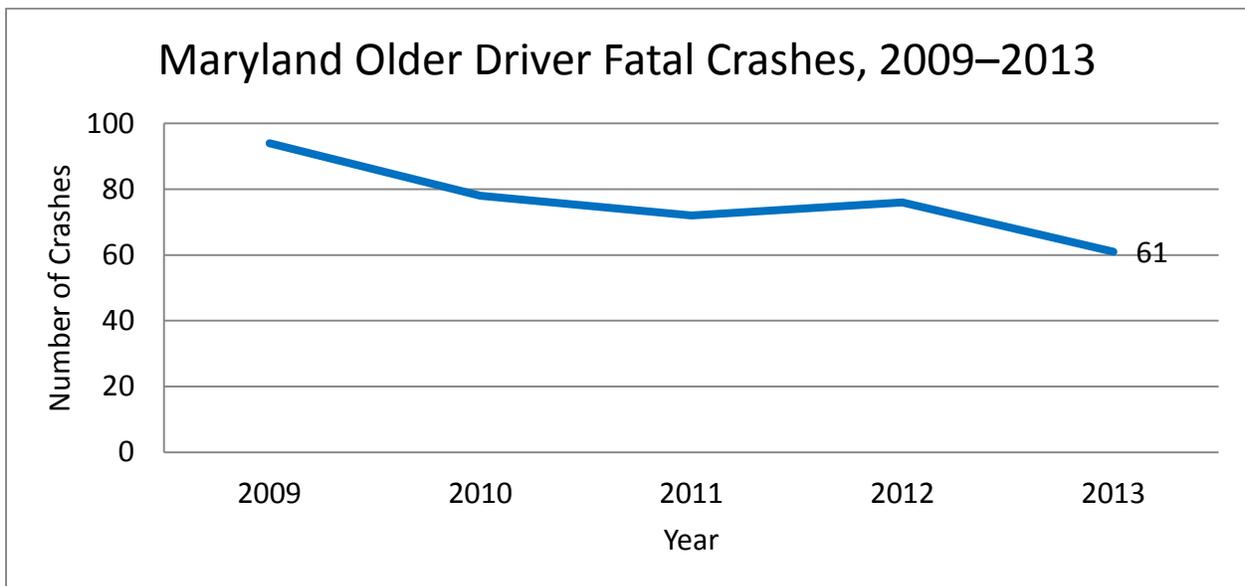
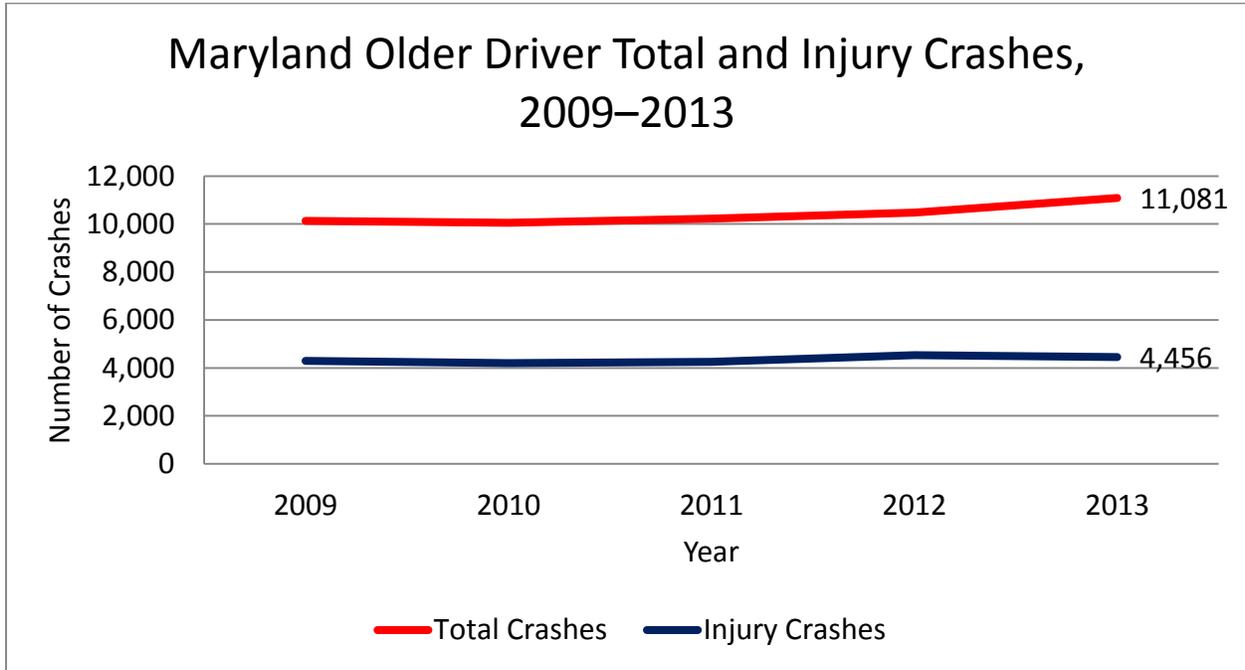


