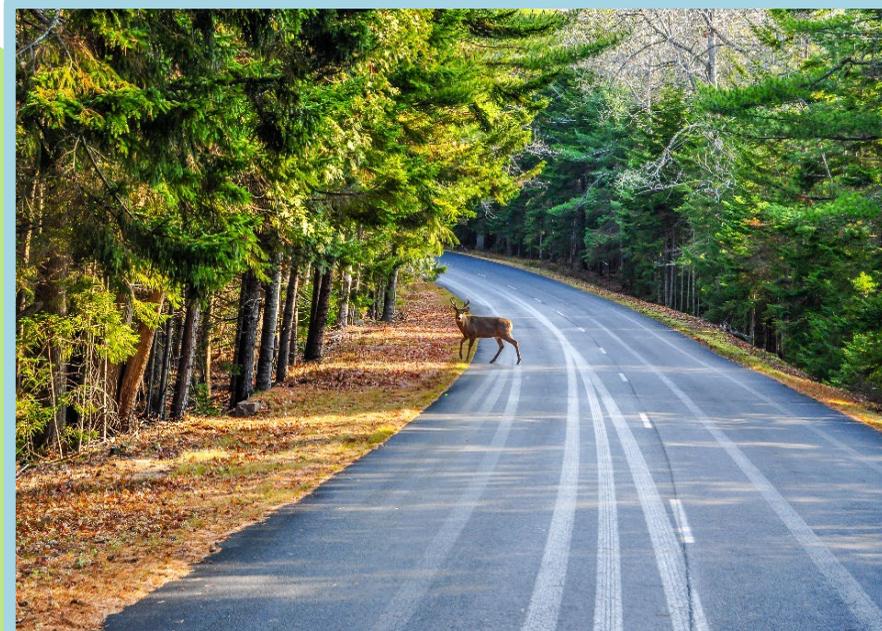


# Maine Driver Awareness Survey Report 2025



Survey Research Center

Catherine Cutler Institute  
University of Southern Maine  
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# Acknowledgements

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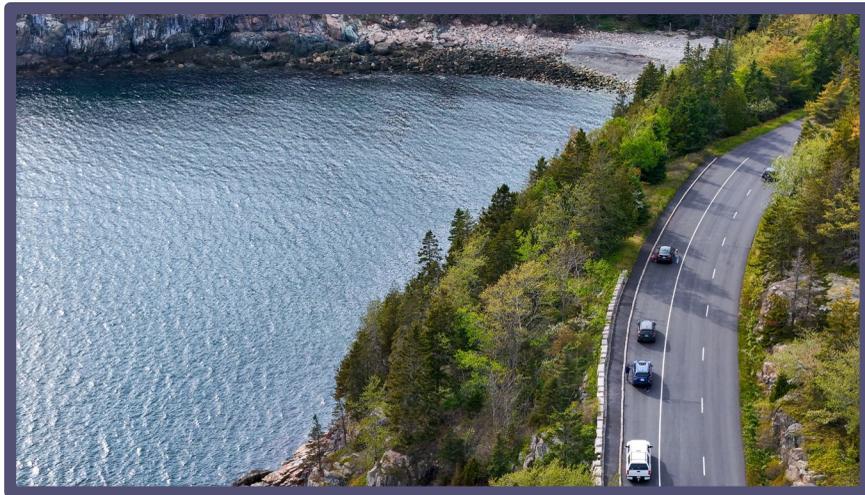
# Introduction



This report summarizes the findings from Maine’s 2025 Driver Awareness Survey. This survey is intended to measure drivers’ awareness of and adherence to seat belt, speeding, impaired driving, and distracted driving laws, to gauge drivers’ perceptions of law enforcement efforts around each of these behaviors, and to determine drivers’ perceptions of danger associated with the behaviors.

With the exception of year 2020, a version of this survey has been conducted annually. In 2020, the survey was not conducted due to the COVID pandemic, resulting in a gap in the trend analysis presented here.

# Methodology



This survey was conducted at eleven of the thirteen Bureau of Motor Vehicle locations across the state. These sites were chosen for their representativeness; together they serve urban, suburban, and rural populations. Surveys were conducted from July 1 to August 6, beginning about four weeks after the end of Maine’s seat belt awareness campaign, which ran from May 12 through June 1.

The survey was conducted with professional interviewers from the Catherine Cutler Institute’s Survey Research Center. Interviewers spent two days at each location, approaching individuals in waiting areas and explaining that they were there to help the Maine Bureau of Highway Safety learn more about people’s driving habits and attitudes. Once interviewers ascertained that individuals were at least 18 years of age and held a valid Maine driver’s license, they invited them to participate in the survey.

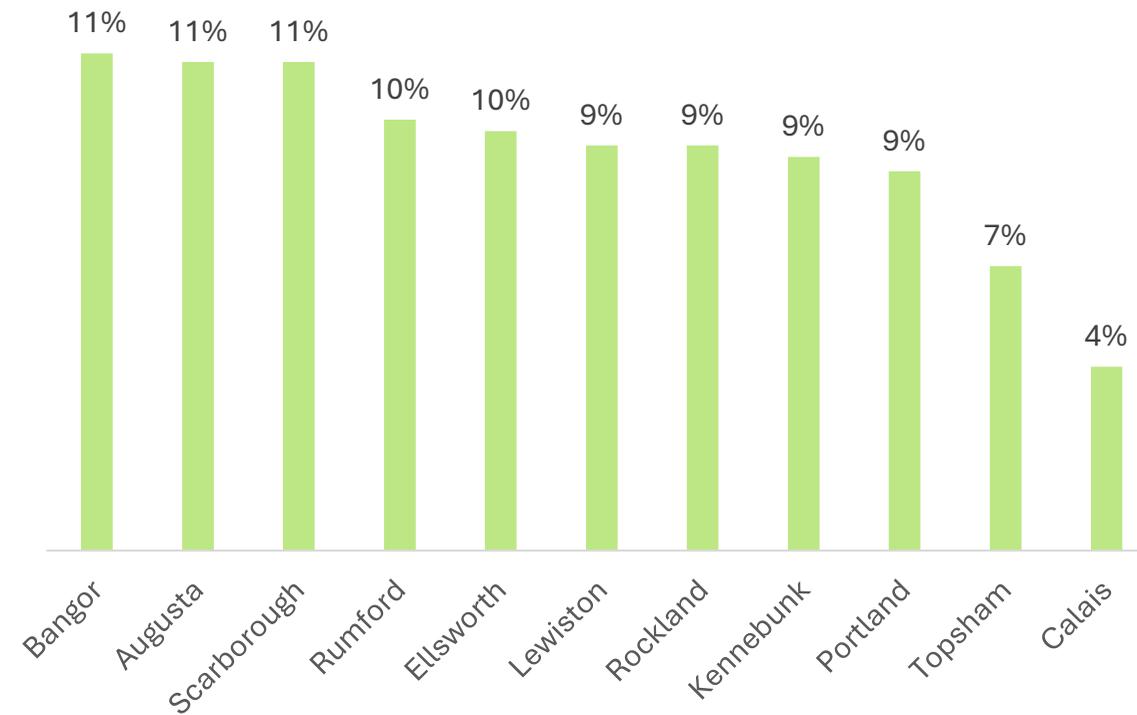
A total of 1,523 completed surveys were collected.

**For more information about this study or to view the survey instrument, please go to: [srcmaine.org/bmv2025\\_info/](https://srcmaine.org/bmv2025_info/)**

# Sites

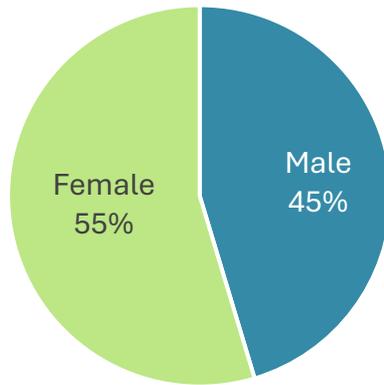
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Surveys were handed out in eleven sites across the state.



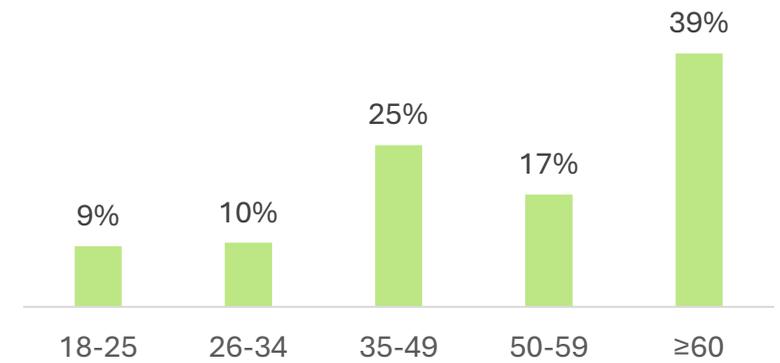
# Demographics

## Sex

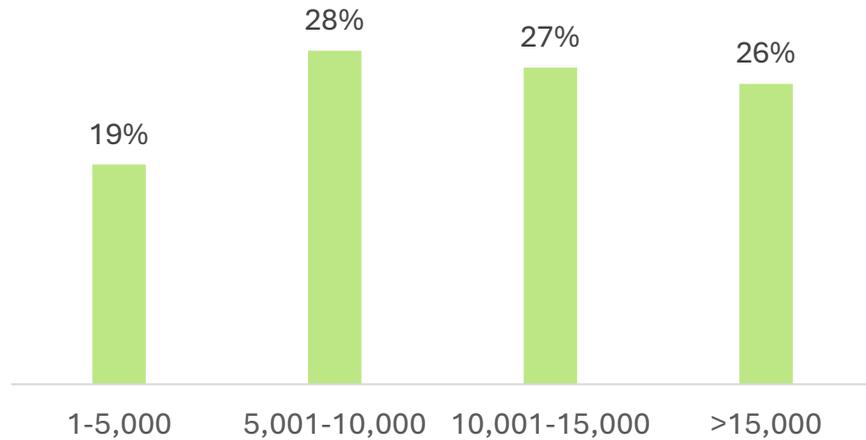


Survey respondents comprise a varied demographic in terms of sex, age, miles driven, and type of vehicle driven

