

# Why Traffic Accidents Are Dangerous for More than Drivers

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Thousands of traffic accidents occur every day. In the majority of those accidents, drivers and passengers are the only individuals affected. However, other people who have nothing to do with the accident can also be the victims of what turns into a very dangerous situation...

Even if you were not directly involved in the accident, if you were injured, you may still have a personal injury claim against one or both of the drivers involved in the crash.



[Read more](#) about how a **Jacksonville personal injury lawyer** can help you decide if bringing a lawsuit is the right option for your unique situation.

## Dangers to Onlookers and Pedestrians

Accidents draw attention. For some, it is exciting and interesting to witness a car accident. But for those involved in the accident, it's a different story. Sometimes onlookers and witnesses can be more annoying than helpful.

Of course, if there are witnesses who actually saw the crash occur, you may want to speak to them if you are able to do so. They may have valuable information about the accident that could be helpful to your legal case.

Car accident scenes become dangerous for pedestrians and onlookers when they place themselves so close to the accident that it becomes a hazard. For example, as the accident occurs, debris from vehicles may fly off and injure an onlooker or passerby. Often, the drivers involved in the accident will also be liable for any injuries that are caused as a result of the accident, including flying debris.

In other situations, witnesses may try to help those who were involved in the accident. While these witnesses have good intentions, their willingness to help might actually do more harm than good.

Some witnesses may stop on the side of the road or as they walk by. Car accident scenes can be dangerous because other drivers may not see them and collide into the scene. This obviously presents a danger to anyone that is near the accident, including Good Samaritans who are trying to render aid.

## Dangers to Police Officers

Police officers often risk their lives in the line of duty, and even responding to a routine fender bender can be extremely dangerous. According to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, auto accidents are one of the most common cause of law enforcement death, second to gunshot wounds. You can read more about those statistics by visiting their [website](#).

This statistic includes those situations where the police officer is outside of his or her patrol car to help with an auto accident. Just like the dangers to onlookers, police also inject themselves into the car accident scene and are subject to the same risks.

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total
Aircraft Accident	2	3	3	3	4	2	1	3	1	0	22
Auto Crash	43	46	61	44	39	51	44	26	28	32	414
Beaten	0	1	0	1	0	2	2	2	0	0	8
Bicycle Accident	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	3
Boating Accident	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	3
Bomb-Related Incident	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	4
Drowned	4	0	4	1	0	3	4	1	2	2	21
Electrocuted	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	3
Fall	4	0	3	0	0	1	4	4	6	0	22
Fire-Related Incident	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Horse-Related Accident	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Job-Related Illness	24	21	20	24	18	21	20	11	16	18	193
Motorcycle Crash	5	11	10	9	3	6	5	8	5	6	68
Poisoned	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Shot	60	54	70	41	50	60	73	50	33	48	539
Stabbed	1	1	0	2	0	0	2	5	2	0	13
Strangled	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
Struck by Falling Object	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Struck by Train	1	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	4
Struck by Vehicle	16	16	14	18	11	13	10	14	12	10	134
Terrorist Attack	1	1	5	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	8
TOTAL	163	156	192	148	125	161	171	126	107	117	1466

One of the ways that Florida law

has attempted to combat this danger is by enacting the “**Florida Move Over Law**”. [Find out](#) more about the requirements of the law here. Essentially, the law recognizes the often dangerous situations that emergency workers like police officers, medical personnel, sanitation workers, and utility service workers face when working alongside a highway.

If it is safe to do so, oncoming traffic should move over a lane when they approach any of these state-service vehicles. This gives them a little more room to work and allows them to do their job safely without having to worry about risking their lives against an oncoming car.

If you cannot move over safely, Florida law requires you to slow to at least 20 miles below the posted speed limit. If the posted speed is 20 miles or less, then you should slow to 5 miles per hour. This is required in order to allow drivers additional reaction time to avoid an emergency worker should he or she have to venture into the road.

*Keep in mind that this law applies to:*

- Tow trucks

- Ambulances
- Police vehicles
- Sanitation vehicles
- Utility workers

If you are able, it may also be a good general practice to move over even if there are no medical professionals or law enforcement on the scene of a car accident yet. Those who have just been involved in an accident may not be thinking clearly and wander into traffic. Slow down and watch carefully to avoid further injury or damage.

## **Car Accident Dangers that Affect Other Drivers**

Often, we are told to simply stop wherever the accident took place and wait for law enforcement to arrive. Although this advice should be generally followed, it is not always safe to stop where the accident occurred.

Instead, you should move the vehicles out of traffic if you are able to do so. Failing to move your vehicle can cause unnecessary danger to other drivers.

Drivers are not looking for accidents in the middle of the road, so coming upon one can be fatal for not only the driver but also those who have already been involved in an accident.

*You can prevent pile ups by adhering to some of these simple after-accident procedures:*

- Remove vehicles and passengers out of the line of traffic and as far away from the road as possible as soon as possible.
- Put up warning signs if you have them (triangles or flares are helpful for this); for some trucking accidents, this may actually be required
- Direct passengers or onlookers away from the accidents
- Direct traffic around the accident, if necessary (but be careful not to put yourself in danger!)

Letting others know about the accident is the best way to avoid further problems. The police can help with this when they arrive, so do your best until they get there.

## **After the Accident...Getting Legal Help from a Jacksonville Personal Injury Lawyer**

Personal injury lawsuits are for more than just those directly involved in the accident. If you suffered an injury that was the result of a car accident, you may still be able to cover your medical expenses, pain and suffering, and lost wages through a personal injury claim.

[Visit here](#) to learn more information on how a Jacksonville personal injury lawyer can help you.