

Wear and tear from potholes costing New York drivers \$2,300 a year: report

TRIP, a national nonprofit transportation research group, released a study Wednesday that says bad roads and bridges in the state are costing New York drivers \$20.3 billion annually. The amount per driver could be higher, though, as the data did not include the brutal winter months.

by [Edgar Sandoval](#) AND [Ginger Adams Otis](#) / NEW YORK DAILY NEWS



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Drivers on Manhattan's Second Avenue, where potholes are common thanks to subway construction, may already know the average wear and tear on vehicles thanks to the craters is \$2,300 annually.

New York's mean streets are pocked by potholes — but for local drivers, they're money pits.

The deteriorated, congested roadways in the five boroughs cause excessive wear and tear on vehicles that costs city drivers an average of \$2,300 a year, according to TRIP, a national nonprofit transportation research group.

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The organization's analysis of the pothole effect, released Wednesday, estimated that across the Empire State, bad roads and bridges cost drivers \$20.3 billion annually — and that number doesn't factor in the punishing weather this winter.

"The report was on data that occurred before this winter, which is one of the worst in years," said Will Wilkins, executive director of the D.C.-based group, who predicted the onslaught of ice and snow will likely make the nation's roadways even worse "unless Congress acts to improve funding."

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President Obama Wednesday also called for increased investment in the nation's crumbling infrastructure.

Speaking at the historic Union Depot in Saint Paul, Minn., Obama proposed a \$302 billion investment over four years to shore up highways and bridges.

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That money could be put to good use in New York, where 27.5% of state-owned bridges need work, said TRIP. In the city, 34.5% of all bridges are in need of repair, the group claimed.

In its report, TRIP reached its \$2,300 figure by calculating the cost of things like front-end alignments, tire wear, general depreciation and, of course, the bill for gasoline burned off in bumper-to-bumper traffic.

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The report's authors said they approve of "Vision Zero," Mayor de Blasio's ambitious plan to eliminate traffic deaths by improving roadway safety and reducing dangerous driving.



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New York's roads and bridges cost the state's drivers \$20.3 billion in repairs. The data from a report did not include the brutal winter months.

But they said de Blasio needs to press federal officials for additional funding if he wants to see his hope for zero traffic fatalities become reality.

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But they said the mayor needs to press federal officials for more money to improve New York's aging infrastructure if he wants to see his plan for zero traffic deaths become reality.

"Whether you are a mother pushing a stroller, an elderly person with a grocery cart or you are crossing the streets to walk your kids to school, the poor conditions of the streets definitely create pedestrian hazards," said Denise Richardson, managing director of General Contractors of NY.

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Marcia Bystry, president of the New York League of Conservation Voters, agreed.

"This is a walking and biking city, but the only way that you are encouraging that is if we have a well maintained infrastructure," Bystry said.

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One of the biggest problems in New York and especially the city is potholes, said Wilkins.

The city's been plagued with the car-rattling craters all winter, and the Department of Transportation has been running special crews to try and keep up.

John Corlett, of AAA New York, said they got 13,000 flat tire calls in January alone — many from hitting potholes.

"It's a symptom of a larger problem, a lack of investment at all levels of government," Corlett said.

A DOT spokeswoman said TRIP's report apparently failed to distinguish between state and city road conditions and budgets — and ignored the agency's comprehensive plan to attack potholes this winter. gotis@nydailynews.com