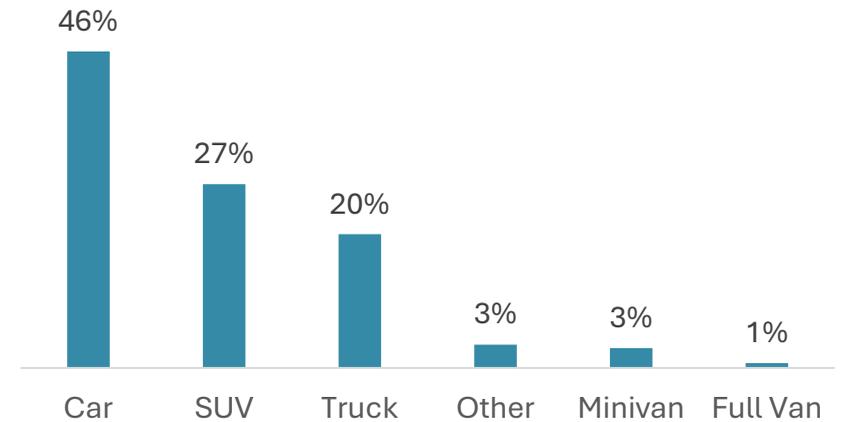
## Age



## Miles Driven



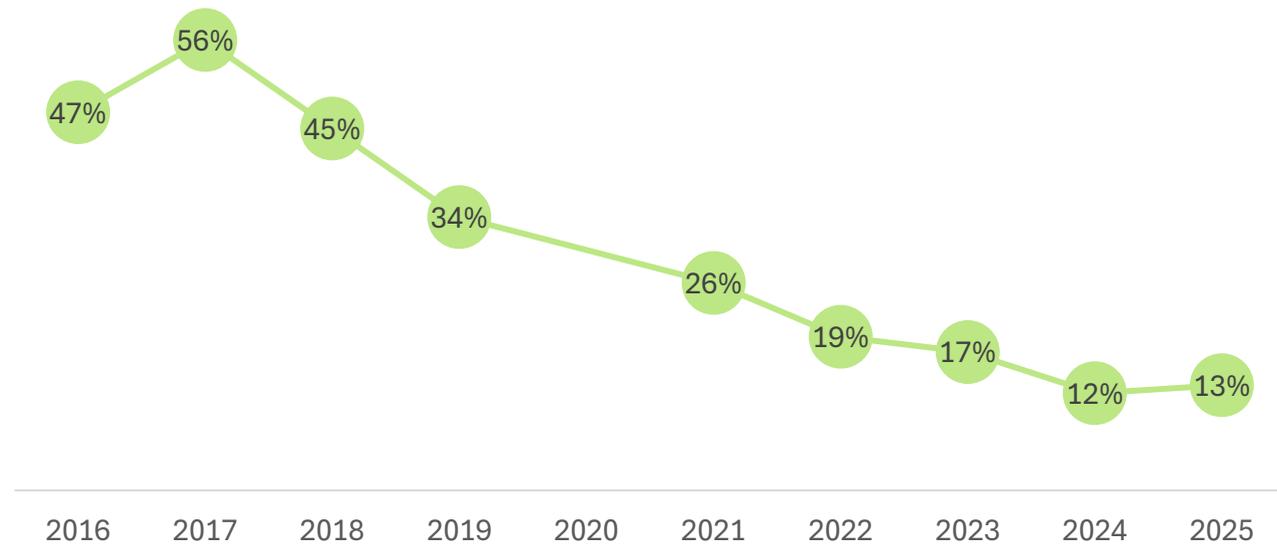
## Vehicle Driven



# Heard About Seat Belt Enforcement

**13%**

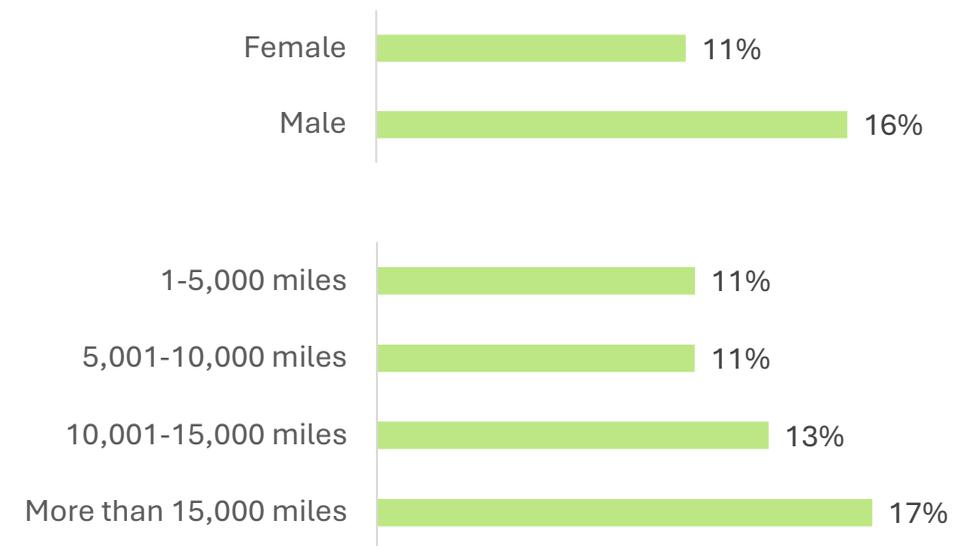
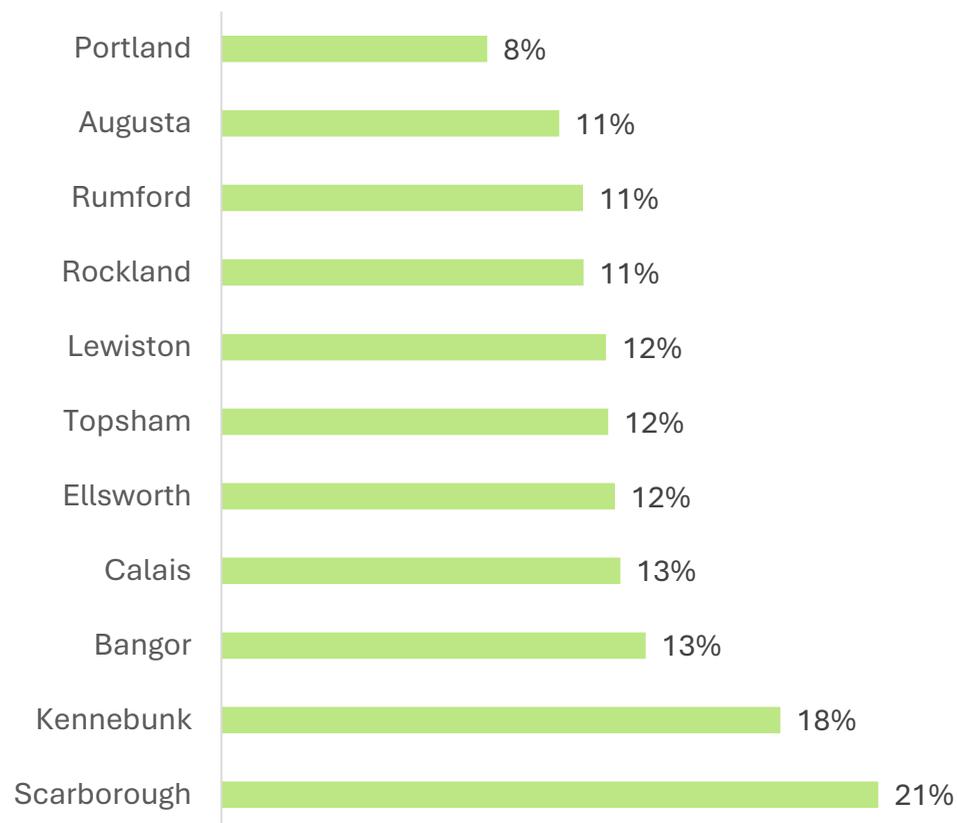
Thirteen percent of survey respondents saw or heard about extra enforcement of seat belt laws within the last 60 days.



This is a slight increase from the 2024 rate of 12%.

# Heard About Seat Belt Enforcement

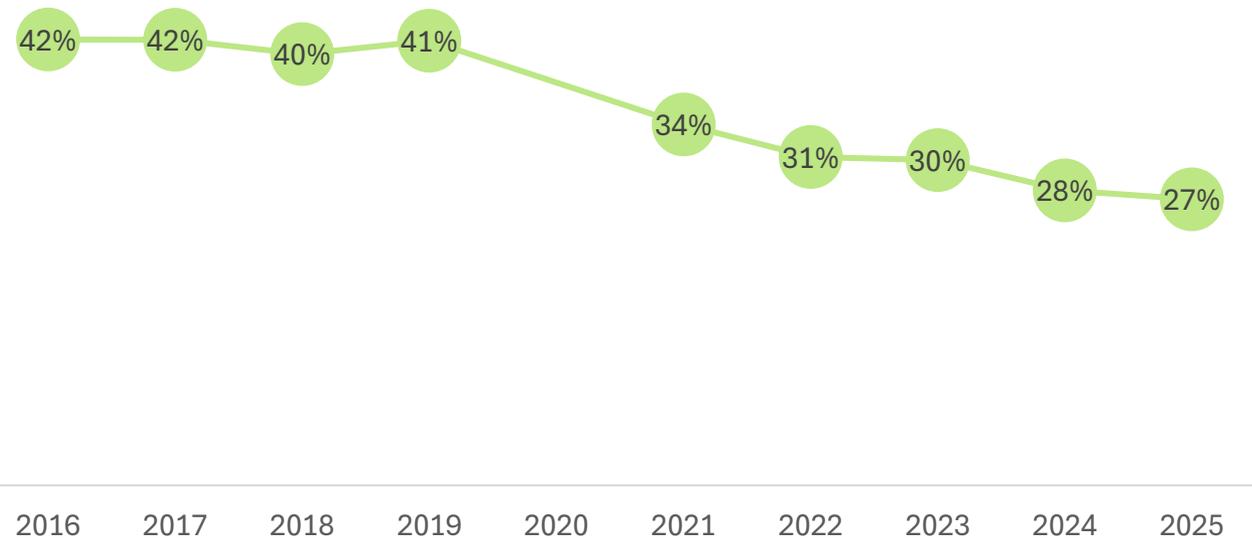
While **13%** of survey respondents saw or heard about extra enforcement of seat belt laws within the last 60 days, this rate varied by survey **site**, **sex**, and **miles** driven.



# Perceived Chances of Ticket for Not Wearing Seat Belt

27%

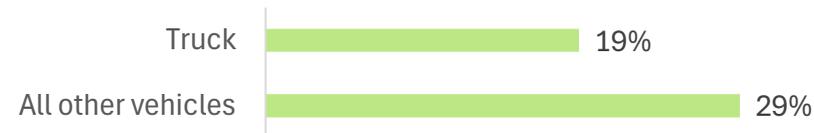
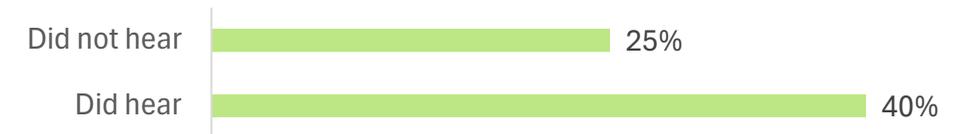
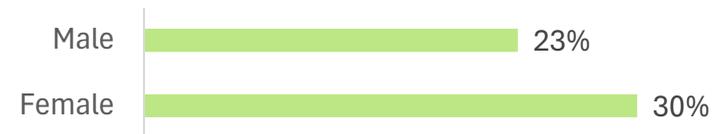
Twenty-seven percent of survey respondents reported that they thought they would *always* or *nearly always* get a ticket if they did not wear a seat belt.



This is a slight decrease from the 2024 rate of 28%.

# Perceived Chances of Ticket for Not Wearing Seat Belt

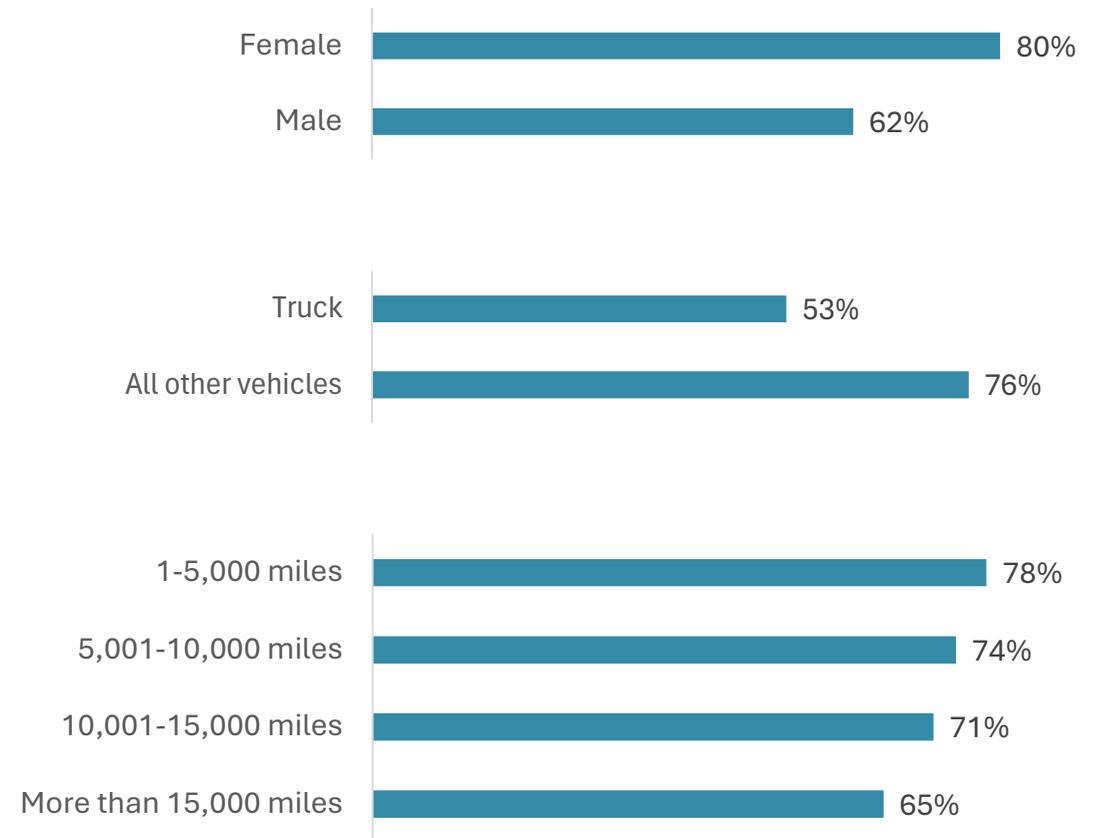
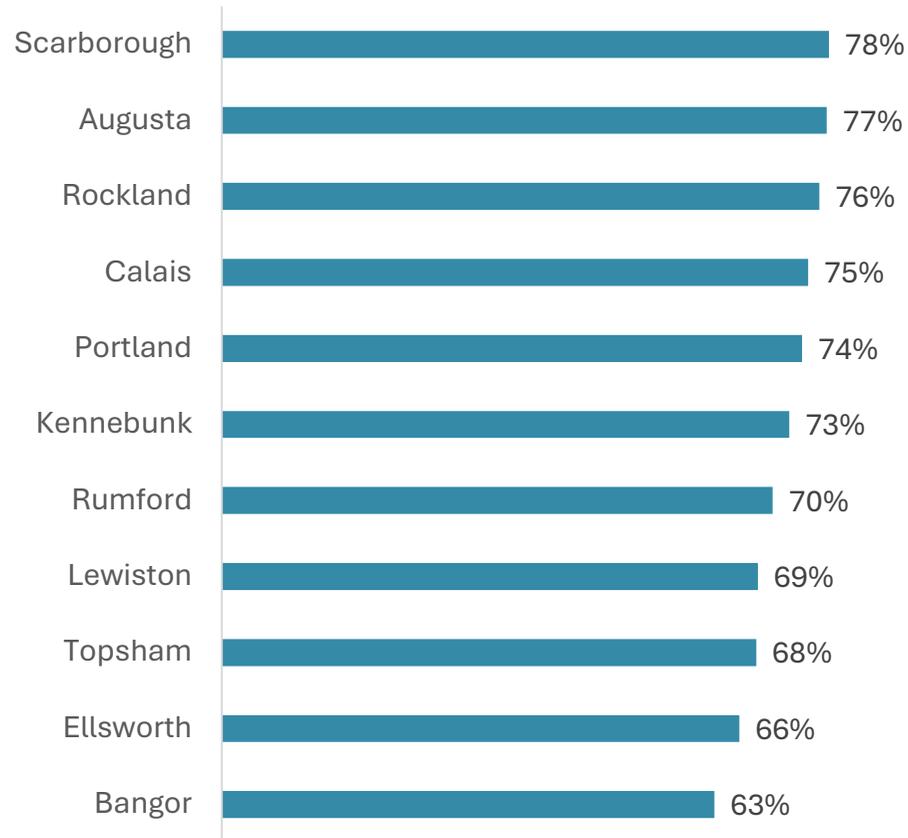
While **27%** of survey respondents reported that they thought they would *always* or *nearly always* get a ticket if they did not wear a seat belt, this rate varied by **sex**, **vehicle** driven, and whether the respondent had heard about **enforcement**.



# Perceived Danger of Not Wearing Seat Belt

72%

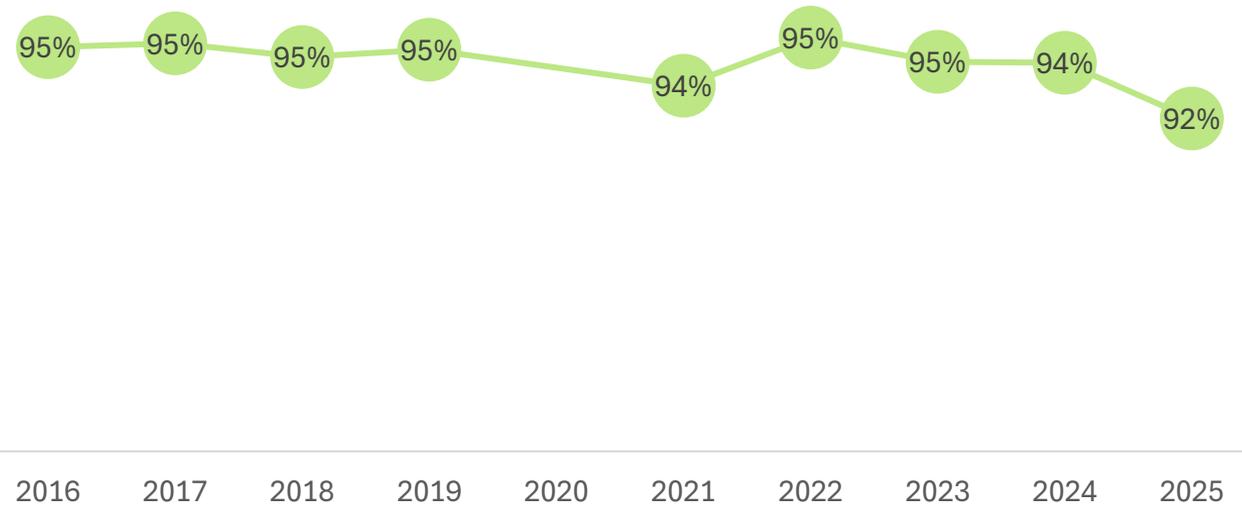
Seventy-two percent of survey respondents reported that they thought not wearing a seat belt was *very* or *extremely dangerous*, but this rate varied by survey **site**, **sex**, **vehicle** driven, and **miles** driven.



