



Kisling, Nestico
& Redick, LLC
OHIO INJURY ATTORNEYS

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The State of Trucking Safety in Ohio

A data-driven look at commercial trucking, crash trends, and the evolving risks on Ohio's roadways.





| Table of Contents

<u>Key Findings</u>	3
<u>Why This Matters Now</u>	4
<u>Truck Accidents by the Numbers</u>	5
<u>How Truck Accidents Happen</u>	6
<u>The Future of Trucking</u>	7
<u>How Ohio Drivers Can Stay Safe Around Large Trucks</u>	8
<u>If You Are in a Crash with a Commercial Truck</u>	9

| Key Findings

- 147 people died in crashes involving large trucks in Ohio in 2025.¹
- 71 percent of fatal truck accident victims were riding in another vehicle in Ohio in 2024.²
- Nationally, large trucks sustained rear-end impacts in 21.2 percent of two-vehicle fatal crashes, roughly three times the rate for other vehicles (6.9 percent) in 2024.³
- Four in five large trucks involved in fatal crashes were in multivehicle crashes nationwide in 2024.⁴
- [The BUILD America 250 Act](#), which would let states opt into raising interstate truck weight limits from 80,000 to 91,000 pounds, is being considered by Congress as of August 2026.⁵
- Partially automated tractor-trailers have been running freight on I-70 between Columbus and Indianapolis since April 2025 under a state pilot.⁶

¹Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, "[Ohio: Summary, CY 2025](#)," Crash Statistics, data snapshot as of May 15, 2026.

²Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, "[Ohio: Summary, CY 2025](#)," Crash Statistics, data snapshot as of May 15, 2026.

³National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, [Traffic Safety Facts: 2022 Data — Large Trucks, National Center for Statistics and Analysis](#), 2024.

⁴National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, [Traffic Safety Facts: 2022 Data — Large Trucks, National Center for Statistics and Analysis](#), 2024.

⁵U.S. House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, "[T&I Committee Approves BUILD America 250 Act](#)," May 22, 2026.

⁶Ohio Department of Transportation, "[Ohio and Indiana Deploy Partially Automated Trucks on Interstate 70](#)," April 14, 2025.

| Why This Matters Now

Commercial trucking is central to Ohio's economy, moving goods across one of the busiest freight networks in the country. However, more trucks on the roads means a higher likelihood of more dangerous crashes for everyday drivers. A fully loaded semi-truck can weigh up to 80,000 pounds, while the average passenger car weighs closer to 3,000 pounds. Pending federal legislation could raise the weight ceiling further, making the roads even more of a threat to drivers.

Ohio has become a testing ground for automated trucks. Partially, automated tractor trailers have been operating on I-70 between Columbus and Indianapolis since April 2025 under the state pilot program. As these technologies become more prevalent on Ohio roads, liability in crashes involving autonomous trucks remains an evolving area of law, specifically when determining responsibility among the vehicle operator, technology providers, manufacturer, and other parties. Meanwhile, many of the state's counties continue to experience thousands of crashes involving commercial vehicles every year.

Large Truck Accidents by the Numbers

10,000

The number of pounds at which a vehicle is considered a large truck under federal crash data. This includes tractor-trailers, as well as single-unit box trucks and dump trucks.

71%

The percentage of people in Ohio, killed in crashes involving large trucks in 2024 who were occupants of other vehicles.

5,340

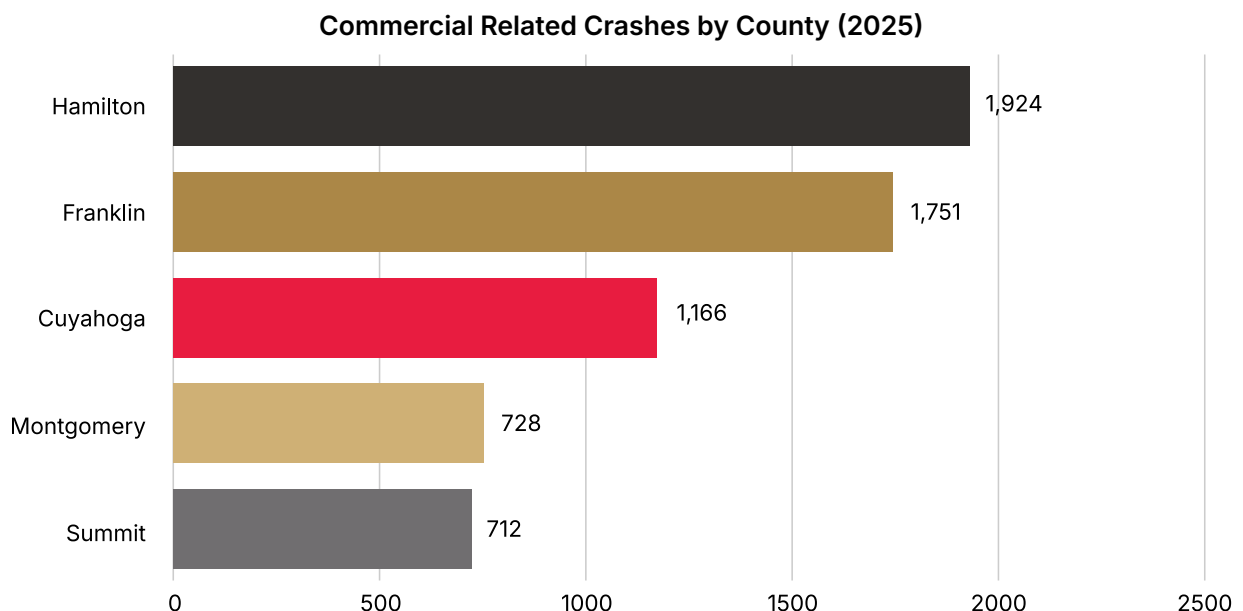
The number of people killed in large truck crashes nationwide in 2024, with an estimated 161,201 more injured. Seventy percent of those killed were occupants of other vehicles according to the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration \(NHTSA\)](#).

