

# Campaign to Eliminate Drunk Driving: Drunk Driving and Enforcement Fact Sheet

## Drunk Driving in the U.S.

- In 2005, there were 43,433 total traffic fatalities and of these, 12,945 involved a driver with an illegal BAC (.08 or greater).<sup>1</sup>
- Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for people from 3 to 33 years old.<sup>2</sup>
- About one-third of all drivers arrested or convicted of driving under the influence are repeat offenders. These drivers are 40% more likely to be involved in a fatal crash than those without prior DUIs.<sup>3</sup>
- In a recent study, sixty percent of those surveyed said they had operated a car or truck under the influence of alcohol or close to being under the influence of alcohol, up from 57 percent in 2000.<sup>4</sup>

## If You Drive Drunk, You Will be Arrested

- Approximately 1.4 million drivers were arrested in 2004 for driving under the influence of alcohol or narcotics. This is an arrest rate of 1 for every 139 licensed drivers in the United States (2005 data not yet available).<sup>5</sup>
- Research show that 88 percent of respondents support .08 percent blood alcohol concentration (BAC) as the illegal drunk driving limit.<sup>6</sup>

## Sobriety Checkpoints & Saturation Patrols

- 40 states and Washington, D.C., allow sobriety checkpoints. All states allow saturation patrols.<sup>7</sup>
- Research has shown that highly publicized, highly visible, and frequent sobriety checkpoints reduce alcohol-involved crashes and fatalities by an average of 20 percent.<sup>8</sup>
- Eighty-seven percent of Americans surveyed say they support the use of sobriety checkpoints to check for drunk drivers. 62 percent would like sobriety checkpoints to be used more often.<sup>9</sup>
- Eighty percent of Americans say they themselves would be discouraged from drinking and driving by sobriety checkpoints.<sup>10</sup>
- Well-conducted sobriety checkpoints generally delay drivers for no more than 30 seconds, and cause no traffic problems.<sup>11</sup>

### Enforcement Activities

**Sobriety Checkpoint:** Law enforcement officials set up clearly visible checkpoints at certain points on the road. Vehicles are stopped in a specific sequence, such as every other vehicle. Police evaluate the driver and must have a reason to suspect the driver is intoxicated before requiring the driver to take a breathalyzer test.

**Saturation Patrol:** Also called “emphasis patrols” and “roving patrols,” these involve a concentrated enforcement effort in which police target impaired drivers by very closely watching for moving violations such as reckless driving, speeding, aggressive driving, etc.

## *Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest.*

- The national *Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest.* is a comprehensive impaired driving prevention program organized by the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) in partnership with Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) and the International Chiefs of Police (IACP). The program focuses on combining high-visibility enforcement of drunk driving laws in twice-yearly national crackdowns with heightened public awareness through advertising and publicity.<sup>12</sup>
- Over the 2006 Labor Day holidays, more than 11,500 law enforcement agencies in all 50 states and the District of Columbia stepped up enforcement using sobriety checkpoints and saturation patrols. The effort was also supported by \$11 million from Congress in paid national advertising to help put everyone on notice that if they are caught driving drunk, they will be arrested.<sup>13</sup>
- Based on the highly successful *Click It or Ticket* program, the U.S. Congress dedicated \$116 million over four years in the federal highway bill to support high-visibility crackdowns for both seat belts and drunk driving.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. "Traffic Safety Facts 2005: Alcohol." DOT 810 606. Washington DC: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 2006.  
<http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/pdf/nrd-30/NCSA/TSF2005/AlcoholTSF05.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. "Traffic Safety Facts 2005: Overview". DOT 810 623. Washington DC: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 2006.  
<http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/pdf/nrd-30/NCSA/TSF2005/OverviewTSF05.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 1997 FARS data.  
[http://www.madd.org/madd\\_programs/10337#1](http://www.madd.org/madd_programs/10337#1)

<sup>4</sup> MADD and Nationwide Insurance Survey, Conducted by Gallup. "Drinking and Driving: Americans' Greatest Highway Safety Concern." 2005. <http://madd.org/stats/10270>

<sup>5</sup> National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. "Traffic Safety Facts 2005: Alcohol." DOT 810 606. Washington DC: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 2006.  
<http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/pdf/nrd-30/NCSA/TSF2005/AlcoholTSF05.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> "Law Enforcement Programs: A Key To Stopping Drunk Driving." Mothers Against Drunk Driving. 6 October 2006. [http://www.madd.org/madd\\_programs/11003](http://www.madd.org/madd_programs/11003)

<sup>8</sup> Transportation Research Board of the National Academies. "Transportation Research Circular- 2005." P. 35  
<http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/circulars/ec072.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> "Sobriety Checkpoints: Facts & Myths" Mothers Against Drunk Driving. 6 October 2006.  
[http://www.madd.org/madd\\_programs/1229](http://www.madd.org/madd_programs/1229)

<sup>12</sup> "NHTSA and Partners Announce Tough New Approach to Drunk Driving." Mothers Against Drunk Driving. 11 October 2006. <http://www.madd.org/news/11072>

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Federal Bill H.R.3, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users; Title II – Highway Safety