



# Wrong-way collisions are rare but deadly, according to national statistics

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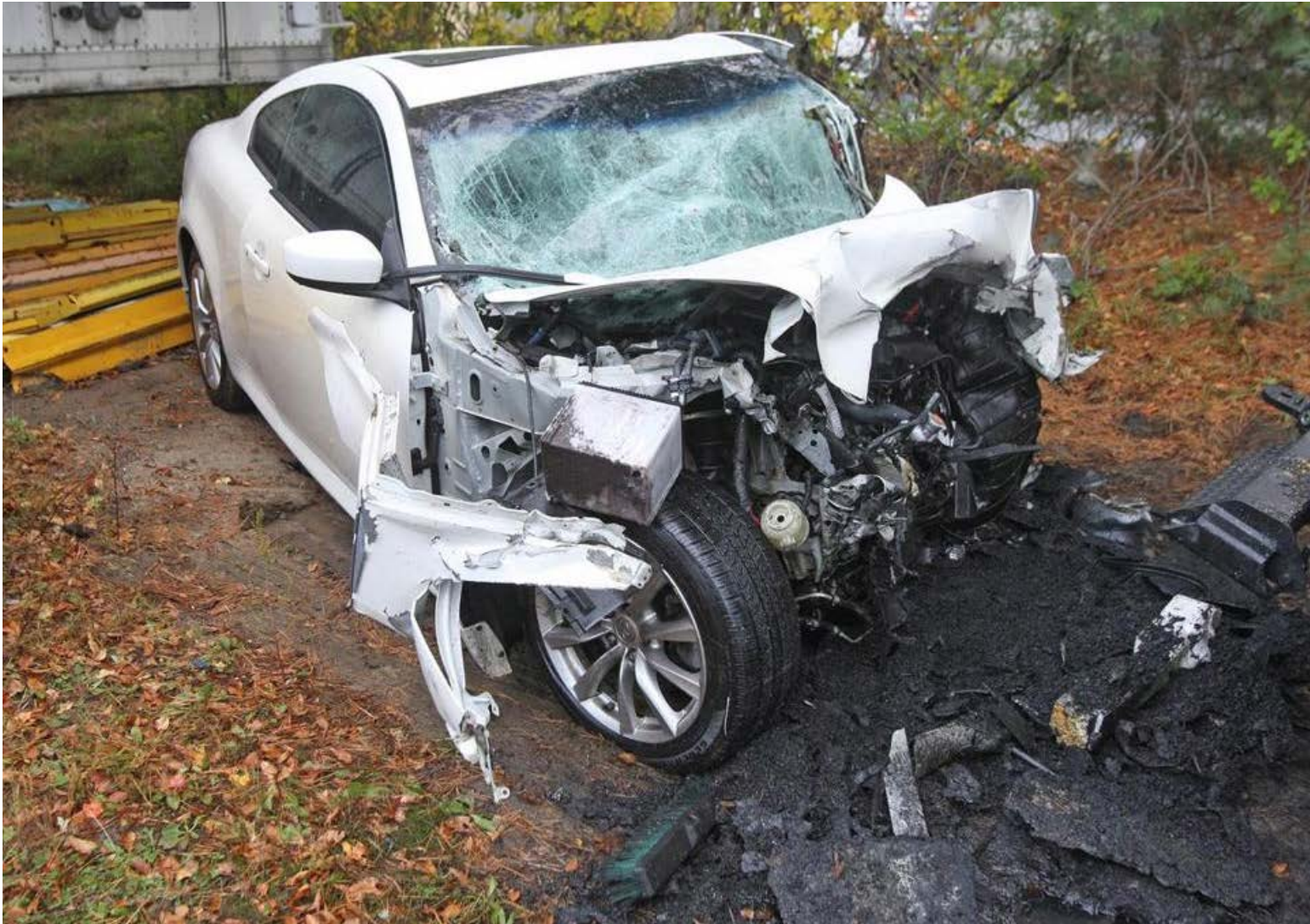
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GEORGE RIZER FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

**Five people died early Monday after a wrong-way collision on I-495.**

**By Matt Rocheleau**

GLOBE STAFF OCTOBER 24, 2016

**Wrong-way collisions nationwide have killed about 360 people each year, on average, in recent years.**

**Early Monday, a [wrong-way crash on Interstate 495 in Middleborough](#) killed the driver, a 31-year-old woman from Fall River, and four students from Worcester-area colleges.**



Such crashes have been relatively rare — wrong-way collisions accounted for just 3 percent of crashes on high-speed divided highways in recent years — but are much more likely to result in fatal and serious injuries than other types of crashes, according to [studies](#) in recent years by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the National Transportation Safety Board.

Studies have estimated the fatality rate for wrong-way crashes is between 12 and 27 times higher than it is for other types of accidents.

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**Wrong-way crashes have claimed other lives on New England highways in recent months.**

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## 'It was a horrific scene': 5 dead after wrong-way crash

Two of the victims were cousins from the Cape who did everything together.

**Photos: 5 killed in wrong-way crash**

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- Earlier this month, [five teens from Vermont were killed](#) in a wrong-way crash on Interstate 89 in Williston, Vt.
- In August, [a 28-year-old Rutland man died](#) when he drove the wrong way on the Massachusetts Turnpike in Southborough.
- In July, a wrong-way driver collided with another car on Interstate 495 in Mansfield [killing the motorists in both vehicles](#).
- And in May, a wrong-way crash killed a Bedford man and an off-duty Rhode Island police officer on Interstate 95 in East Greenwich, R.I., according to the [Lowell Sun](#).



National statistics show wrong-way collisions are most




likely to happen between midnight and 3 a.m. A majority occurred on weekends.

Drivers most often wind up headed in the wrong direction when they mistakenly enter an exit ramp, instead of an entrance ramp, research shows.

Drivers in wrong-way crashes are more likely to not be properly licensed to drive than drivers in other types of crashes, the national study said. Alcohol was more than twice as likely to be a factor in fatal wrong-way crashes than in other deadly crashes.

*Lisa Tuite of the Globe staff contributed to this report. Matt Rocheleau can be reached at [matthew.rocheleau@globe.com](mailto:matthew.rocheleau@globe.com). Follow him on Twitter [@mrochele](https://twitter.com/mrochele).*

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A cousin of the sisters discovered the body last month in the kitchen of the \$1.2 million Brookline home. [MORE...](#)



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Martellus Bennett gave \$2,500 to the Maurice J. Tobin K-8 School, so they could buy books for a reading space. [MORE...](#)

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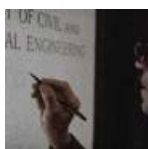
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If a name appears written in black letters on a professor's office door at MIT, it's more likely than not that Glenn Silva put it there. [MORE...](#)

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The parents of severely ill children are hoping Beacon Hill will raise reimbursement rates for nurses



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The unseasonable weather, which came on a damp day, matched a mark set on Jan. 12, 1975, and in 1913. [MORE...](#)

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Two men were stabbed on Tremont Street just before 4 p.m. Thursday, police said. [MORE...](#)

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Worcester District Attorney Joseph D. Early Jr. declined to say how Walter Armstrong, 83, was killed. [MORE...](#)

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Governor Charlie Baker signed into law a controversial bill that licenses the alternative medicine practitioners. [MORE...](#)

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Mary Truong, executive director of the state's Office for Refugees and Immigrants, hopes her example will help others like her. [MORE...](#)



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"I'm feeling good about America," a small-business owner in Bellevue, Ohio, said. [MORE...](#)



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