

California ranked No. 48, Nevada No. 15 for condition of roads

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We often hear the nation's infrastructure is crumbling, but state highway conditions are the best they've been in 19 years, according to Reason Foundation's 19th Annual Highway Report. Unfortunately, the recession is partly responsible for the improvement in road conditions: people are driving less which has helped slow pavement deterioration and reduced traffic congestion and fatalities.

The annual Reason Foundation study measures the condition and cost-effectiveness of state-owned roads in 11 categories, including deficient bridges, urban traffic congestion, fatality rates, pavement condition on urban and rural Interstates and on major rural roads, and the number of unsafe narrow rural lanes. National performance in all of those key areas improved in 2008, the most recent year with complete data available.

Drivers in California, Minnesota, Maryland, Michigan and Connecticut are stuck in the worst traffic. Over 65 percent of all urban Interstates are congested in each of those five states. But nationally, the percentage of urban Interstates that are congested fell below 50 percent for the first time since 2000, when congestion standards were revised.

Motorists in California and Hawaii have to look out for the most potholes on urban Interstates. In those two states, 25 percent of urban interstate pavement is in poor condition. Alaska and Rhode Island have the bumpiest rural pavement, each with about 10 percent in poor condition. However, nationally,

pavement conditions on urban Interstates are the best they've been since 1993, and rural primary roads are the smoothest they've been since 1993 also.

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