



**MONTANA CONTRACTORS ASSOC.**  
THE CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION

**For immediate release**

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## **Montana Ranks First in Nation For Increase in Pre-Pandemic Vehicle Travel**

A report released this week indicates that Montana is leading the nation in increase of vehicle miles of travel (VMT) since March 2019. The current VMT actually surpasses pre-COVID levels.

The report was released by the National Transportation Research Nonprofit (TRIP), a private, nonprofit organization that researches, evaluates, and distributes economic and technical data on surface transportation issues. The report highlighted that Montana’s VMT for the time period March 2019 to March 2021 increased by 13.3% above the pre-COVID VMT. The nationwide average during that time period is a 3.0% decrease.

<b>States Exceeding Pre-Pandemic Vehicle Travel - March 2019 to March 2021</b>					
1	Montana	13.3%	9	Utah	3.2%
2	South Dakota	12.7%	10	Tennessee	2.6%
3	Idaho	11.7%	11	Wyoming	1.9%
4	Arizona	9.6%	12	Texas	1.3%
5	Nebraska	7.8%	13	Alaska	0.7%
6	Oklahoma	5.0%	14	Kentucky	0.7%
7	Missouri	4.9%	15	Iowa	0.2%
8	Arkansas	4.3%	<b>U.S. Average: - 3%</b>		

“These numbers reflect what we already know in Montana – it’s a long way between towns, and we like to drive there,” stated David Smith, executive director of the Montana Contractors Association. “In addition, MDT fuel consumption projections now exceed pre-COVID projections. MDT is projecting a \$10 million increase in fuel tax revenues. This emphasizes the importance of the Bridge and Road Safety Act passed by the Legislature in 2017. Local communities can use the funds to improve the roadway infrastructure as they see fit.”

The TRIP report can be found here. <https://tripnet.org/reports/transportation-impact-and-implications-of-covid-19-may-2021/>

TRIP releases state-specific details regarding surface transportation. Many patterns in the statistics can indicate future correlations with a state's ability to experience economic growth. The latest fact sheet for Montana for May 2021 can be found on TRIP's website at: [https://tripnet.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/TRIP\\_Fact\\_Sheet\\_MT.pdf](https://tripnet.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/TRIP_Fact_Sheet_MT.pdf)

With Memorial Day approaching this weekend, the holiday typically marks the start of the summer travel season. Along with the nicer weather comes the opportunity for road crews across the state to work on improving access and upgrades to Montana's aging infrastructure system. "With more vehicles traveling longer distances and driving more miles, we encourage drivers to be alert, slow down, and give construction crews plenty of room," Smith reminds travelers. "Patience and planning are key to making sure we all get to our destinations safely."

*The Montana Contractors Association is a chartered chapter of the Associated General Contractors of America. The MCA represents contractors in highway, building, heavy/civil and suppliers of products and services.*

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