

Attorney Paul Greenberg Cautions Drivers and Pedestrians About Urban Areas Like Chicago Seeing Higher Rates of Auto Accident Injuries and Fatalities

Chicago, Illinois – Chicago consistently reports more auto accident injuries and fatalities than surrounding suburban areas, according to recent crash data released by state and federal agencies. Paul Greenberg, a Chicago personal injury attorney at Briskman Briskman & Greenberg Personal Injury & Car Accident Lawyers says the reasons are tied to traffic density, roadway design, and the number of pedestrians and cyclists who share city streets with vehicles. The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) tracks crashes statewide in its annual Crash Facts report. Recently, more than 62 percent of Illinois traffic crashes occurred on urban roadways, and two-thirds of all injury crashes also took place in urban settings. Cook County consistently leads the state in both the number of collisions and the number of people injured. National data confirms the trend. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) reports that more than 80 percent of pedestrian fatalities in the United States occur in urban areas. For Cook County, the state's most urbanized area, that means a disproportionate number of deaths and severe injuries involve pedestrians and cyclists.

"City streets create constant points of conflict," Greenberg said. "You have higher traffic volumes, shorter blocks with more intersections, and thousands of people walking or biking alongside vehicles every day. The statistics reflect what we see in practice: Chicagoans face greater risks of car accident injuries simply because of the way the city functions."

Chicago's expressways and arterial roads move hundreds of thousands of vehicles daily. With so many cars in close proximity, one mistake can affect multiple drivers. Intersections are especially dangerous. NHTSA estimates that nearly 40 percent of all crashes in the United States occur at intersections. In Chicago, left turns across traffic, drivers running red lights, and failure to yield to pedestrians routinely lead to collisions.

Unlike suburban communities, Chicago depends heavily on walking, biking, and public transportation. Residents routinely cross wide roads to reach bus stops and train stations, often during peak traffic hours. IDOT's 2022 statistics show that Cook County accounted for more than half of all pedestrian deaths in Illinois. Federal data mirrors the trend nationwide, with urban areas experiencing the overwhelming majority of pedestrian and cyclist fatalities.

"Even at lower speeds, pedestrians and cyclists are extremely vulnerable," experienced Chicago car accident lawyer, Paul Greenberg noted. "The lack of protection means that a collision that might cause minor injuries between two cars can be devastating for someone on foot or on a bike."

Speeding continues to play a major role in serious and fatal crashes. The City of Chicago's Vision Zero data shows that 68 percent of traffic deaths in the city involved a driver traveling at high speed. Larger vehicles such as SUVs also increase the likelihood of fatal injury to pedestrians due to higher impact forces.

Distracted driving adds another layer of risk. With so many visual and environmental demands in an urban setting, even a momentary glance at a phone can have severe consequences. Illinois State Police and IDOT have both identified distracted driving as a growing cause of collisions, particularly in dense metropolitan areas.

The attorneys at Briskman Briskman & Greenberg Personal Injury & Car Accident Lawyers have seen firsthand the complexity of urban crashes. Multi-vehicle collisions, pedestrian accidents, and crashes involving commercial carriers or rideshare operators can involve multiple parties and overlapping insurance coverage.

"Every crash has a story, and in the city those stories often involve more than one potential source of negligence," Greenberg said. "Our role is to gather the facts, preserve the evidence, and make sure that victims can recover for their injuries, medical bills, and long-term needs." The concentration of crashes in urban areas like Chicago reflects a combination of traffic density, intersection frequency, pedestrian exposure, speeding, and distraction. State and federal crash reports provide clear evidence that city residents face heightened risks compared to their suburban counterparts.

"Understanding why these numbers are higher is an important step in making streets safer," Greenberg said. "It also helps explain the challenges injured people face when they pursue compensation in the aftermath of a crash."

The attorneys at Briskman Briskman & Greenberg Personal Injury & Car Accident Lawyers have successfully represented individuals and families who have been injured or lost loved ones as a result of someone's carelessness or a workplace accident. We have achieved success in thousands of cases, recovering millions of dollars in damages for our clients in a wide variety of cases, including personal injury, car accidents, wrongful death, medical malpractice, pharmacy errors, dog bite injuries, and work injuries.

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