

Elderly drivers tend to bear the brunt of our frustrations on the road, but new research suggests they are actually improving over time. A new study has found that fatal crash rates are declining amongst older drivers.



According to the nine-year research project undertaken by the U.S. Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS), the 37% decline in fatal crashes involving drivers over 70 exceeded the 23% decline in drivers aged 35 to 54. Even non-fatal accidents declined for older drivers, while they increased slightly for middle-aged drivers.

In 1995, older drivers were 3.5 times more likely to die in crashes that were reported to law-enforcement agencies. But during the study period, the difference fell to 2.9 times worse for the older drivers – still not a great statistic, but certainly an improvement.

“The stats are running counter to what most researchers thought would happen,” said IIHS spokesman Russ Rader. “Ten years ago we predicted we were going to have a problem with the elderly and automobile crashes and we are seeing the opposite occur.”