

Some Texas consumers have seen their auto insurance premiums increase, and may be wondering why. Luckily, Texas has a very competitive auto insurance market and consumers have many choices to consider when looking for auto insurance coverage and the best rate for their circumstances. If you experience an increase in your premium, you should shop around for the best deal for you and your insurance needs.

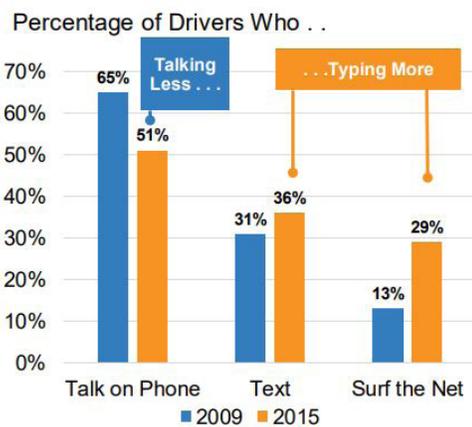
**HERE’S SOME FACTORS THAT MAY BE IMPACTING AUTO INSURANCE RATES:**

**MORE CARS ARE BEING PURCHASED.** CNN Money reports sales for 2016 set a record of 17.6 million cars and trucks, a slight increase over the 17.5 million vehicles sold in 2015.



**GREATER NUMBER OF DRIVERS ON THE ROAD.** Thanks to lower fuel prices and higher employment, 2016 saw the highest increase in drivers in 25 years.

**AMERICANS ARE DRIVING MORE THAN EVER BEFORE.** The Federal Highway Administration says drivers in cars, trucks, minivans and SUVs put a record 3.22 trillion miles on the nation’s roads in 2016, up 2.8 percent from 3.1 trillion miles in 2015.



**INCREASE IN DISTRACTED DRIVING.** Texting on cell phones ranks higher than talking on cell phones, followed by checking emails and browsing on the internet. Distraction-affected crashes were up 8.8% in 2015, the last year data was available.

**AUTO ACCIDENTS ARE OCCURRING LESS FREQUENTLY, BUT WITH GREATER SEVERITY.** The Insurance Information Institute (III) reports rising accident costs across all coverage types in auto insurance from 2015-2017. Cars are becoming more technologically advanced, meaning significantly higher repair costs today versus the same type of accident 10 years ago. For example, the average cost to repair a head lamp assembly went from \$394 in 2014 to \$918 in 2016. Also, as health care costs continue to rise, minor injuries can result in large claim payments.

Source: III

**SEVERE WEATHER EVENTS.** As storms become more severe, hail and flooding have caused billions of dollars in losses in Texas. 2016 was among the costliest years for hail losses for vehicles and 2017 was the costliest year for flood losses for cars and trucks. If frequent flooding and more severe hailstorms continue, this may also impact auto premiums.

**RISE IN TRAFFIC FATALITIES.** According to information from the Texas Department of Transportation, more than 3,700 people were killed on Texas roadways in 2017, marking a 10% increase in traffic deaths from the previous year. Traffic fatalities have continued to rise every year since 2010 marking a 34% increase in traffic deaths in the past seven years.

**Here are a few tips to help with rising premiums:**

- Discuss customer lifestyle changes with your insurance agent - Did you know that a move from a rural to urban area or vice versa could affect your insurance rate? Changes in your commute or household makeup can also affect your premium.
- Review your auto coverage - Ensure that you’re taking full advantage of available discounts and have the appropriate coverages.
- Review your deductible- A higher deductible can help to lower your premium amount.

**For more information on this and many other insurance-related topics, visit [www.insurancecouncil.org](http://www.insurancecouncil.org)**