# Seat Belt Use Rates

92%

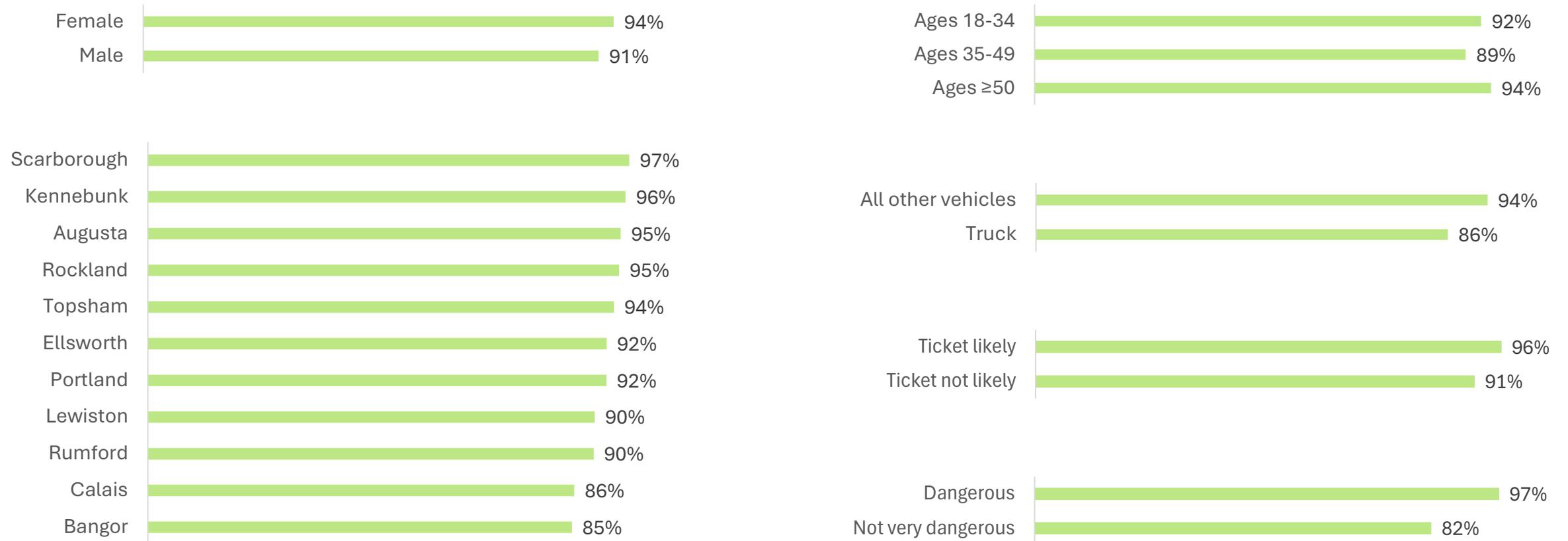
Ninety-two percent of survey respondents reported that they *always* or *nearly always* wear their seat belt.



This is a decrease from the 2024 rate of 94%.

# Seat Belt Use Rates

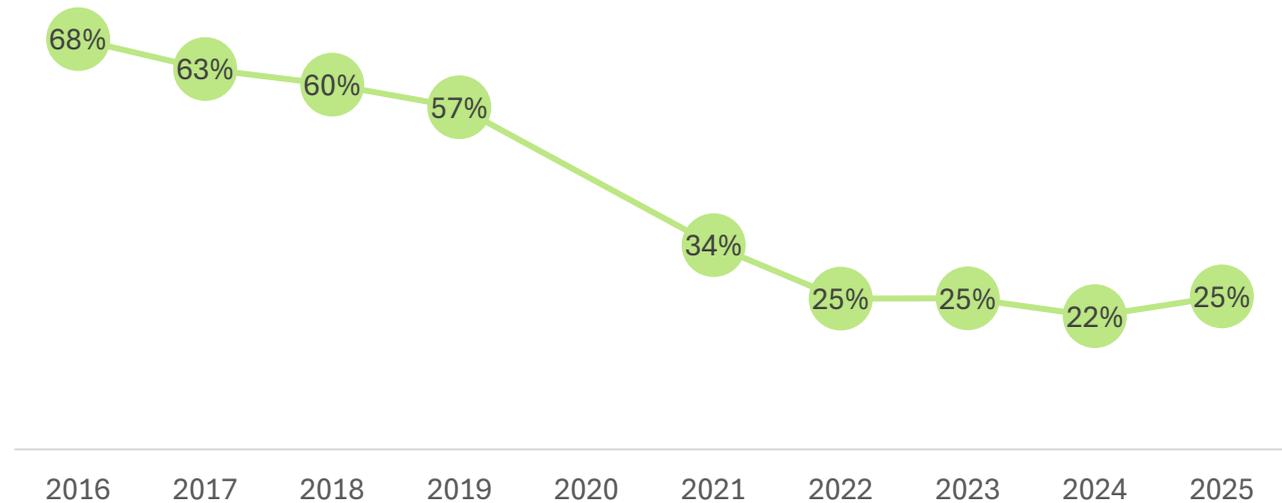
While **92%** of survey respondents reported that they *always* or *nearly always* wear their seat belts, this rate varied by **sex**, survey **site**, **age**, **vehicle** type, whether the respondent thought a **ticket** was likely, and the perceived **danger** of the behavior.



# Heard About Drinking & Driving Enforcement

**25%**

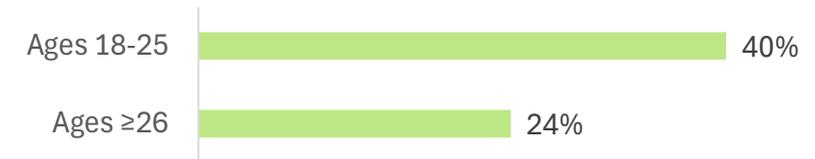
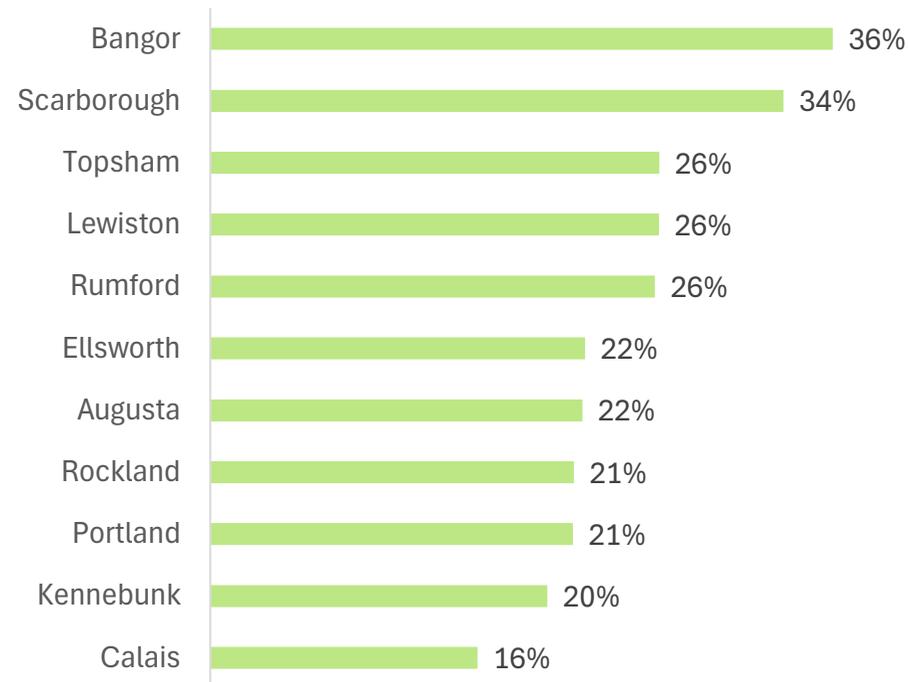
Twenty-five percent of survey respondents saw or heard about extra enforcement of drinking and driving laws within the last 60 days.



This is a slight increase from the 2024 rate of 22%.

# Heard About Drinking & Driving Enforcement

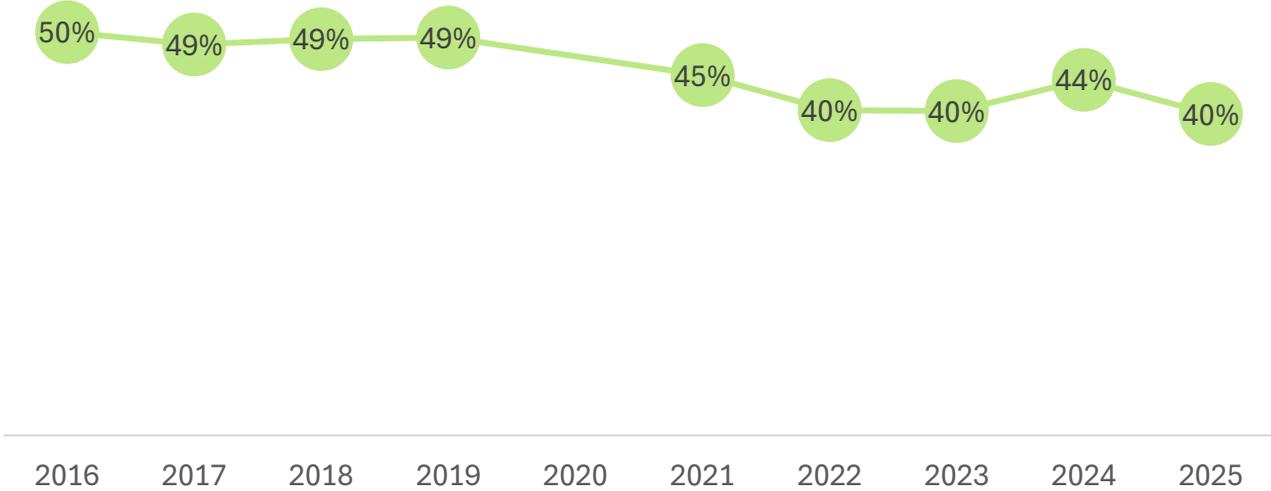
While **25%** of survey respondents saw or heard about extra enforcement of drinking and driving laws within the last 60 days, this rate varied by survey **site** and **age**.



# Perceived Chances of Arrest for Drinking & Driving

40%

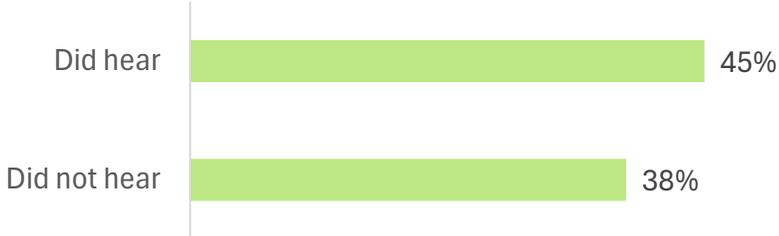
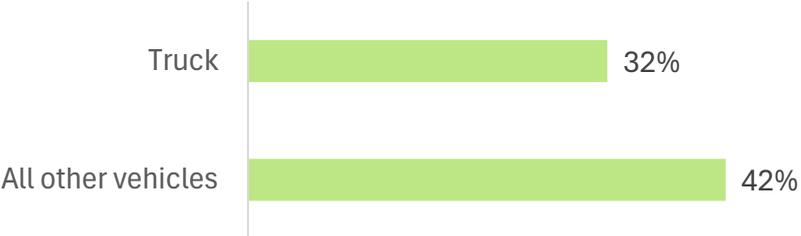
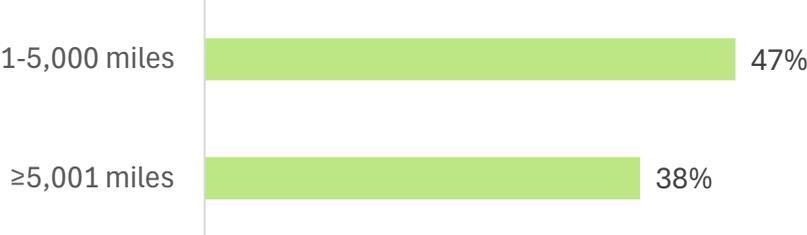
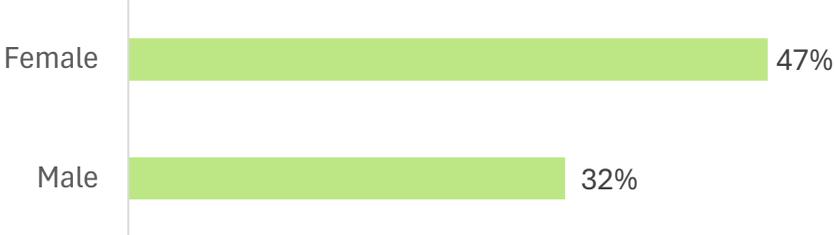
Forty percent of survey respondents reported that they thought they would *always* or *nearly always* be arrested if they drove after drinking.



This is a decrease from the 2024 rate of 44%.

# Perceived Chances of Arrest for Drinking & Driving

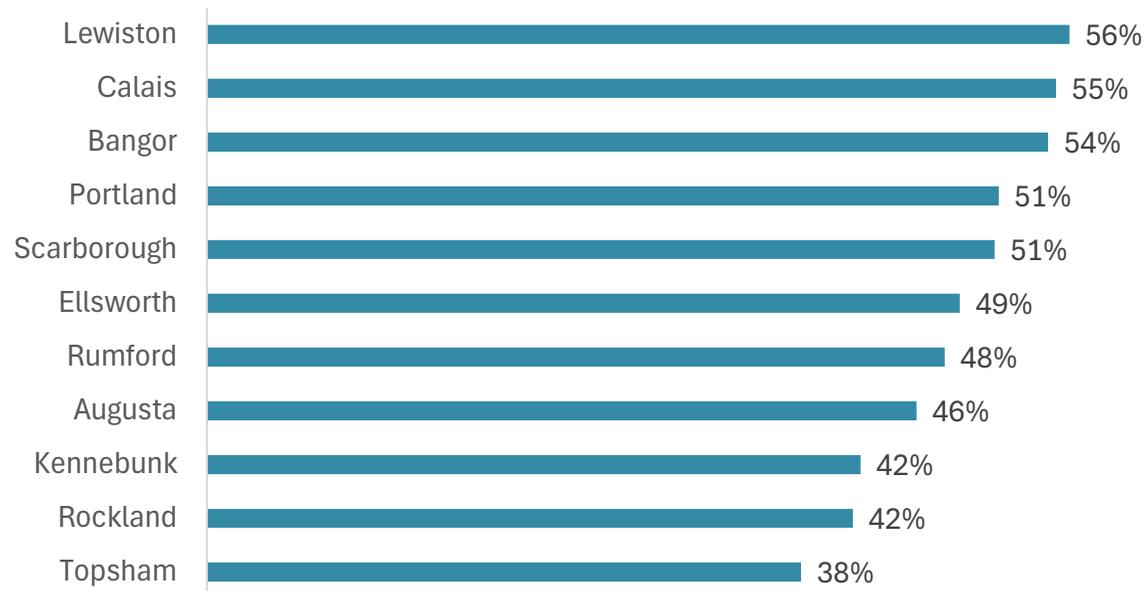
While **40%** of survey respondents reported that they thought they would *always* or *nearly always* be arrested if they drove after drinking, this rate varied by **sex**, **miles** driven, **vehicle** driven, and whether the respondent had heard about **enforcement**.



