

Death Toll, Homelessness and Suffering of Americans 40 Year High “War Time Death Toll”

An estimated 20+ unhoused Americans die daily from treatable conditions, extreme weather, and violence, with deaths in urban areas jumping 77% in the five years ending in 2020. This crisis is driven by an aging homeless population, fentanyl overdoses, and extreme heat. Concurrently, pedestrian deaths have reached a 40-year high.

Unsheltered Homeless Deaths

- **Rising Mortality:** Deaths are accelerating due to a combination of untreated health conditions, violence, and addiction, with an average age of death for the unhoused being only 52.
- **Causes:** Leading causes include drug overdoses (nearly one-third of deaths), cardiovascular issues, and environmental factors like hyperthermia in extreme heat or hypothermia.
- **Scale:** In 2020, 7,877 deaths were recorded in just 73 U.S. cities and counties.
- **Context:** Experts argue this crisis is a direct consequence of inadequate housing, with data on these losses collected by advocates to highlight the, as noted in a [Homeless Deaths Count](#) report. A 2022 Guardian report highlighted that the death toll among the homeless has increased sharply.

Pedestrian Deaths (Traffic Fatalities)

- **40-Year High:** In 2022, 7,522 pedestrians were struck and killed in the U.S., a 75% increase since 2010.
- **Factors:** Increased traffic deaths are linked to higher speed limits, larger SUVs and trucks with higher front ends, distracted driving via smartphones, and poor infrastructure.
- **International Discrepancy:** While other high-income nations have improved pedestrian safety, US pedestrian deaths have risen 50% in the last decade, making it a major outlier.
- **Dangerous Infrastructure:** Data indicates that a significant percentage of traffic deaths occur at night. A report by [Smart Growth America](#) highlights that many US roads are designed for speed rather than safety.

These crises are often described as "a war-time death toll in times of peace" and a failure of social systems to protect vulnerable populations. Further context on the nature of these crises can be found in a Street Sheet article.