OLDER DRIVER SAFETY IN MARYLAND

THE FACTS

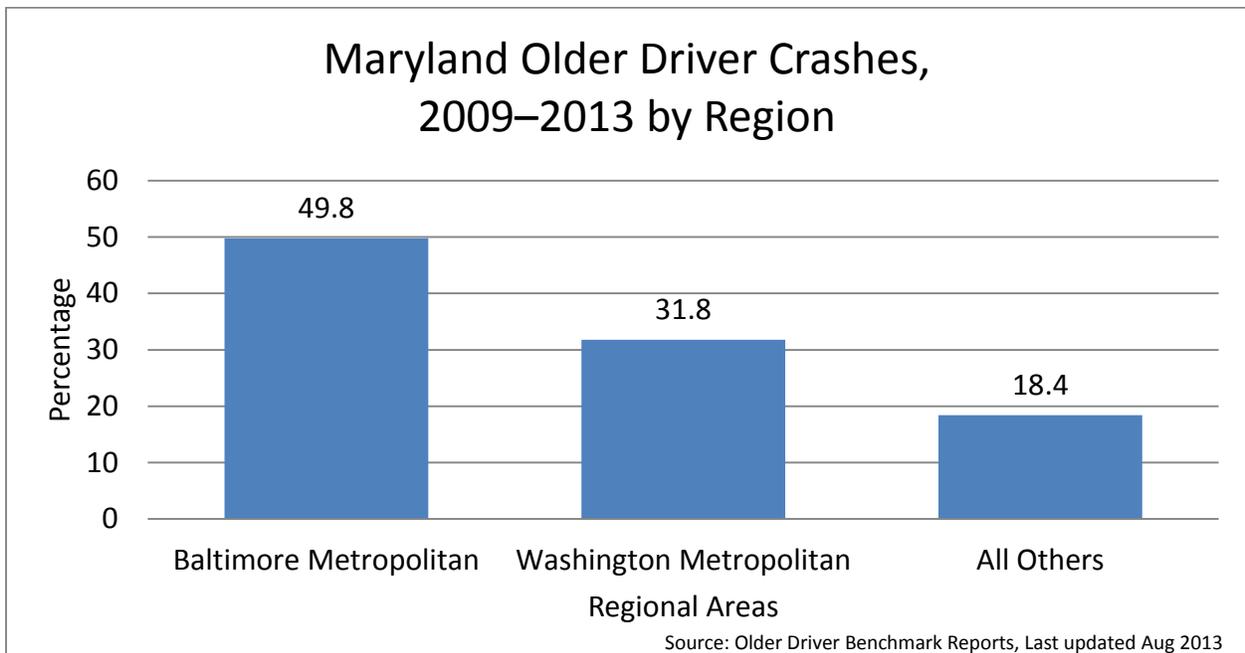


- **Motor vehicle crashes are a huge threat to public health.** Over the past decade, the number of crashes reported on the nation’s roadways has declined annually. However, motor vehicle crashes continue to be a leading cause of death in the United States¹. In 2012, approximately 5.6 million crashes were reported; approximately 30 percent resulted in an injury or fatality².

¹ CDC National Vital Statistics Reports – 10 Leading Causes of Death, United States, 2012

² NHTSA Traffic Safety Facts – Overview DOT HS 812 016

- **Crashes among older drivers in Maryland are worsening.** Between 2009 and 2013 the number of overall crashes involving older drivers increased. In 2013, 15 percent of Maryland’s nearly 30,000 injury crashes involved a driver ages 65 and older.
- **Death and injury are high among older driver-involved crashes.** On average, drivers 65 and older were involved in nearly 10,000 crashes each year. Approximately 43 percent of the crashes resulted in an injury or fatality, which is higher when compared to statewide crashes where only 34 percent were injury or fatality crashes.
- **Highly-populated regions have the highest concentration of older driver crashes³.** Approximately two out of three older driver-involved crashes occurred within five jurisdictions: Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Montgomery, and Prince George’s Counties, and Baltimore City. Crashes involving older drivers occurred most often on State and County roadways. Injury and fatal crashes were higher among older drivers involved in crashes on these roads.



- **Crashes involving older drivers occur year-round.** Over the past five years, older driver-involved crashes were spread relatively evenly throughout the calendar year, similar to the statewide distribution of crashes. Older driver crashes were only slightly higher in October through December than those occurring in other months.
- **Crashes increase toward the end of the work week.** Nearly 80 percent of all crashes involving an older driver occurred on a weekday. From Monday to Friday, the number of crashes involving older drivers increased as the week progressed. Weekends showed a lower number of older driver-involved in crashes. Less than 10 percent of all crashes involving older drivers occurred on Sunday, making it the lowest crash day for seniors. From 2009 to 2013, just over half of all crashes statewide occurred between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. However, older driver crashes were

³ Baltimore Metropolitan area is comprised of Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, and Howard Counties, and Baltimore City as designated by the Baltimore Metropolitan Council. The Washington Metropolitan Area is defined as Charles, Frederick, Montgomery, and Prince George's Counties as designated by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments.

concentrated during the late morning through the late afternoon, accounting for almost 76 percent of crashes.