# Perceived Danger of Drinking & Driving

48%

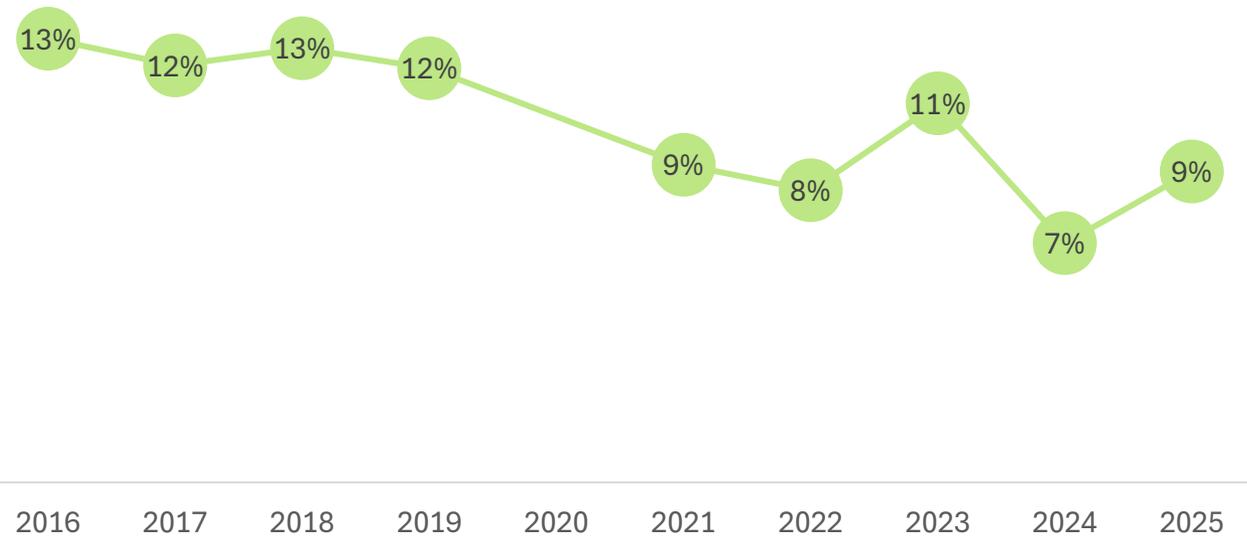
Forty-eight percent of survey respondents reported that they thought drinking and driving was *very* or *extremely dangerous*, but this rate varied by survey **site**, **sex**, **miles** driven, and **vehicle** driven.



# Drinking & Driving Rates

9%

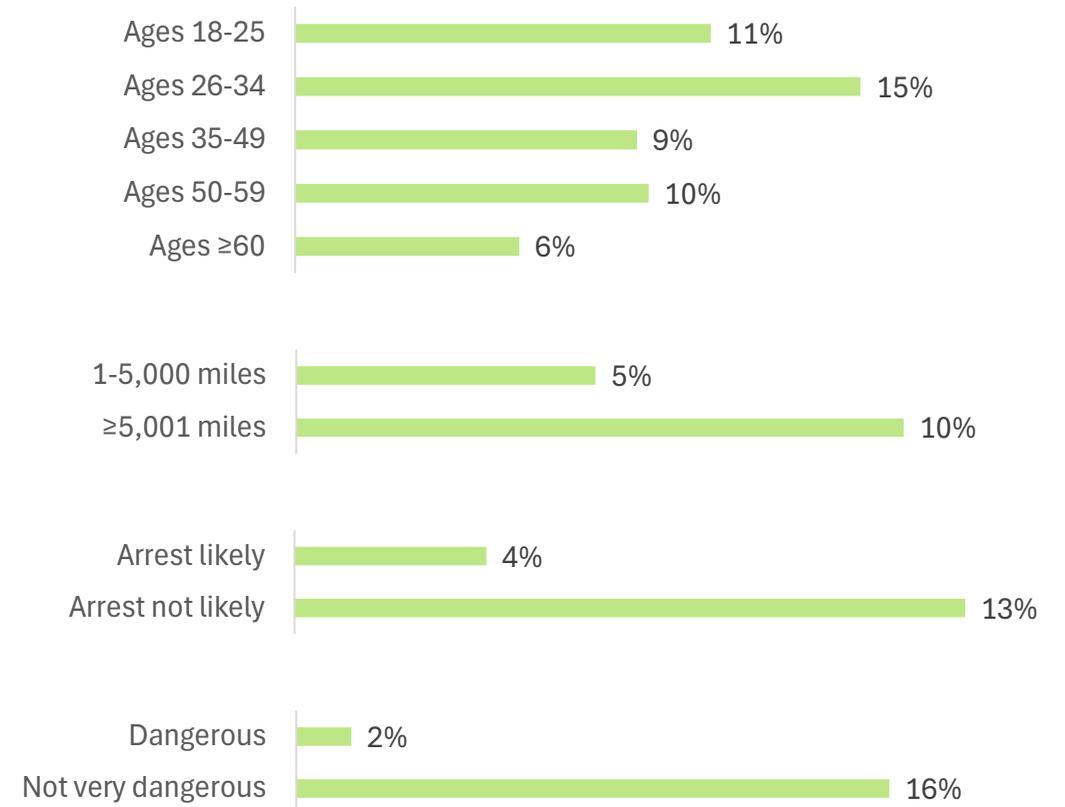
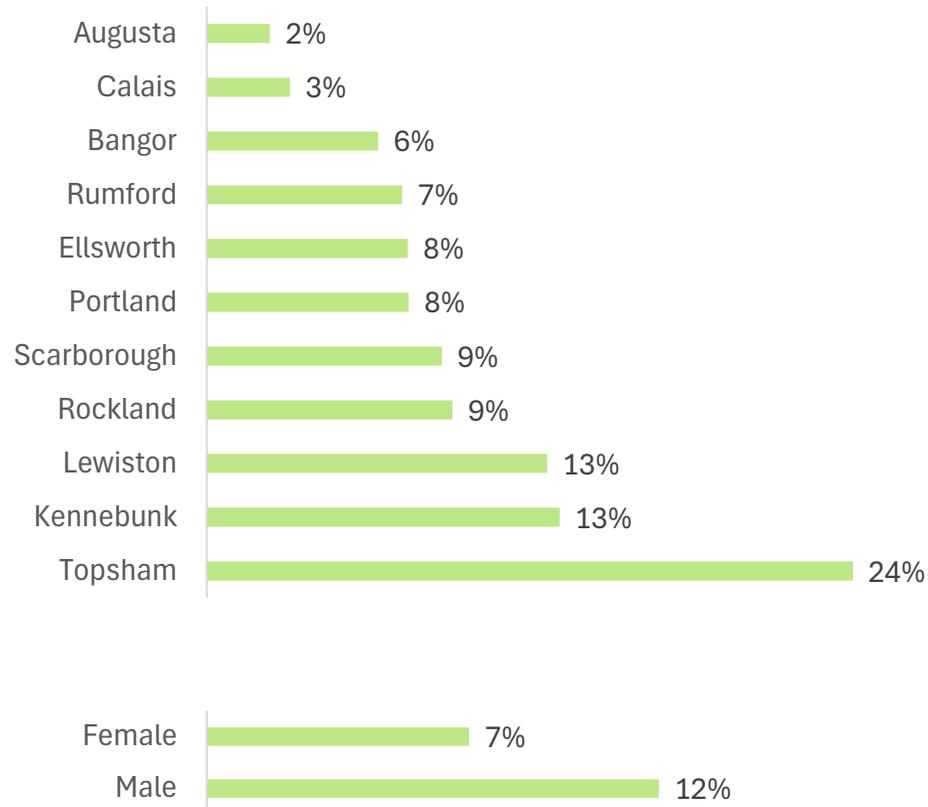
Nine percent of survey respondents reported that they drove within two hours of drinking within the past 60 days.



This is an increase from the 2024 rate of 7%.

# Drinking & Driving Rates

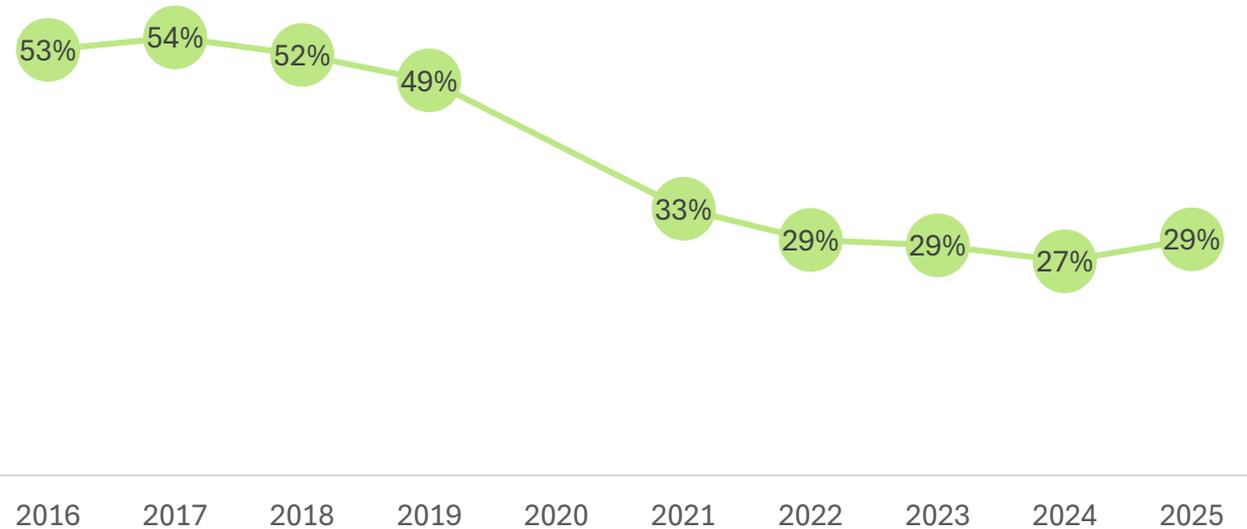
While **9%** of survey respondents reported that they drove within two hours of drinking within the past 60 days, this rate varied by survey **site**, **sex**, **age**, **miles** driven, whether the respondent thought **arrest** was likely, and the perceived **danger** of the behavior.



# Heard About Speed Enforcement

**29%**

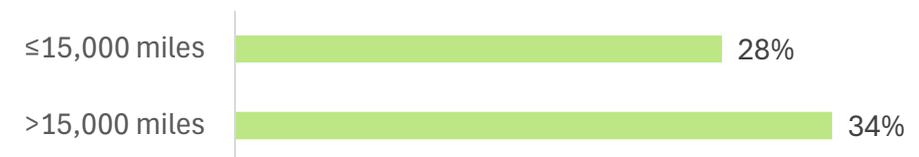
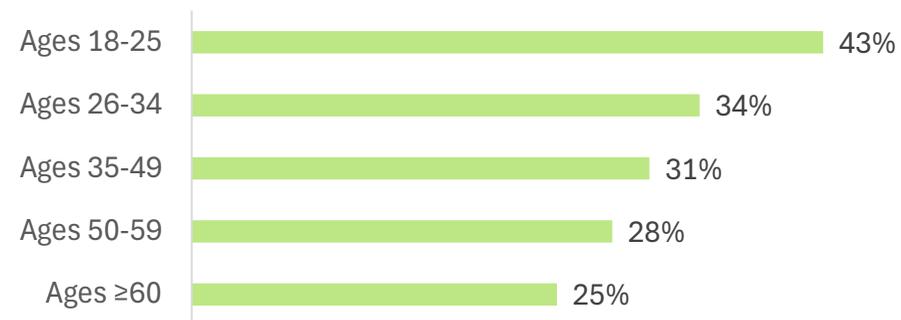
Twenty-nine percent of survey respondents saw or heard about extra enforcement of speed laws within the last 60 days.



This rate has remained stable over the past four years.

# Heard About Speed Enforcement

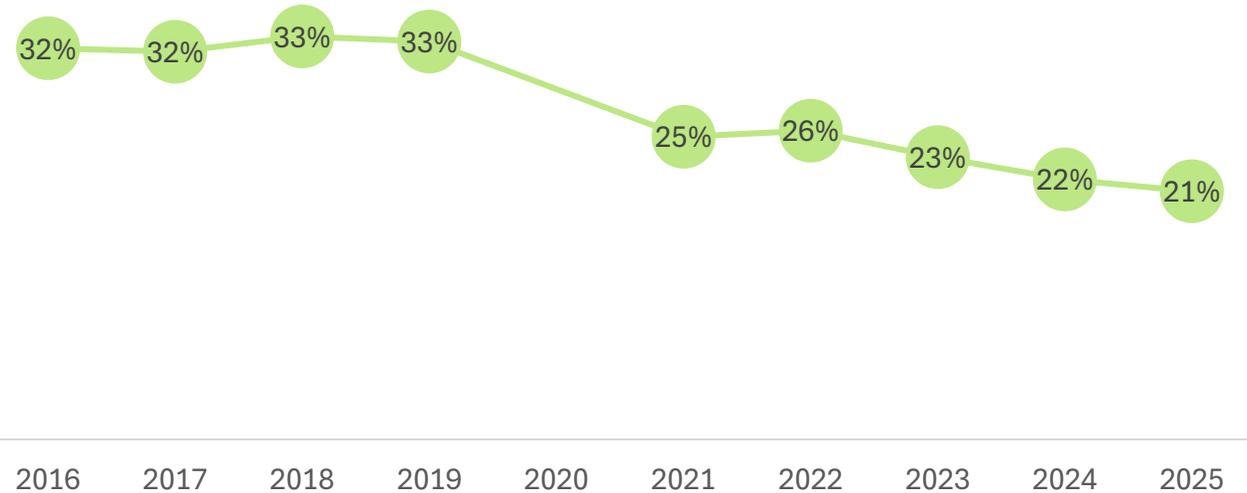
While **29%** of survey respondents saw or heard about extra enforcement of speed laws within the last 60 days, this rate varied by **age** and **miles** driven.



