

# Overall collisions down across Waterloo Region but pedestrian, bike accidents rise | Your online newspaper for New Hamburg, Ontario

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## ***Independent file photo***

A car crash on Notre Dame Drive: the number of fatal accidents on local regional roads decreased from 16 down to 10 in 2012, and the number of injury collisions decreased by 29.

Overall collisions down across Waterloo Region but pedestrian, bike accidents rise

**Melissa Murray**

*Special to the Independent*



While the region experienced a four per cent decline in the number of crashes on regional roads on 2012, with 5,795 in total, there have been increases in pedestrian, bicycle and horse and buggy accidents.

Cambridge mayor Doug Craig said something's got to give.

"It's a little bit alarming to see the increase in collisions with people on bicycles," he said at the planning and works committee meeting on Tuesday.

"I think we need to look at something different because it's becoming really obvious that there is a disrespect between motorists and people on bicycles and the increase in accidents is really worrisome."

Collisions involving cyclists rose from 104 in 2011 to 130 in 2012, a 26 per cent increase. High accident intersections include Hespeler Road at Munch Avenue in Cambridge, and Cedar Street at King Street, and Weber Street at Franklin Street, both in Kitchener.

It's a smaller increase for pedestrians, with 151 collisions in 2011 and just three more in 2013. There were two more horse and buggy accidents last year as well.

Pedestrians should beware of King Street at University in Waterloo where there were 11 collisions in five years, as well as Main Street at Wellington Street in Cambridge and Bridgeport Road at King Street in Waterloo.

The top-ranked crash intersections include Ottawa Street at Homer Watson Boulevard in Kitchener

with 209 collisions over five years, King Street at Fountain Street in Cambridge with 115 and King Street at University Avenue in Waterloo with 130.

The Homer Watson and Block Line intersection in Kitchener takes the top spot for crashes in roundabouts with 53. The Ira Needles and Erbsville roundabout and the Ira Needles and Highland roundabout in Kitchener both had 33 collisions. The University and Ira Needles roundabout in Waterloo had 21.

The collision report's numbers aren't without improvements, due largely to the implementation of collision countermeasures. On regional roads the number of fatal accidents decreased from 16 down to 10 and the number of injury collisions decreased by 29.

"We are continually monitoring the network and particularly problematic intersections and addressing them through the collision countermeasures," said Bob Henderson, regional manager of transportation engineering,

The long-term trend is influenced by a combination of strategies — through countermeasures, education and enforcement programs, as well as some private initiatives.

"We are going to continue our best initiatives to improve and reduce collisions. We are now understanding what measures are working better than others and continuing those programs, as well as understanding what programs may not be working," he said.

#### ***Waterloo Region collision facts:***

##### **Notable decreases:**

- Fatal injury crashes decreased from 16 in 2011 to 10 in 2012
- Fatal crashes decreased from 15 in 2011 to 10 in 2012
- The number of people injured in crashes in 2012 was 1,898
- In 2003, the total number of crashes was 6,657 and in 2012, the total number of crashes was 5,795 on regional roads
- That's a decrease from 13.9 crashes per 1,000 people, to 10.4.

##### **Notable roundabouts:**

- The Homer Watson and Block Line takes the top spot for crashes, with 53 in 2012.
- 33 crashes each: Ira Needles and Erbsville, Ira Needles and Highland

##### **The top five most dangerous intersections:**

- Ottawa Street at Homer Watson Boulevard in Kitchener
- King Street at Fountain Street in Cambridge
- King Street at University Avenue in Waterloo
- Franklin Boulevard at Can-Amara Parkway in Cambridge
- Victoria Street North between Bruce and Edna Street in Kitchener

The most common factors are rear-end crashes, those that happen in January, and those that occur on Fridays at about 5 p.m.