76%

The percentage of fatal crashes involving large trucks nationwide that occurred on weekdays, between 6 a.m. Monday and 5:59 p.m. Friday. Eighty percent of large trucks in fatal crashes were involved in multivehicle crashes.

Ohio Counties with Most Commercial Vehicle Crashes (2025)

The [Ohio State Highway Patrol](#) does not publish a separate count for large trucks, but it tracks commercial-related crashes, a broader category that includes semi-tractors alongside school buses, transit and charter buses, commercial vans, single-unit trucks over 10,000 pounds, and any vehicle carrying a hazardous material placard.



1. [Hamilton County](#): Commercial-related crashes reached 1,924 in 2025, up from 1,728 in 2023.
2. [Franklin County](#): Recorded 1,751 commercial-related crashes in 2025, up from 1,349 in 2023.
3. [Cuyahoga County](#): Reported 1,166 commercial-related crashes in 2025, down from 1,226 in 2023.
4. [Montgomery County](#): Reported 728 commercial-related crashes in 2025, up from 688 in 2023.
5. [Summit County](#): Commercial-related crashes increased to 712 in 2025, up from 674 in 2023.

| How Truck Accidents Happen

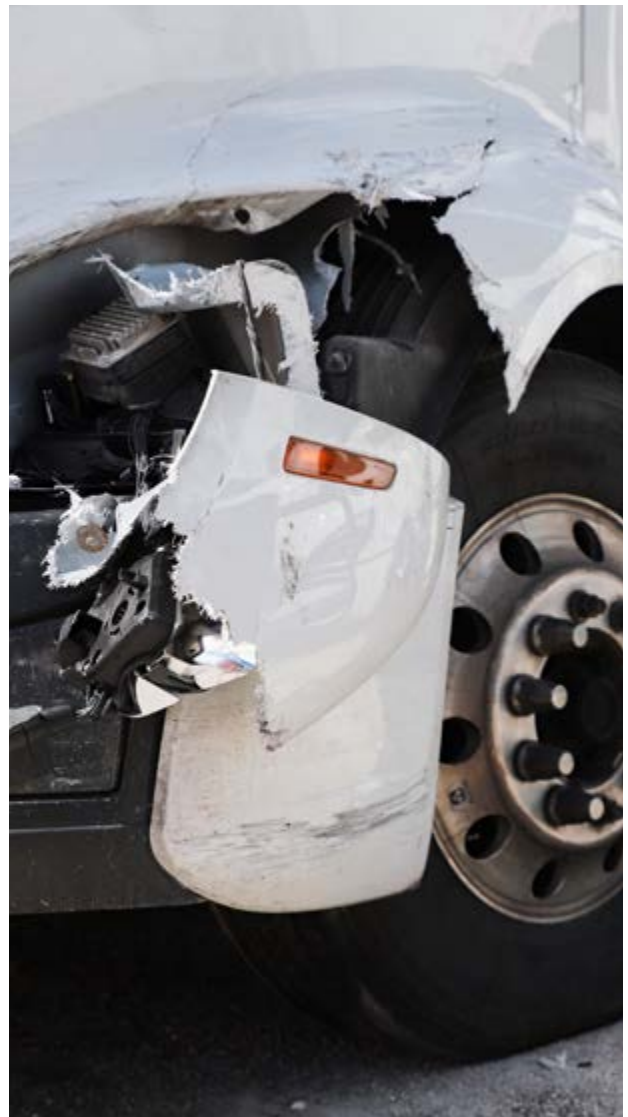
According to the [NHTSA](#), in 42.4 percent of two-vehicle fatal crashes involving a large truck, both the truck and the other vehicle were driving straight. Large trucks were struck at the front in 59.9 percent of two-vehicle fatal crashes. A loaded semi needs substantially more distance to stop than the car in front of it.

