Sobering Facts: Alcohol-Impaired Driving

WASHINGTON

1,602 people were killed in crashes involving an alcohol-impaired driver in Washington from 2009-2018.

KEEP WASHINGTON SAFE
Keep alcohol-impaired drivers off the road.

This fact sheet provides a snapshot of alcohol-impaired driving deaths and an overview of proven strategies to reduce or prevent alcohol-impaired driving. The information can help decision makers and community partners see gaps and identify relevant strategies to address the problem of alcohol-impaired driving.

FAST FACTS
- Drivers with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) above the state’s legal limit are considered alcohol-impaired by law.
- More than 10,000 people in the United States die each year in crashes that involve an alcohol-impaired driver.
- Because of dedicated efforts, rates of alcohol-impaired driving and alcohol-impaired fatal crashes in the United States have gone down since the 1980s.
- Still, alcohol-impaired drivers get behind the wheel millions of times each year.

ALCOHOL-IMPAIRED DRIVING DEATH RATES BY AGE
Per 100,000 Population

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>NATIONAL</th>
<th>WASHINGTON</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-20</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>*</td>
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<tr>
<td>21-34</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35+</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Ages</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>2.2</td>
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</table>

Alcohol-impaired drivers 0-20 deaths are suppressed. Source: Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS), 2018

ALCOHOL-IMPAIRED DRIVING DEATH RATES BY SEX
Per 100,000 Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.2</td>
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Deaths in crashes involving a driver with BAC ≥ 0.08%. Source: Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS), 2018

PERCENTAGE OF ADULTS WHO REPORT DRIVING AFTER DRINKING TOO MUCH
In the Past 30 Days

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>NATIONAL</th>
<th>WASHINGTON</th>
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<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
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Source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 2018

Working together, we can help keep people safe on the road—every day.
www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/impaired_driving/states
WHAT WORKS

The strategies in this section are effective for reducing or preventing alcohol-impaired driving. They are recommended by The Guide to Community Preventive Services and/or have been demonstrated to be effective in reviews by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.* Different strategies might require different resources for implementation or have different levels of impact. Find strategies that are right for your state.

**Strategies to Reduce or Prevent Alcohol-Impaired Driving**

- **Alcohol-impaired driving laws** make it illegal to drive with a BAC at or above a specified level (0.05% or 0.08%, depending on the state). For people under 21, **zero tolerance laws** make it illegal to drive with any measurable amount of alcohol in their systems. These laws, along with laws that maintain the **minimum legal drinking age** at 21, are in place in all 50 states and DC and have saved tens of thousands of lives.

- **Publicized sobriety checkpoints** allow police to briefly stop vehicles at specific, highly visible locations to check drivers for impairment. Police may stop all or a certain portion of drivers. Sobriety checkpoints should be well publicized (e.g., through **mass media campaigns**) and conducted regularly for greatest impact.

- **High-visibility saturation patrols** consist of a large number of police patrolling a specific area, usually at times and locations where alcohol-impaired driving crashes are more common. Like sobriety checkpoints, these patrols should be well publicized and conducted regularly.

- **Ignition interlocks for all, including first-time, convicted offenders** can be installed in vehicles to measure alcohol on drivers' breath. Interlocks keep vehicles from starting if drivers have a BAC above a certain level, usually 0.02%. Interlocks are highly effective at preventing repeat offenses while installed. Incorporating **alcohol problem assessment and treatment** into interlock programs shows promise in reducing repeat offenses once interlocks are removed.

- **Alcohol problem assessment and treatment programs** can be used for those arrested for alcohol-impaired driving. Treatment is most effective when combined with other sanctions and when offenders are closely monitored. Assessment and treatment are critical to the success of **DWI courts**, which are specialized courts focused on changing the behavior of alcohol-impaired driving offenders.

- **Alcohol screening and brief interventions** take advantage of “teachable moments” and can be delivered in health care, university, and other settings to identify people at risk for alcohol problems and get them treatment as needed.

- **Multi-component interventions** combine several programs or policies to prevent alcohol-impaired driving. The key to these comprehensive efforts is **community mobilization**, which involves coalitions or task forces in design and implementation.

- **School-based instructional programs** are effective at teaching teens **not to ride** with alcohol-impaired drivers.

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