# Perceived Chances of Ticket for Speeding

21%

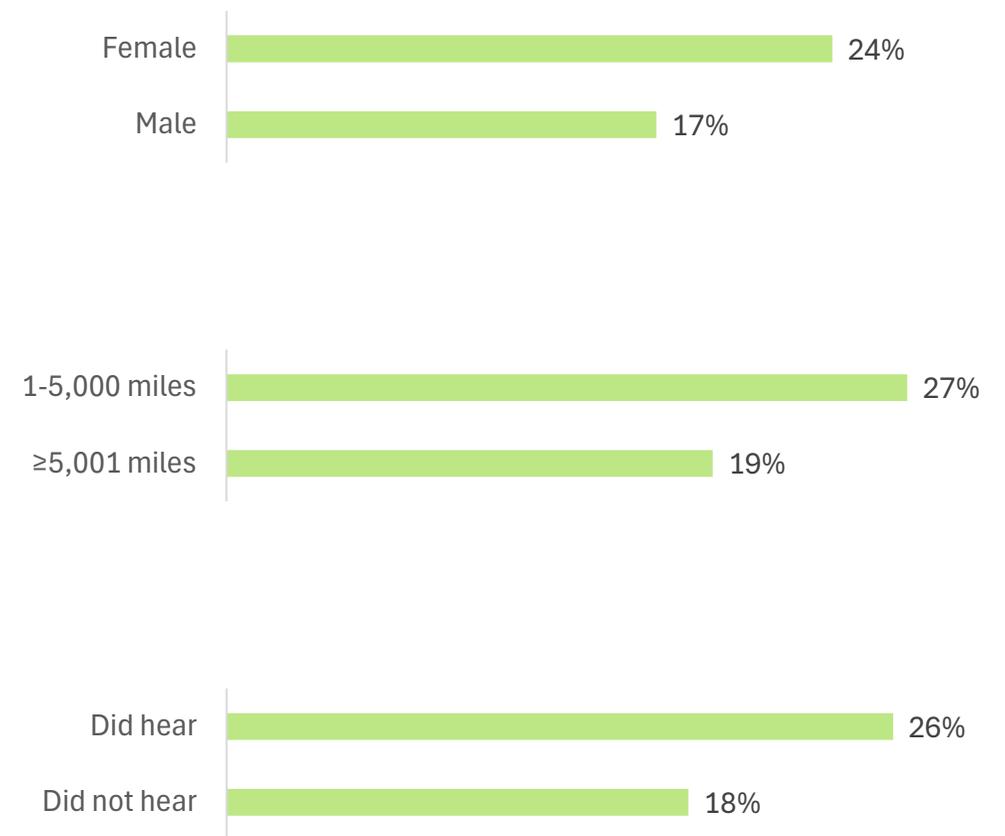
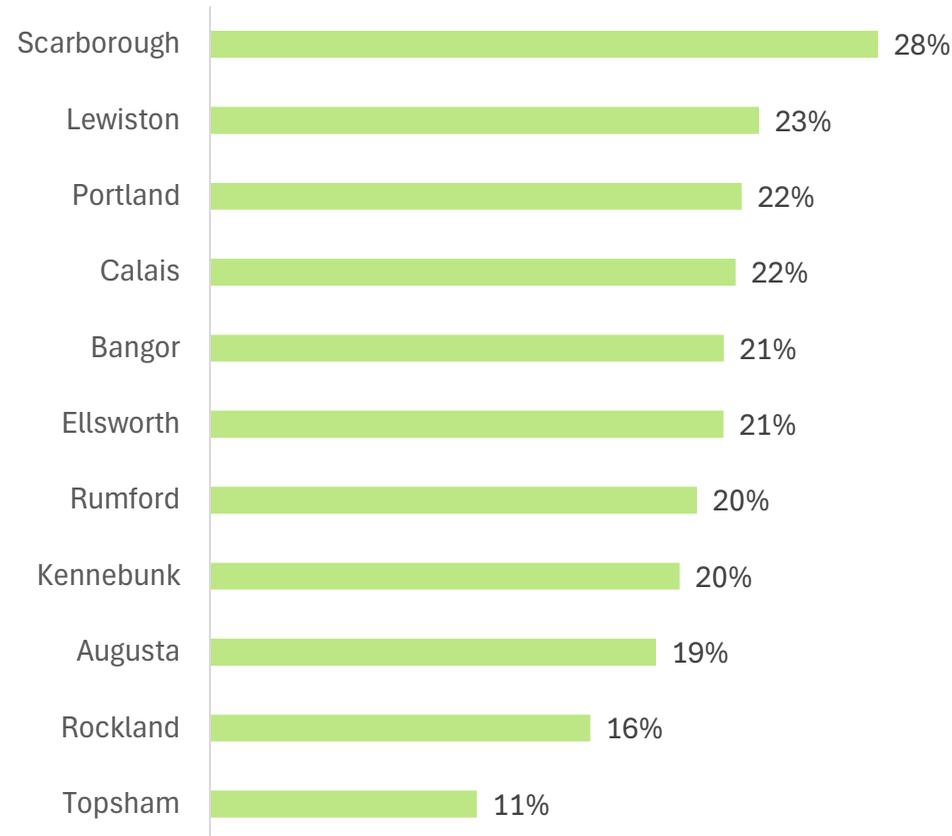
Twenty-one percent of survey respondents reported that they thought they would *always* or *nearly always* get a ticket if they drove over the speed limit.



This rate has remained stable over the past three years.

# Perceived Chances of Ticket for Speeding

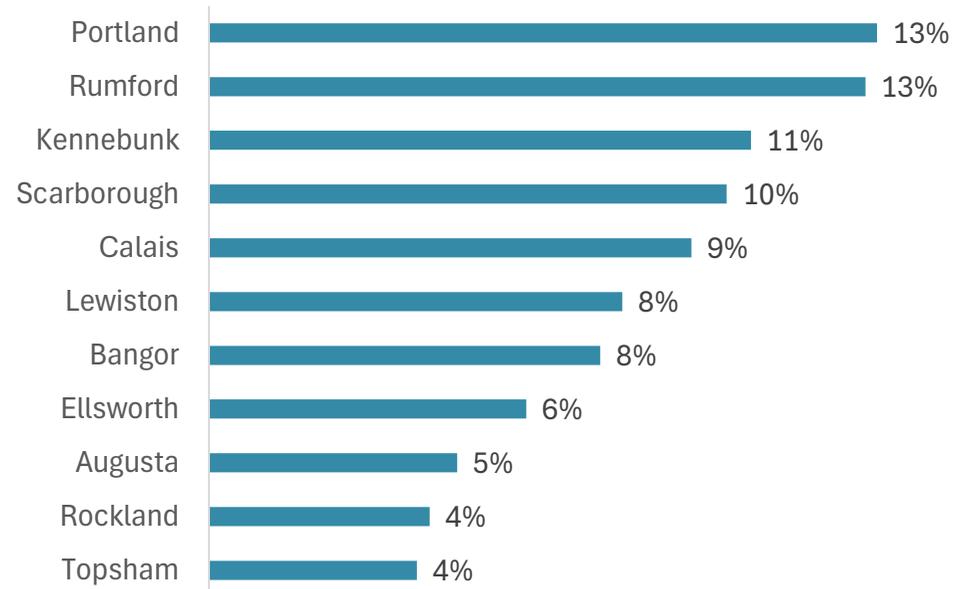
While **21%** of survey respondents reported that they thought they would *always* or *nearly always* get a ticket if they drove over the speed limit, this rate varied by survey **site**, **sex**, **miles** driven, and whether the respondent had heard about **enforcement**.



# Perceived Danger of Speeding

8%

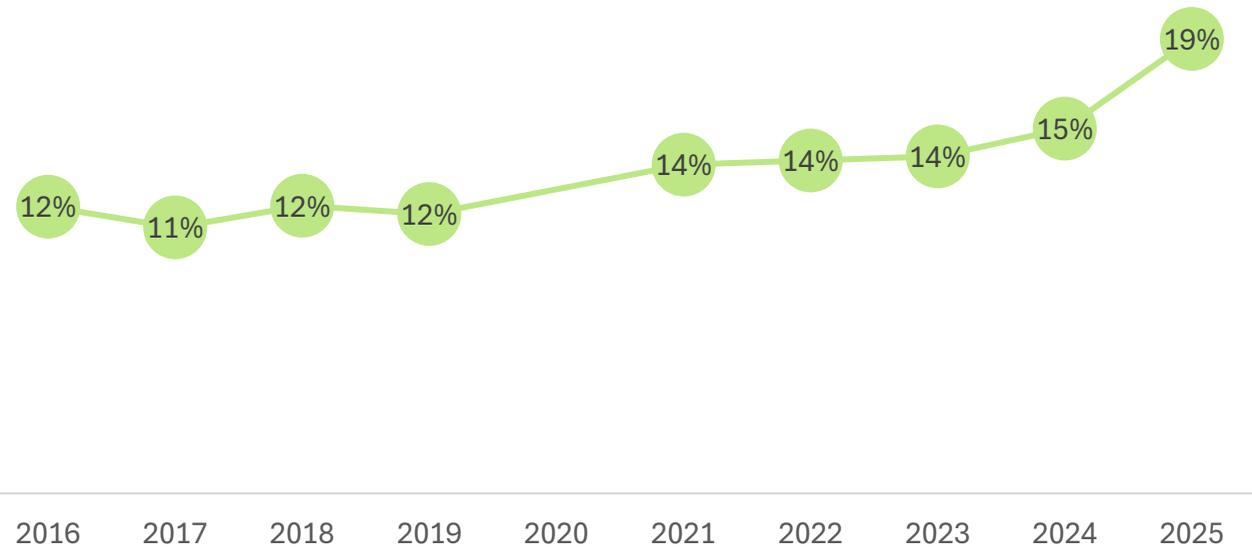
Eight percent of survey respondents reported that they thought speeding was *very* or *extremely dangerous*, but this rate varied by survey **site**, **vehicle** driven, and **miles** driven.



# Speeding Rates

**19%**

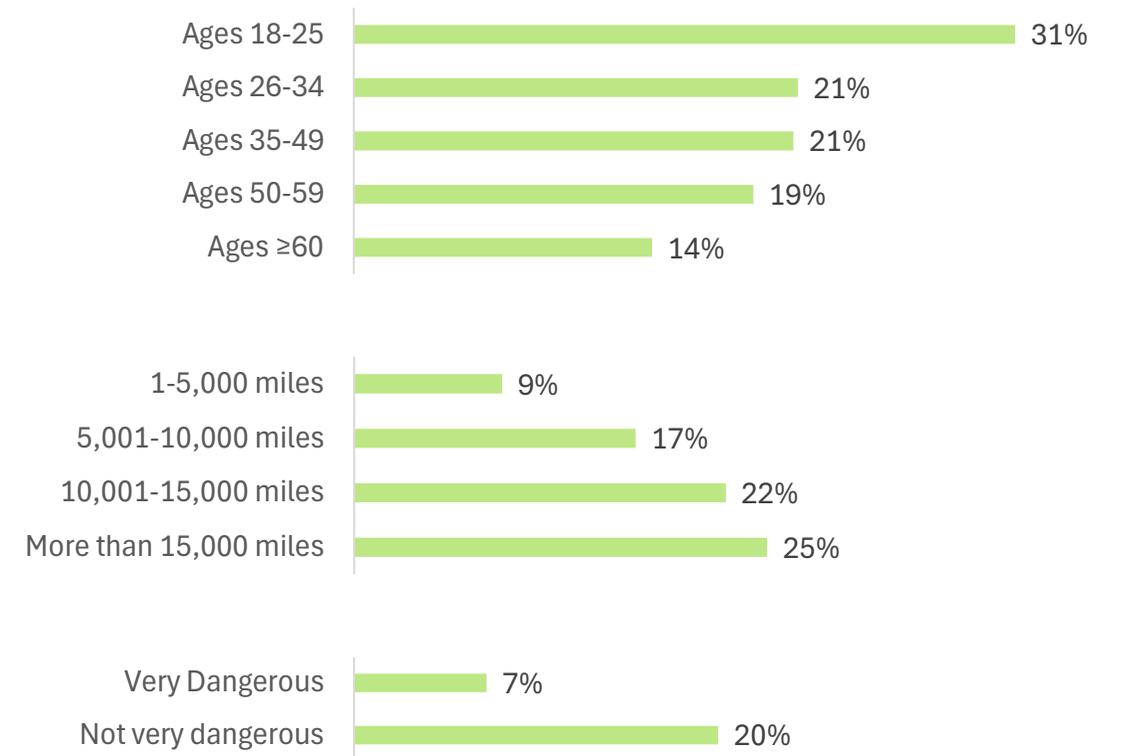
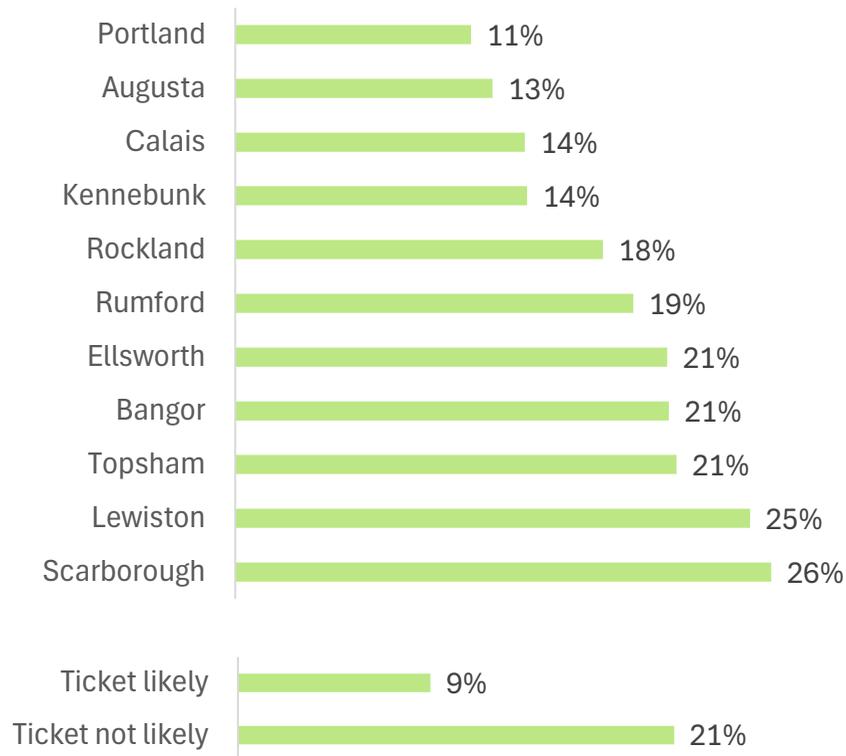
Nineteen percent of survey respondents reported that on a local road with a speed limit of 30 mph they would *always* or *nearly always* drive over 35 mph.



This is an increase from the 2024 rate of 15%.

# Speeding Rates

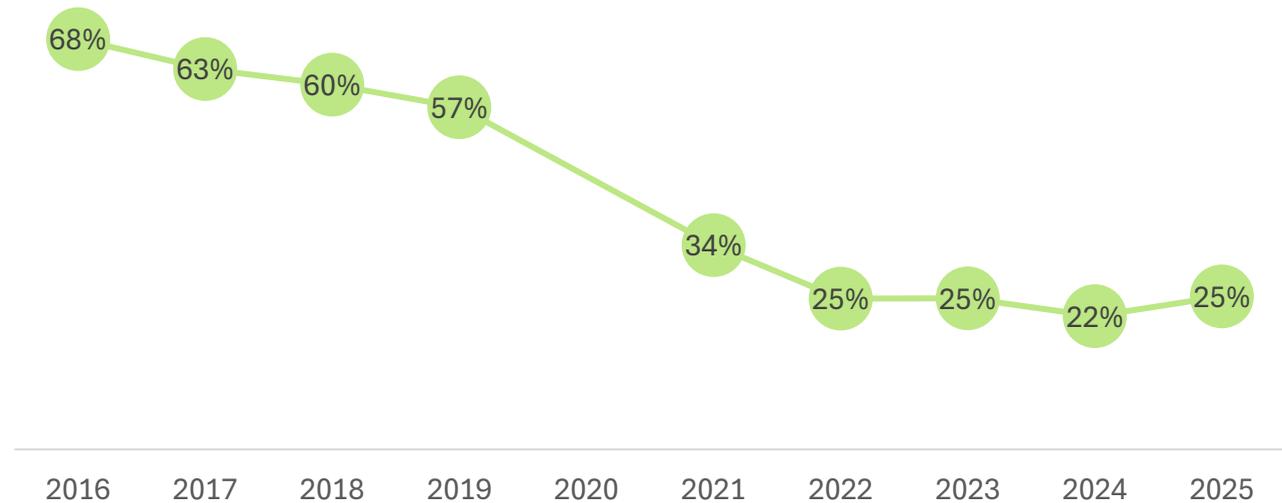
While **19%** of survey respondents reported that on a local road with a speed limit of 30 mph they would *always or nearly always* drive over 35 mph within the past 60 days, this rate varied by survey **site**, whether the respondent thought a **ticket** was likely, **age**, **miles** driven, and the perceived **danger** of the behavior.