Case Study

In Montgomery County on I-75 in November 2025, a driver of a Ford cargo van was struck by a semi in the right lane after the semi did not keep a safe distance and hit the van from behind. The driver of the van died as a result of the crash. The semi driver was charged with vehicular homicide and vehicular manslaughter. I-75 north closed for several hours.

Additional common causes of crashes include:

- [Driver fatigue](#)
- [Tire blowouts](#)
- [Failure to yield](#)
- [Failure to check blind spots](#)
- [Distracted driving and texting](#)
- [Unsecured cargo](#)
- [Bad weather](#)



| The Future of Trucking

Regulation that could put heavier semis on the road

For vehicles traveling on the interstate system, Ohio limits commercial vehicles to 80,000 pounds gross weight, with a maximum of 20,000 pounds on a single axle and 34,000 pounds on a tandem axle.

The [BUILD America 250 Act](#) includes an amendment establishing a voluntary pilot program that would let individual states raise the maximum gross vehicle weight on federal interstates from 80,000 to 91,000 pounds. Trucks operating at the higher weight would be required to carry a sixth axle to distribute the load. States that decline to participate keep the 80,000-pound limit, which means Ohio would have to opt in for the change to reach its highways. The bill cleared the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee in May 2026 and awaits a floor vote.

KNR Managing Partner John Reagan has [warned against passing it](#), noting that heavier trucks require longer stopping distances, reduce maneuverability, and increase the force of a collision, potentially resulting in more severe injuries.

Ohio's automated truck corridor

Ohio serves as a testing ground for automated trucks. Partially automated tractor-trailers have been hauling freight on I-70 between Columbus and Indianapolis since April 2025. The [\\$8.8 million project](#) is partly funded by a U.S. Department of Transportation grant and run by the Ohio Department of Transportation and its DriveOhio initiative together with the Indiana Department of Transportation, with [EASE Logistics](#) operating the trucks and Kratos Defense supplying the technology.

The technology is truck platooning rather than driverless operation. Two tractor-trailers travel in tandem, and the lead truck's driver electronically controls the follower, which can steer, accelerate and brake on portions of the route. Professional drivers remain in both cabs throughout the drive. The automated trucks are specifically in Ohio to be tested in windy and snow-covered environments, potentially putting Ohio drivers at risk.

Ohio currently governs automated vehicle testing through executive order and the DriveOhio framework rather than a dedicated statute.

How Ohio Drivers Can Stay Safe Around Large Trucks

Stay out of the no-zones:

A tractor-trailer has blind spots directly in front of the cab, along both sides, and roughly 30 feet behind the trailer. The right side is the largest. If you cannot see the driver's face in their side mirror, they cannot see you.

Give trucks room to stop:

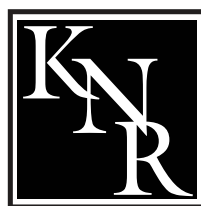
A loaded semi traveling at highway speed needs roughly 40% more distance to stop than a passenger car. Cutting in front of one and braking removes the cushion the driver has been maintaining. Leave at least four seconds of following distance behind a truck, and more in rain or snow.

Plan lane changes early, especially on Ohio's freight corridors:

I-270, I-71, I-75, I-90, I-480, and I-77 carry heavy truck volume through interchanges with short merge distances. Move to your exit lane well ahead of the ramp rather than crossing lanes at the last moment.

Record the drive:

As KNR Founding Partner Rob Nestico told WTOL11, [Ohio drivers should install a dashcam](#). A motorist's own footage is often the only independent account of the seconds before impact.



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If You Are in a Crash with a Commercial Truck

A commercial truck crash can leave you dealing with serious injuries, vehicle damage, insurance claims and questions about what happened. If you've been involved in a truck accident in Ohio:

- Get proper medical care first.
- Obtain your traffic crash report. You can request your free copy of your Ohio traffic crash report through [MyFreePoliceReport.com](https://www.MyFreePoliceReport.com). The service provided by KNR retrieves official crash reports from agencies across Ohio at no cost and does not require a credit card. The report can include information about the vehicles and people involved, road and weather conditions, witnesses, and the investigating officer's determination of fault.
- If you were injured, you may also want to speak with an attorney about your legal options. If you would like a [free consultation](#) on your legal options after a crash, our team is here to help. Kisling, Nestico & Redick has represented Ohio injury victims for more than 20 years and serves clients across all 88 Ohio counties.