- **Older male drivers were injured or killed in more crashes than female drivers of the same age.** In 2013, three times as many older male drivers were killed than female drivers of the same age.

BACKGROUND

The safety and security of drivers aged 65 years or older is of increasing concern in Maryland. The percentage of older residents in Maryland is expected to increase to 25 percent of Maryland's projected population of 6.7 million by the year 2030. Crashes involving older drivers have fluctuated over recent years and require attention and work to move them steadily downward. At the Maryland Highway Safety Office (MHSO), efforts are being made to educate older drivers, their families and caregivers to enforce traffic laws for older driver safety as this demographic continues to increase.

OLDER DRIVER LAWS

- **Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA)—Identification Cards and Drivers' Licenses**
 - Maryland Law allows the MVA to increase the validity period of an ID card for anyone age 65 years and older, from five years to eight years.
 - The law also authorizes the waiver of a vision examination for an applicant applying for a corrected driver's license who has passed an acceptable vision exam within the last year.

OLDER DRIVER SAFETY PROGRAMS

- **MHSO Older Driver Program**
 - The MHSO Older Driver Program focuses upon education, outreach, and the medical review of at-risk drivers.
 - The Older Driver Program is supported through an active partnership between the MVA, MHSO and Regional Traffic Safety Programs (RTSPs) to develop and implement local and statewide traffic safety outreach programs.
- **Older Driver Program Grants**
 - Maryland provides grants to private and public organizations to educate older drivers and their caregivers on the risks associated with aging and safely operating a motor vehicle. Grants are issued using federal traffic safety funds from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).
 - The ultimate goal of grant awards is to fund programs that will result in an overall reduction of crashes, injuries and fatalities on Maryland's roadways.

- **AAA Roadwise Review**
 - *AAA Roadwise Review* is a driver screening tool for private, home-based use which measures declines in functional abilities scientifically linked to crash risk among older drivers.
 - Available on CD-ROM and online, *Roadwise Review* was designed to measure driving risk in certain visual, physical, and mental skills that are important for safe driving. For more information visit: <http://dev.seniordriving.aaa.com/>.

- **AARP Driver Safety Program**

The AARP Smart Driver™ Course is the nation’s first and largest refresher course for drivers age 50 and older. It has given millions of drivers the skills and tools they need to drive safely on today’s roads, allowing them to remain independent for many years to come. For more information visit: <http://www.aarp.org/ws/EO/driver-safety-programs.html>.

- **CarFit**
 - *CarFit* is an educational program created by the American Society on Aging and developed in collaboration with AAA (American Automobile Association), AARP, and the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA). It is a free community-based program designed to enhance the ‘fit’ between drivers and their vehicles for maximum comfort and safety.
 - *CarFit* also provides materials and information on community-specific resources that can help improve the safety of older drivers and/or increase their mobility in the community. For more information visit: <http://www.car-fit.org/>.

- **Maryland-Area Agencies on Aging**
 - Local transit services are offered for most counties either through local government or a private, nonprofit corporation designated by the county. Most counties provide transportation services for seniors and people with disabilities through the county transportation department, or the local agency on aging.

- **MVA’s Medical Advisory Board (MAB)**
 - Maryland does not restrict driving privileges based on age; however, through the Maryland MVA’s Driver Wellness and Safety Division, an individual of any age can be referred for an evaluation of their medical fitness to drive.
 - The MVA’s MAB works with the Driver Wellness and Safety Division and is made up of physicians and other health care professionals from various areas of the medical field that work to ensure a driver is capable of safely operating a motor vehicle.
 - Several screening measures may be used to complete an individual’s assessment. These elements assess an individual’s divided attention, working memory, visual processing and other aspects of visual, physical, and cognitive functioning.

- Depending on the results of the screenings and a review of relevant medical reports by a driver's own physician, individuals may be referred for abilities assessment/remediation by a driving rehabilitation specialist.
- When all necessary information is received, the case is reviewed by MAB, and then a recommendation is made concerning the individual's medical fitness to drive.

OLDER DRIVER SAFETY TIPS

- **Always buckle-up.**
- **Avoid driving at dusk or dawn or when visibility is difficult.**
- **Older drivers need more time and space to react.** Therefore, allow older drivers extra space for emergency braking or to avoid a crash.
- **Older drivers often refresh their knowledge of safe driving practices, new traffic controls and roadway design features by enrolling in a mature driver safety class.**
- **Aging drivers should frequently discuss their driving ability (e.g. visual, cognitive and physical) with their personal physician or healthcare provider or at least during annual visits.**
- **An older driver taking any medication should consult with their doctor, healthcare provider or pharmacist about any interactions that could affect their ability to drive.** Some medication can limit or impair one's ability to drive safely and may cause drowsiness etc.
- **Older drivers and their caregivers should discuss and plan for alternative transportation options before driving safely is no longer possible.** Alternate transportation options are good to explore and learn about while older drivers are still driving so that transitions can be less impactful.

CONTACTS FOR OLDER DRIVER SAFETY IN MARYLAND

MARYLAND MOTOR VEHICLE ADMINISTRATION

- Contact: MVA's Press Information at 410-762-5188