

Which are the worst states for tickets?

As the traditional summer driving season gets under way this weekend, a drivers'-rights group ranks the states on driver friendliness. New Jersey? Fuhgeddaboutit.

5.22.2009 MSN Money

By [Catherine Holahan](#)

MSN Money

Diane Daniel knows her drive to the North Carolina coast this Memorial Day weekend will take longer. But it won't be the traffic slowing her down -- it will be the cops.

"I got the only speeding ticket of my life there a few years ago," explained Daniel, a freelance travel writer. Stretches of road leading to the beach are perfect spots for police to snare speeders and add tourist dollars to their towns' coffers, she added.

Luckily for Daniel, she's driving in North Carolina this weekend. That state rates low on the National Motorists Association's recent ranking of the worst places to drive due to what they characterize as unfair traffic laws and public monitoring.

Drivers in New Jersey are the ones who really need to watch out, according to the motorists group. The state ranked the worst based on 17 factors, including:

- Speed limits.
- The use of red-light or speed cameras.
- Laws banning cell phone use while driving.
- Whether speeders are allowed jury trials.
- The number of speed traps (weighted by population).

New Jersey ranked seventh-worst in the speed-trap category. But it was the state's traffic laws that put New Jersey atop the list.

More from MSN Money

If you are issued a speeding ticket, think twice before paying it off immediately. "Our results suggest that tickets are used as a revenue-generation tool rather than solely a means to increase public safety," report co-authors Gary Wagner, an economist at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, and Thomas Garrett, a researcher at the St. Louis Fed, said of their July 2007 study.

Increased ticketing isn't just about padding town coffers, however. In a follow-up study that Makowsky and Strattman conducted, the economists found that increased ticketing does reduce the number of traffic accidents. So perhaps ticketing does make drivers safer,

as well as making towns richer.

"It definitely changed my driving habits," Daniel said of her ticket. "I will not be speeding."

National Motorists Association rankings, from worst to best:

Rank	State	Rank	State	Rank	State
1	New Jersey	18	Florida	35	Hawaii
2	Ohio	19	Pennsylvania	36	Arkansas
3	Maryland	20	North Carolina	37	Alaska
4	Louisiana	21	Alabama	38	Kansas
5	New York	22	Rhode Island	39	Mississippi
6	Illinois	23	West Virginia	40	Wisconsin
7	Delaware	24	New Hampshire	41	Utah
8	Virginia	25	Arizona	42	South Dakota
9	Washington	26	New Mexico	43	Indiana
10	Massachusetts	27	Missouri	44	Minnesota
11	Colorado	28	Texas	45	North Dakota
12	Oregon	29	Oklahoma	46	Kentucky
13	Tennessee	30	Nevada	47	Nebraska
14	California	31	Georgia	48	Montana
15	Michigan	32	Connecticut	49	Idaho
16	Vermont	33	South Carolina	50	Wyoming
17	Maine	34	Iowa		