# Heard About Distracted Driving Enforcement

24%

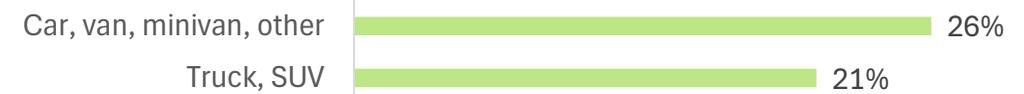
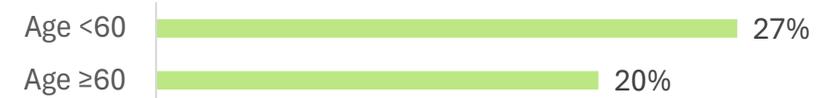
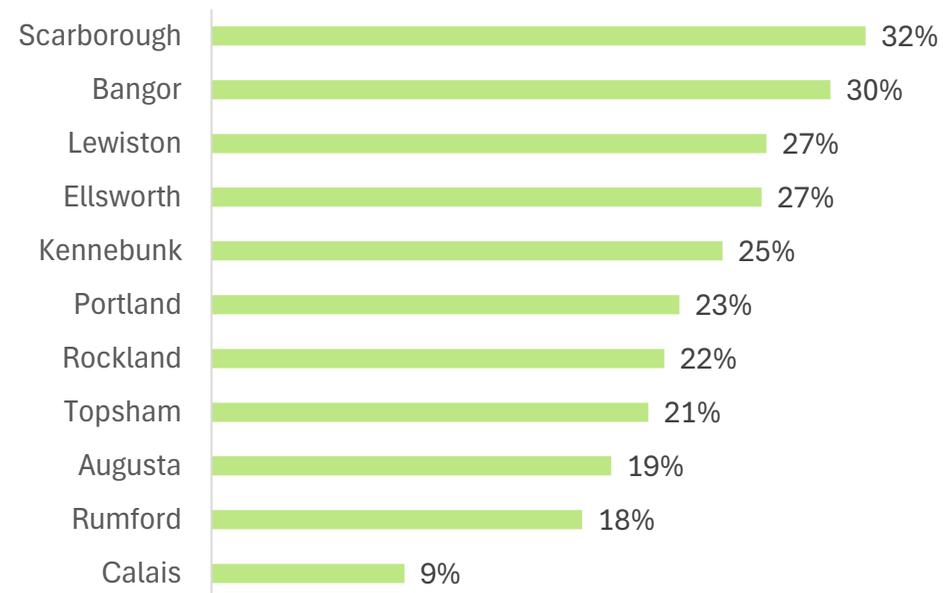
Twenty-four percent of survey respondents saw or heard about extra enforcement of distracted driving laws within the last 60 days.



This is an increase from the 2024 rate of 22%.

# Heard About Distracted Driving Enforcement

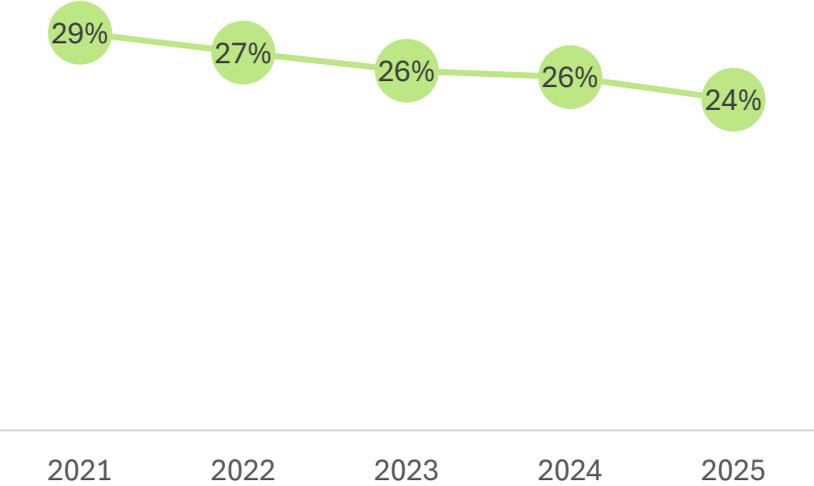
While **24%** of survey respondents saw or heard about extra enforcement of distracted driving laws within the last 60 days, this varied by survey **site**, **age**, and **vehicle** driven.



# Perceived Chances of Ticket for Distracted Driving (Talking)

24%

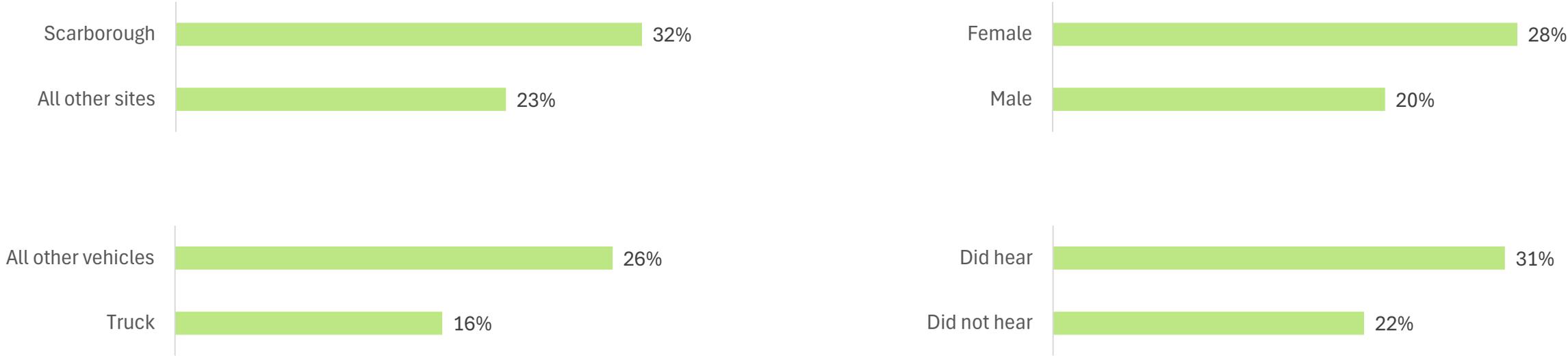
Twenty-four percent of survey respondents reported that they thought they would *always* or *nearly always* get a ticket if they talked on a handheld device while driving.



This rate has remained stable over the past three years.

# Perceived Chances of Ticket for Distracted Driving (Talking)

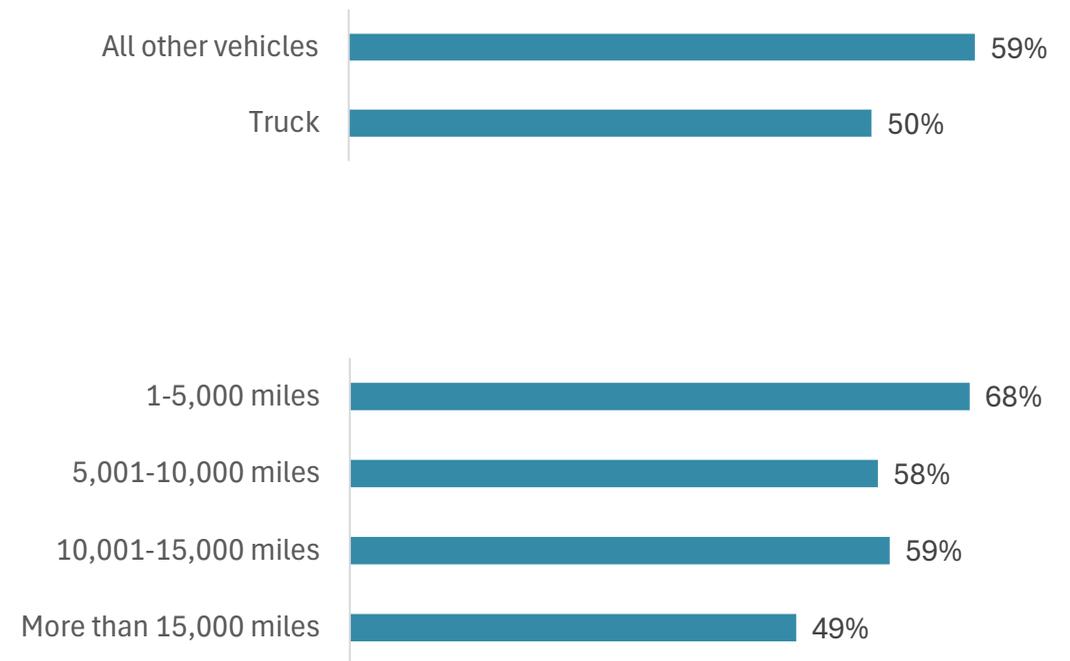
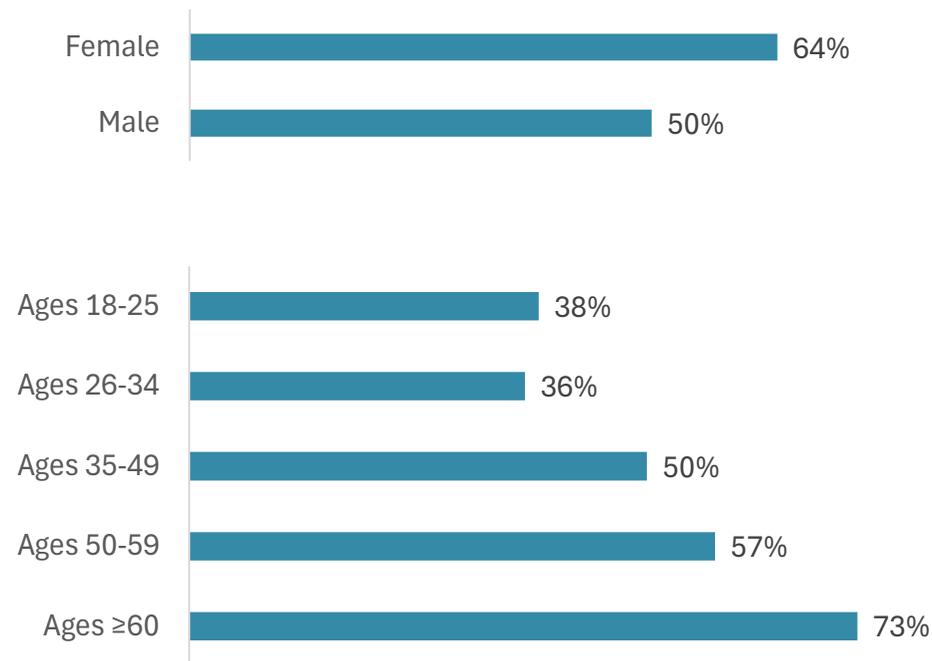
While **24%** of survey respondents reported that they thought they would *always* or *nearly always* get a ticket if they talked on a handheld device while driving, this rate varied by survey **site**, **vehicle** driven, **sex**, and whether the respondent had heard about **enforcement**.



# Perceived Danger of Distracted Driving (Talking)

58%

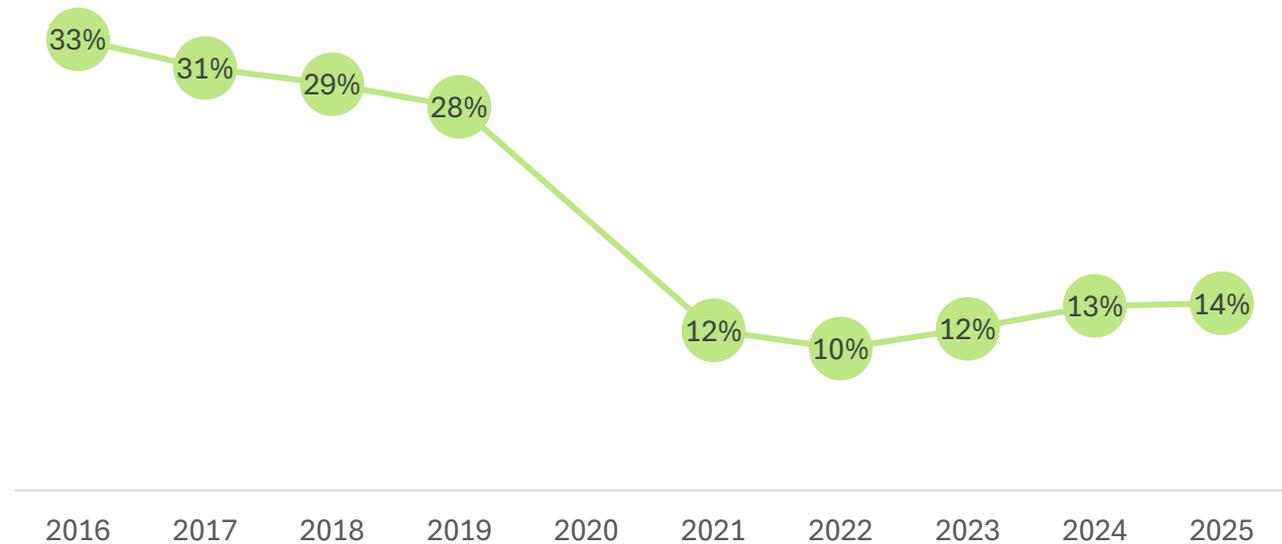
Fifty-eight percent of survey respondents reported that they thought talking on a handheld device while driving was *very* or *extremely dangerous*, but this rate varied by **sex**, **age**, **vehicle** driven, and **miles** driven.



