

Fact Sheet: Drunk Driving

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Drunk Driving : The Facts

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Drunk Driving: The Problem¹

Driving while drunk is deadly and is a continuous problem across the United States. Alcohol reduces the brain's overall function impairing reasoning, muscle coordination, and thinking, which hinder operating a vehicle safely. As an individual's Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) increases, their driving deteriorates rapidly leading to possible traffic crashes and deaths.



Have you Heard?¹

- ◇ Approximately 1/3 of all traffic crash deaths involve drunk drivers.
- ◇ In 2018, over 10,500 people were killed by drunk drivers; these are preventable deaths.
- ◇ On average over 10 years (2009-2018), 10,000 people die every year in drunk driving incidents.
- ◇ Men are more likely to be driving drunk in fatal crashes compared to women.
- ◇ The highest percentage of drunk drivers were in the age group 21-24.



Consequences¹

The consequences of drunk driving include legal ones. Tough enforcement of the drunk-driving laws have been a factor in reducing the amount of drunk driving deaths. An individual can be charged from a misdemeanor upwards to a felony offense, such as vehicular manslaughter. An individual accused of drunk driving can have their driver's license revoked, fines, and jail or prison time. A first time offense can cost up to \$10,000 in fines and fees.

What You Can Do to Stop Drunk Driving¹

Taking greater responsibility can ultimately end drunk driving.

- ◇ If drinking, plan to have a safe ride home before drinking, and choose a designated driver (i.e., non-drinking friend)
- ◇ If someone you know has been drinking, do not let them drive! Take their keys and arrange for a ride home for them
- ◇ Call a taxi, ride-share service, or a sober friend.
- ◇ Always wear a seatbelt when driving
- ◇ If you see an impaired driver on the road, contact law enforcement.

All these actions can help prevent drunk driving crashes, and, ultimately, preventable deaths.

Resources

- ◇ National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (nhtsa.gov) —888-327-4236
- ◇ Mothers Against Drunk Driving (M.A.D.D.; madd.org) —877-623-3435

References

¹ United States Department of Transportation: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (n.d.). *Drunk driving*. <https://www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/drunk-driving#age-5056>