



Fact Sheet:



Driving-Under-the-Influence (DUI) Frequently Asked Questions

How serious is the problem?

Drunk driving is the most frequently committed crime in the United States. In 2006, over 1.46 million drivers were arrested 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.

It is estimated that alcohol and other drugs are a factor in 41 percent of all fatal automobile accidents and 9 percent of all crashes in 2006. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reported that in 2006, 42,642 people were killed on our nation's highways; 17,602 of these fatalities were alcohol-related. Alcohol-related injuries continue to be a serious threat to both drivers and passengers on the road. In 2006, over 254,000 people in the United States suffered injuries in alcohol-related crashes.

About 3 in every 10 Americans will be involved in an alcohol-related crash at some time in their lives. An alcohol-related motor vehicle crash kills someone every 30 minutes and injures someone every 2 minutes. Traffic crashes are the greatest single cause of death for every age between the ages of 2 and 34.

Beyond the tragedy of lost lives and painful recovery from injuries, alcohol-related accidents exact a huge economic cost. In 2006, the financial costs associated with alcohol-related crashes in the U.S. were estimated at \$51 billion annually.

How does the DUI problem impact young people?

The alcohol-related traffic fatality rate for youth has been cut by over half since 1988. However, youth are still over represented in fatal crashes compared to the older population. In 2007, 20 percent of the children under age 14 killed in crashes were killed in alcohol-related crashes.

Trends

- Alcohol-impaired driving fatalities fell by 3.7 percent, from 13,491 in 2006 to 12,998 in 2007.
- The percent of alcohol-related fatalities has declined from 60 percent in 1982 to 41 percent in 2006.
- California demonstrated the largest decrease in alcohol-impaired driving fatalities among the states; from 1,272 in 2006, to 1,155 in 2007.

What are the penalties for DUI?

Fines/Penalties

.....approximately \$300 - \$5,000

Jail/Community Service

.....2 days to 2 years

DUI Treatment Program

..... 3, 6, 9, 18, or 30 months

Drivers License Suspension

.....4 months to 5 years

How much does a DUI Cost?

Costs for DUI have been estimated to be more than \$6,600. (Actual costs may vary) Here is a conservative itemized breakdown for a first DUI offense:

Fines/Penalties.....	\$1,000
Tow/Impound Fee.....	215
DUI Treatment Program (First Offender).....	626
Court Costs.....	\$800
Insurance Increase.....	\$500-\$1,500
Attorney Fees.....	\$2,500
Total Approximate Cost:.....	\$6,641

What is blood alcohol concentration (BAC)?

Blood Alcohol Concentration is a measure of the amount of alcohol in the blood stream expressed as a percentage. In 2005, all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico had established the illegal BAC level at .08 percent.

Is it safe to drive after drinking modest amounts of alcohol?

Just a drink or two can make someone behind the wheel a threat to themselves and to others. Drinking alcohol affects a driver's coordination, reaction time, and vision (particularly at night). Long before any outward signs of impairment are recognized, the driver's judgment, emotions, and confidence are adversely affected. Even at a BAC as low as .02 percent, alcohol affects driving ability and crash likelihood. The probability of crash begins to increase significantly at .05 percent BAC and climbs rapidly after about .08 percent BAC.

The speed of alcohol absorption affects the rate at which one becomes drunk. Unlike foods, alcohol does not have to be slowly digested. As a person drinks faster than the alcohol can be eliminated, the drug accumulates in the body, resulting in higher and higher levels of alcohol in the blood.

The average person metabolizes alcohol at the rate of about one drink per hour. Only time will sober a person up. Drinking strong coffee, exercising or taking a cold shower will not help in sobering up.

What is "Admin per se?"

"Admin per se" refers to a relatively new procedure, administrative license suspension, in which a driver's license may be taken before conviction when a driver fails or refuses to take a chemical test for alcohol. As of 2007, 41 states including Washington, D.C. had administrative license suspension laws. In California a driver's license is suspended for four months on a first offense, and one year for a second offense.

When do most DUIs occur?

Most DUIs occur at night (9 p.m. to 6 a.m.). In 2007, 42 percent of all fatal crashes during the week were alcohol related, compared to 57 percent on weekends. In addition, 68 percent of all the alcohol-impaired drivers were in single-vehicle crashes.

Who is at risk?

Young men between 18 to 20 years old reported driving while impaired more frequently than any other age group. Additionally, male drivers involved in fatal motor vehicle crashes are twice as likely as female drivers to be intoxicated with a BAC of .08 percent or higher. In 2007, males comprised approximately 83 percent of all alcohol-impaired drivers involved in fatal crashes, while the females comprised 15 percent.

Although young drivers, 15 to 20 years old, make up only 6.4 percent of the total driving population in the United States, they constituted 12.9 percent of the drivers involved in fatal crashes in 2006.

In 2007, while drivers age 25 to 34 constituted 19 percent of all drivers involved in fatal crashes, they were over-involved among the alcohol-impaired drivers, constituting about 26 percent of all alcohol-impaired drivers in fatal crashes.