# Distracted Driving Rates (Talking)

14%

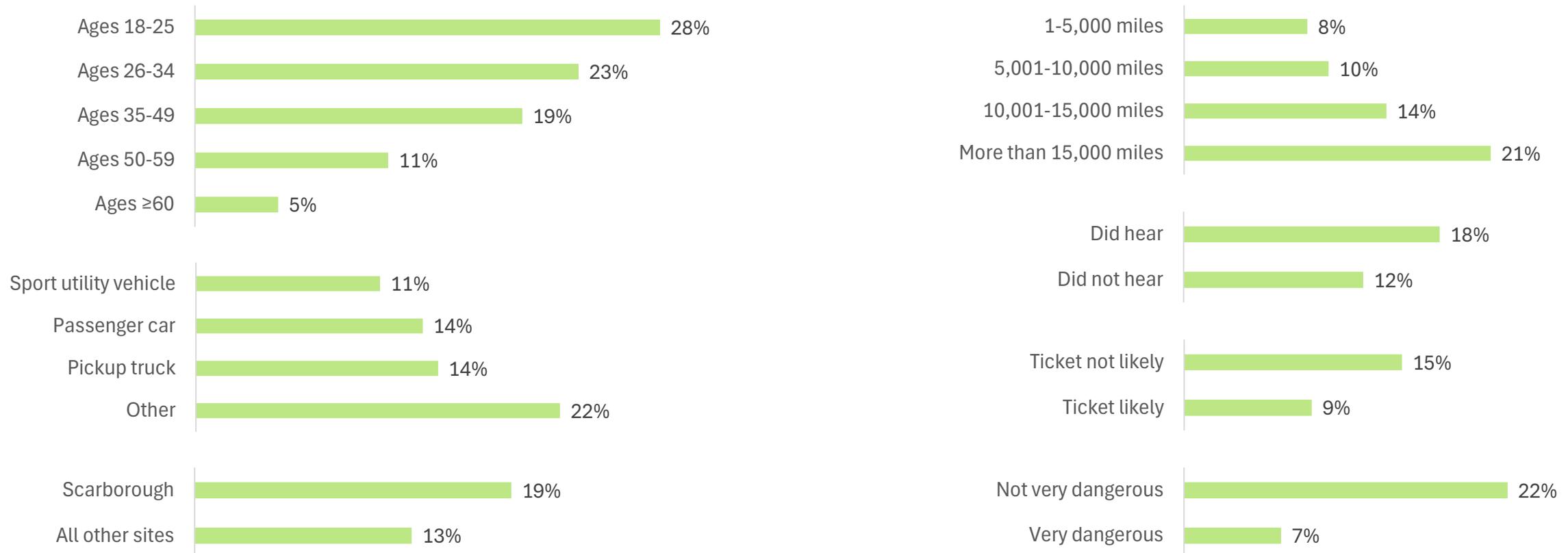
Fourteen percent of survey respondents reported that they talked on a handheld device *sometimes, nearly always, or always* while driving.



This rate has remained stable over the past three years.

# Distracted Driving Rates (Talking)

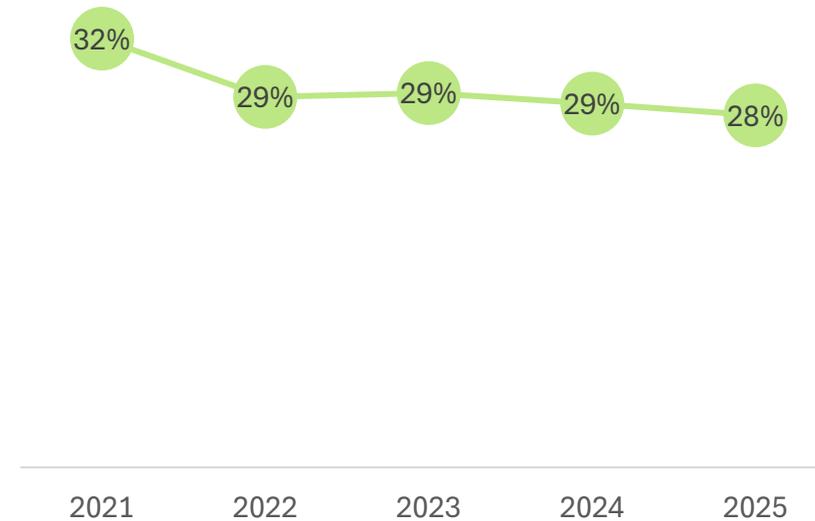
While **14%** of survey respondents reported that they talked on a handheld device *sometimes, nearly always, or always* while driving, this rate varied by **age, vehicle** driven, survey **site, miles** driven, whether the respondent had heard about **enforcement**, whether the respondent thought a **ticket** was likely, and the perceived **danger** of the behavior.



# Perceived Chances of Ticket for Distracted Driving (Texting)

28%

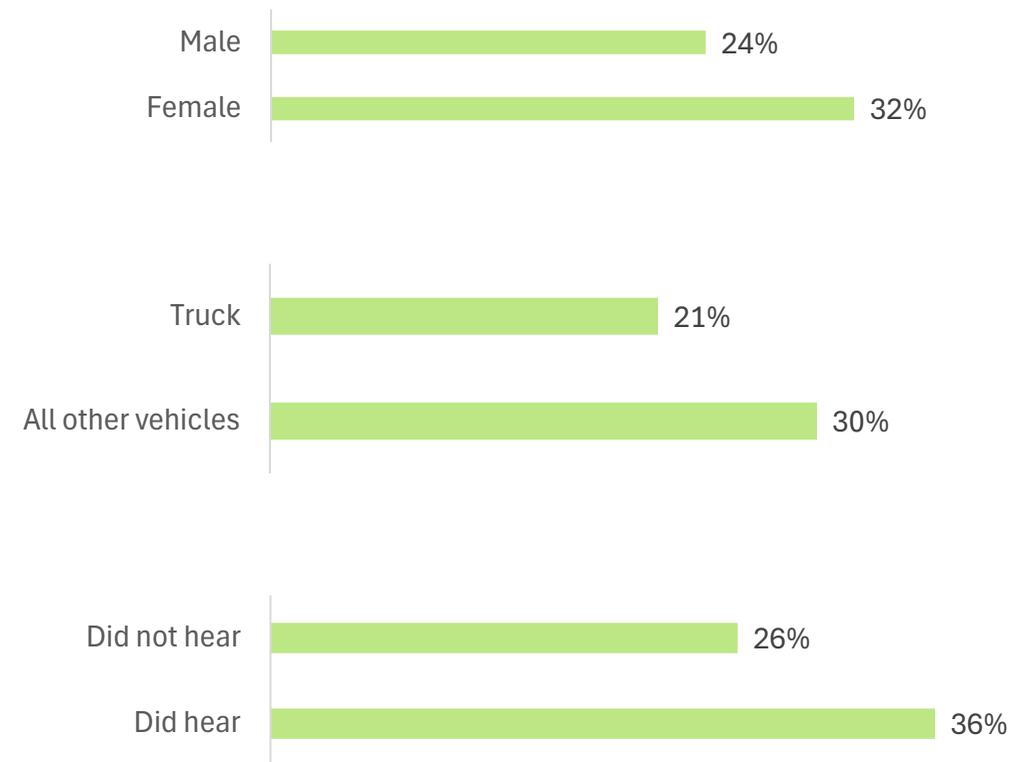
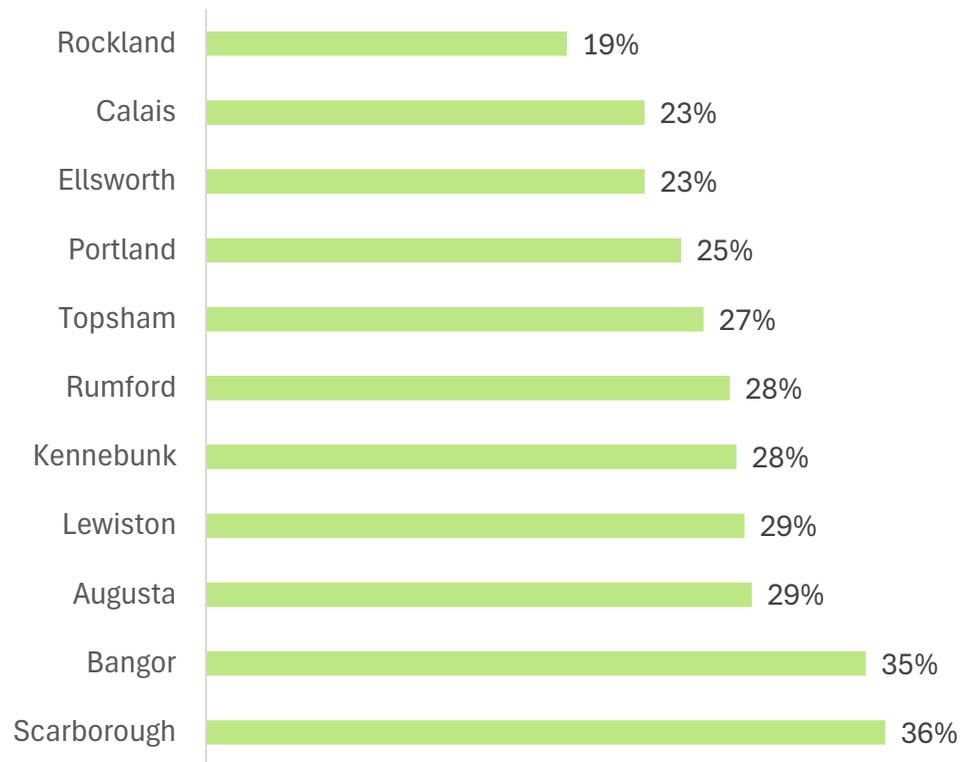
Twenty-eight percent of survey respondents reported that they thought they would *always* or *nearly always* get a ticket if they texted on a handheld device while driving.



This rate has remained stable over the past four years.

# Perceived Chances of Ticket for Distracted Driving (Texting)

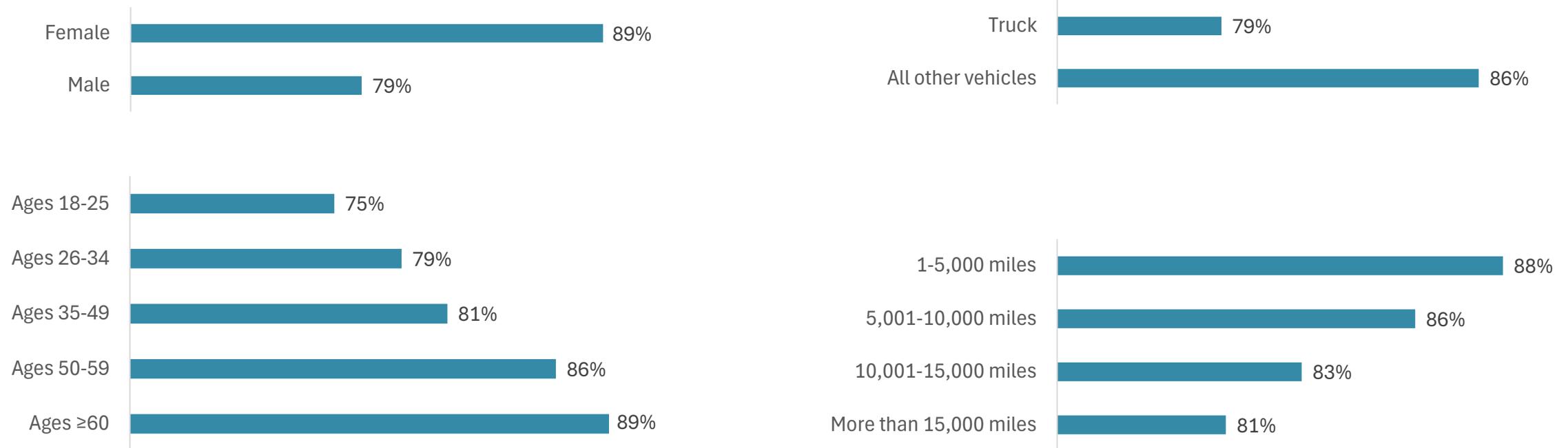
While **28%** of survey respondents reported that they thought they would *always* or *nearly always* get a ticket if they texted on a handheld device while driving, this rate varied by survey **site**, **sex**, **vehicle** driven, and whether the respondent had heard about **enforcement**.



# Perceived Danger of Distracted Driving (Texting)

84%

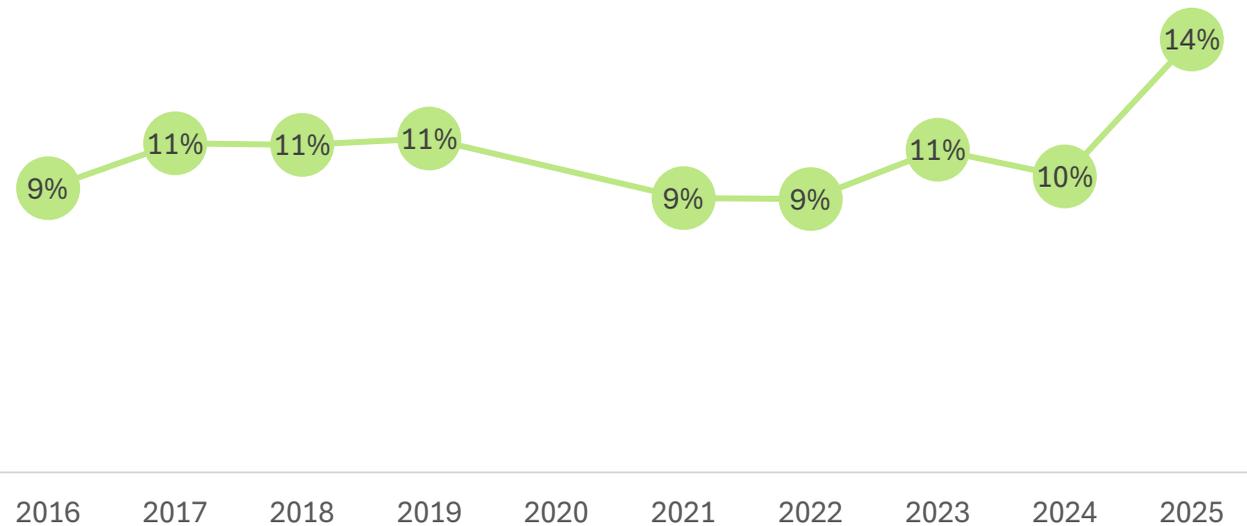
Eighty-four percent of survey respondents reported that they thought texting on a handheld device while driving was *very or extremely dangerous*, but this rate varied by **sex**, **age**, **vehicle** driven, and **miles** driven.



# Distracted Driving Rates (Texting)

14%

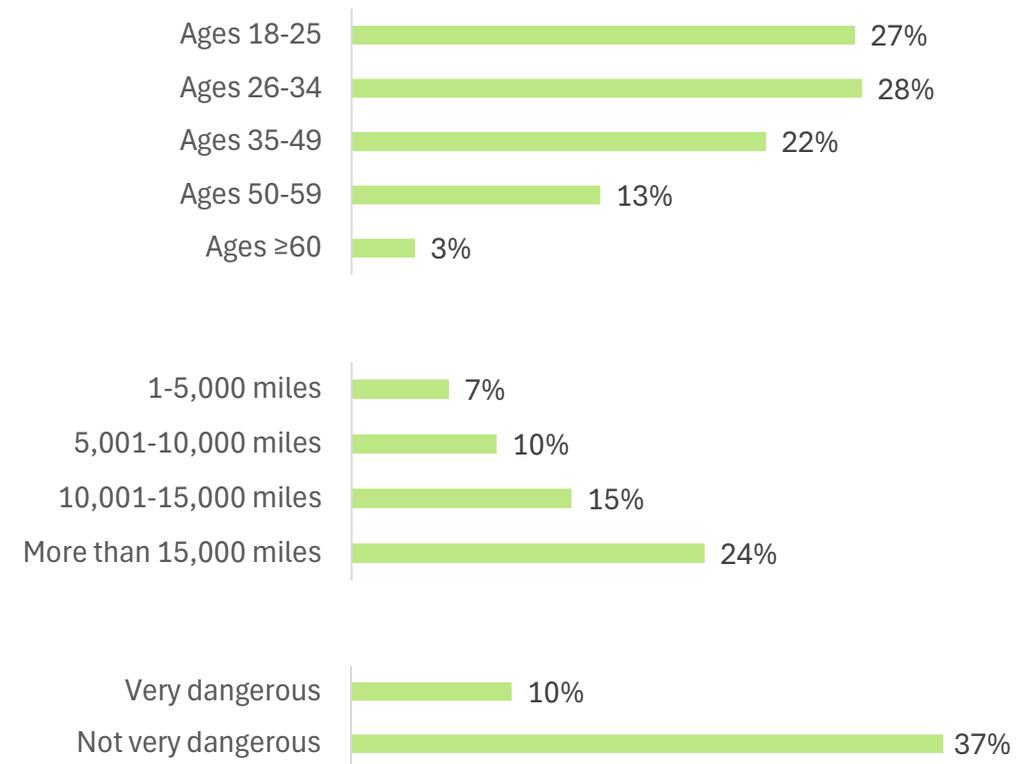
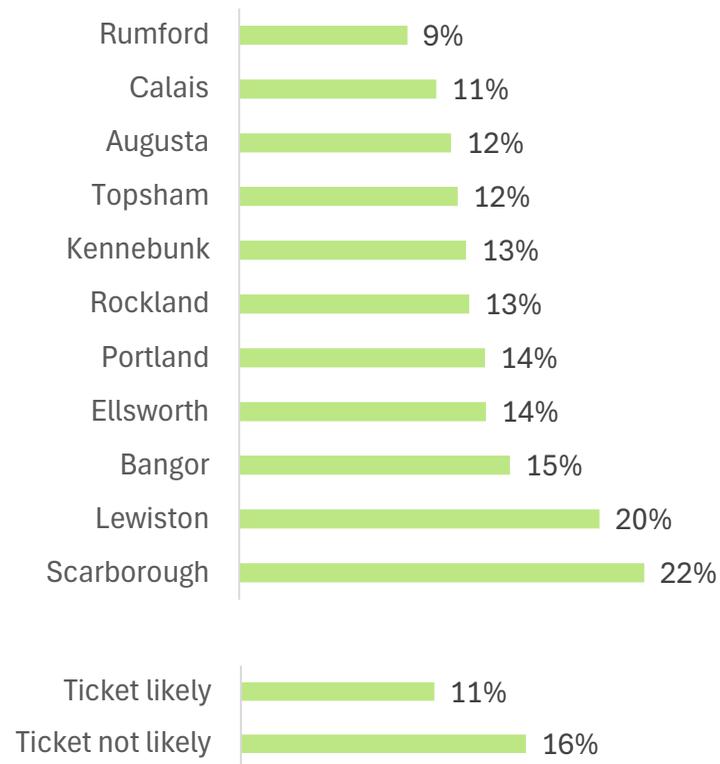
Fourteen percent of survey respondents reported that they texted on a handheld device *sometimes, nearly always, or always* while driving.



This rate increased from the 2024 rate of 10%.

# Distracted Driving Rates (Texting)

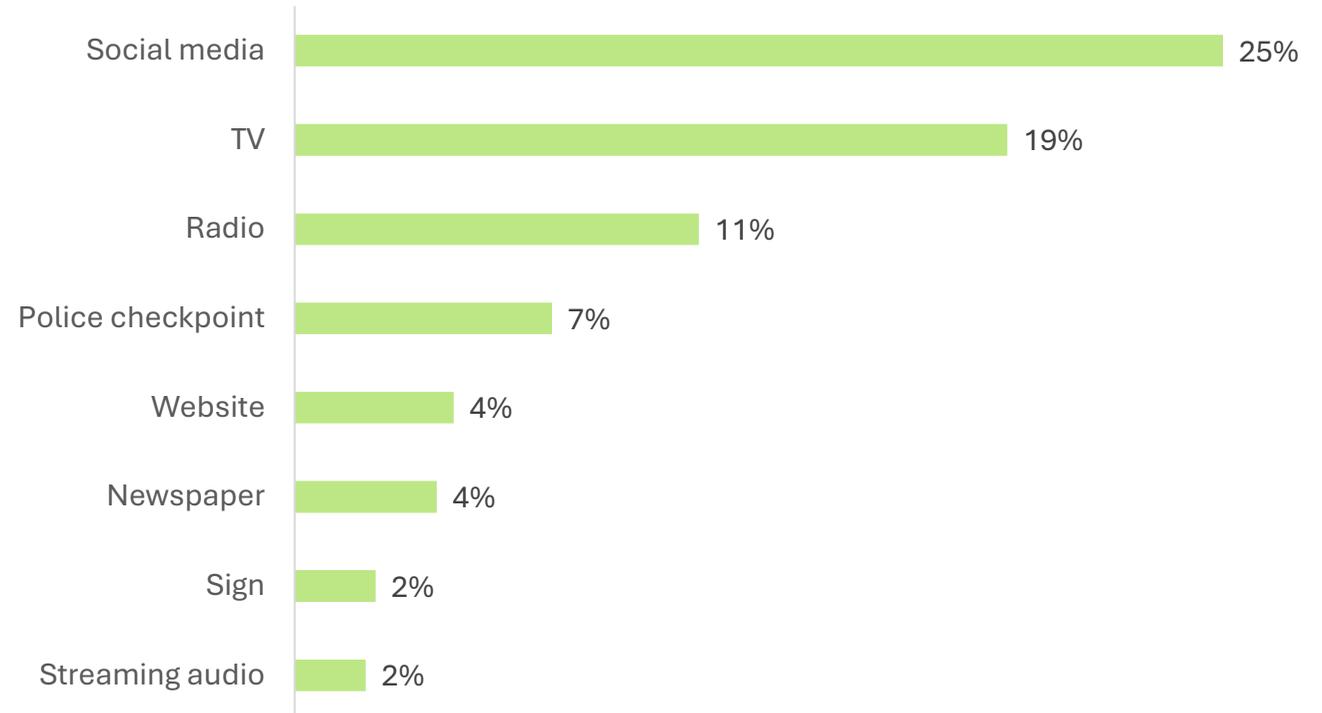
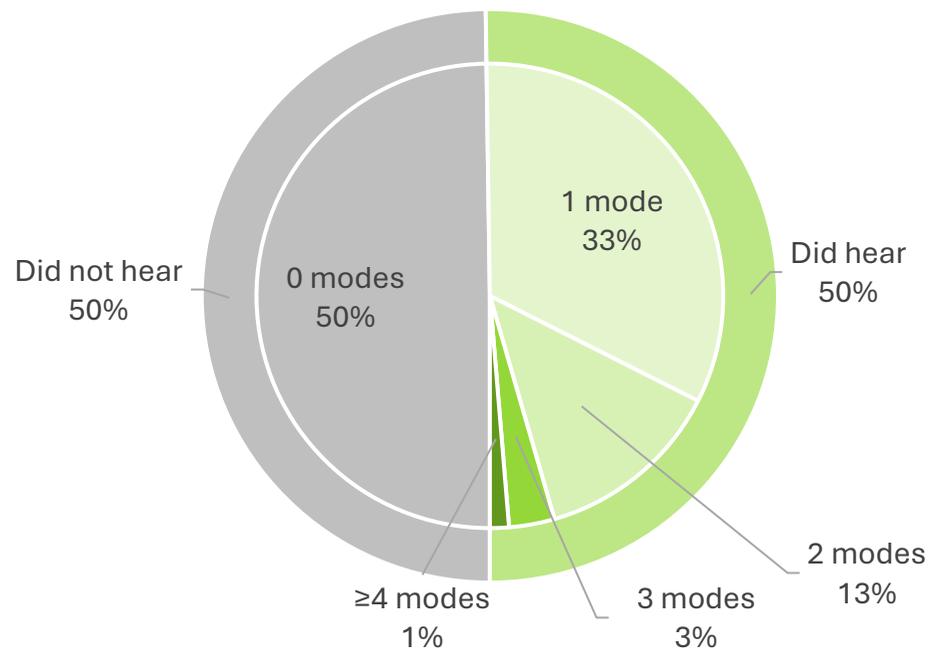
While **14%** of survey respondents reported that they texted on a handheld device *sometimes, nearly always, or always* while driving, this rate varied by **survey site**, whether the respondent thought a **ticket** was likely, **age**, **miles** driven, and the perceived **danger** of the behavior.



# Modes of Hearing About Enforcement

50%

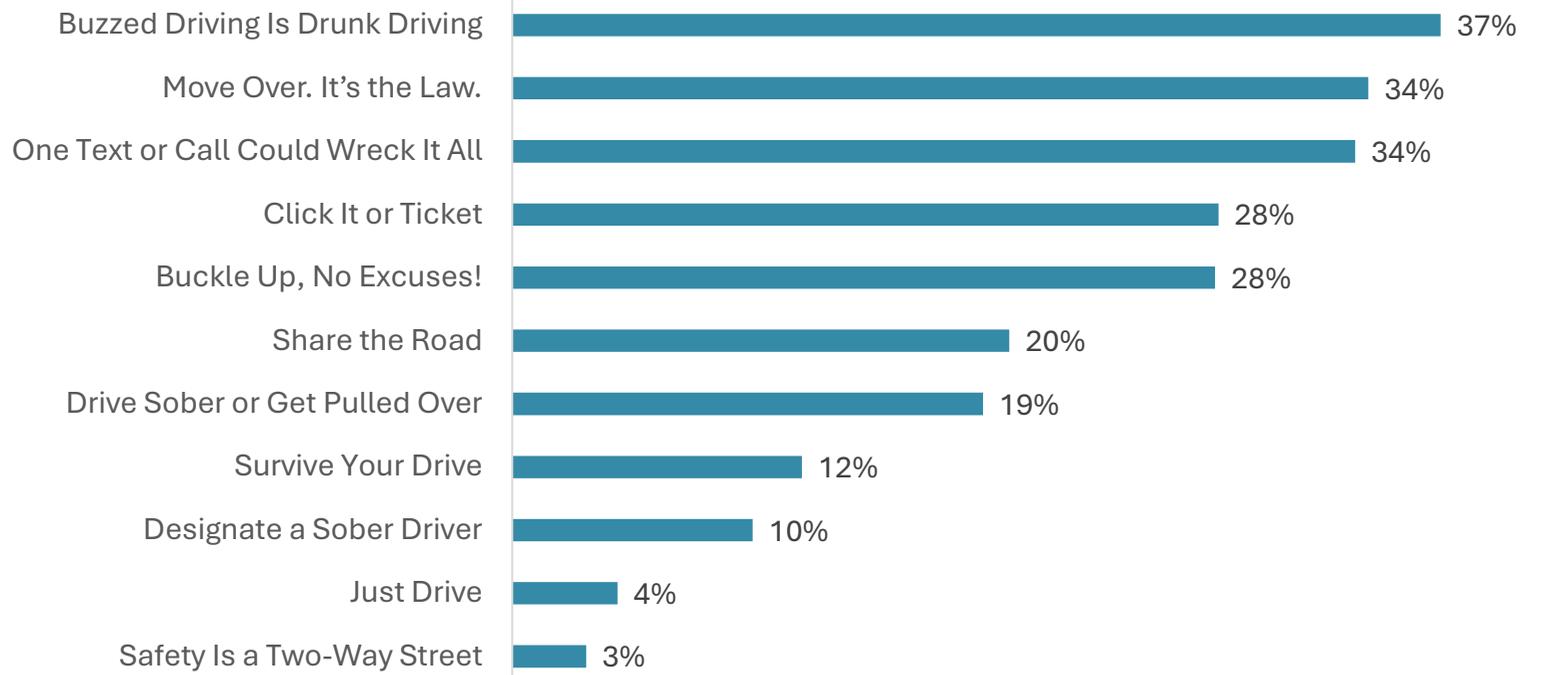
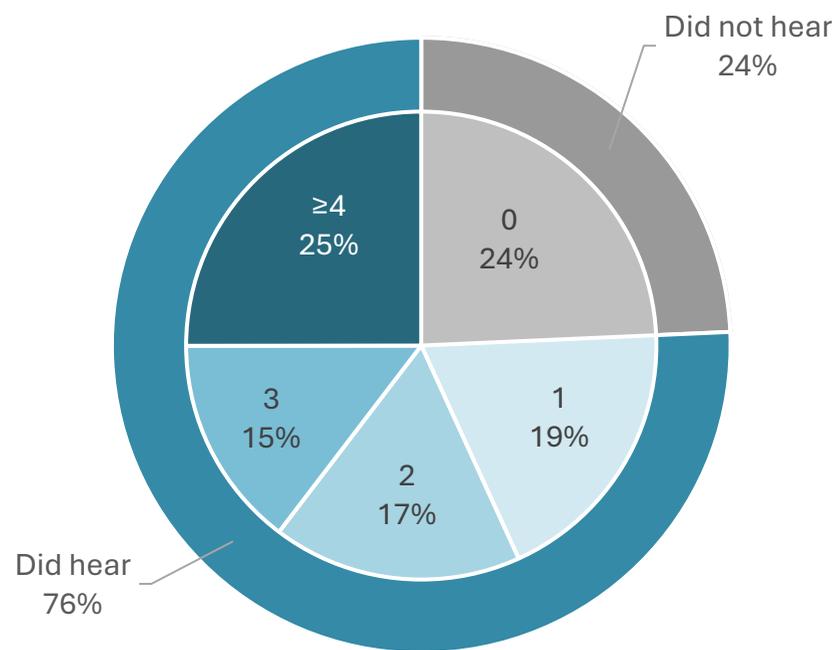
Fifty percent of survey respondents reported hearing about extra police enforcement within the last 60 days through one or more modes.



# Safety Message Heard

76%

Seventy-six percent of survey respondents reported hearing about at least one public service message related to highway safety within the last 60 days.



## About the Muskie School of Public Service

The Muskie School of Public Service is Maine's distinguished public policy school, combining an extensive applied research and technical assistance portfolio with rigorous undergraduate and graduate degree programs in geography-anthropology; tourism and hospitality; policy, planning, and management (MPPM); and public health (MPH). The school is nationally recognized for applying innovative knowledge to critical issues in the fields of sustainable development and health and human service policy and management and is home to the Catherine Cutler Institute for Health and Social Policy.

## About the Catherine Cutler Institute for Health and Social Policy

The Catherine Cutler Institute for Health and Social Policy at the Muskie School of Public Service is dedicated to developing innovative, evidence-informed, and practical approaches to pressing health and social challenges faced by individuals, families, and communities.

## About the Survey Research Center

The Survey Research Center provides technical expertise and assistance to support the generation, processing, and analysis of quantitative data in the social sciences, human services, and public opinion fields. The Center provides a wide range of research and technical assistance services to federal, state, and municipal governments, private nonprofit agencies, businesses, and University faculty and departments. Services include proposal preparation, market research, needs assessments, program evaluation, policy analysis, and information system design.