



Campaign to Eliminate Drunk Driving **Fact Sheet**

In November 2006, MADD launched a major new offensive in the war against drunk driving through its *Campaign to Eliminate Drunk Driving*. Alcohol-related traffic fatalities have declined by 40 percent since MADD was founded in 1980, yet progress has stalled in recent years. MADD is not satisfied with a 40 percent reduction, and because of advancements in technology, we now have new tools at hand to actually *eliminate* drunk driving.

MADD is intensifying efforts by taking the fight against drunk driving to a new and unprecedented level. The Campaign calls for mandatory ignition interlocks for all convicted drunk drivers, high visibility law enforcement, development of advanced vehicle technology and mobilization of community support.

The Campaign has four elements:

- **Full implementation of current alcohol ignition interlock technologies**, including efforts to require alcohol ignition interlock devices for all convicted drunk drivers. A key part of this effort will be working with judges, prosecutors and state driver's license officials to stop the revolving door of repeat offenders;
- **Intensive high-visibility law enforcement**, including twice-yearly crackdowns and frequent enforcement efforts that include sobriety checkpoints and saturation patrols in all 50 states;
- **Exploration and development of advanced vehicle-based technology** that will detect if a driver has an illegal alcohol level of .08 BAC or above and prevent that driver from operating the vehicle.
- **Mobilization of grassroots support** led by MADD and its 400+ affiliates, to make the elimination of drunk driving a reality.

Alcohol ignition interlocks for all convicted drunk drivers would save thousands of lives a year.

Ignition interlocks are one of the best proven ways to stop convicted drunk drivers from continuing to drive drunk. Interlocks installed in the vehicles of convicted drunk drivers prevent the vehicle from starting if the driver fails a breath test. Once installed, studies have shown that interlocks reduce repeat drunk driving offenses by an average of 64 percent.

MADD is pushing for legislation that would make alcohol ignition interlocks mandatory for all convicted drunk drivers in all 50 states. MADD's model state legislation also includes a compliance revision. An interlock should remain installed in a vehicle until an offender can adequately demonstrate sober driving through an interlock or electronic monitoring. If an offender fails a test, the offender's interlock installation should be extended to match the initial interlock period (e.g., 150 days for a first offense).

It is estimated that only one out of eight convicted drunk drivers each year currently get the device, and the majority are repeat offenders. There are approximately 146,000 interlocks currently in service in the United States. The Campaign is committed to vastly increasing that number in the next five years to 500,000 by encouraging states to enact model laws that require alcohol ignition interlock devices for all convicted drunk drivers, which remain on the car until the offender can adequately demonstrate that the interlock is no longer needed.

Highly visible law enforcement crackdowns, including checkpoints and saturation patrols, are proven to keep drunk drivers off the road. Every state should allow sobriety checkpoints to find and deter drunk drivers. MADD is working with law enforcement agencies as well as federal, state and local governments to increase enforcement—especially during peak holiday periods. Americans stand behind strong enforcement: 87 percent say they support the use of sobriety checkpoints. 65 percent also support the mandatory installation of interlocks for first time offenders.

Future technology will eliminate drunk driving for good. MADD also supports the development of advanced technology that will stop a drunk driver from operating a vehicle. This research is being led by the Automotive Coalition for Traffic Safety through a 5-year cooperative research agreement with the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration. There are several advanced technologies currently under development including:

- using infrared light to measure BAC through the skin;
- transdermal technology that measures BAC in a person's sweat through skin contact with vehicle surfaces such as the steering wheel;
- advanced, non-intrusive measurements of driver breath alcohol.

To be effective and accepted by the public, implementation of advanced technologies must not affect or interfere with the sober driver; must be absolutely reliable and accurate; must be set at .08 BAC for adult drivers not convicted of drunk driving, and must be cost effective. MADD envisions that this technology will be made available to the public on a voluntary basis and will include insurance premium discounts.

MADD is mobilizing grassroots support to make the elimination of drunk driving a reality. Together with its 400+ affiliates, MADD is uniting drunk driving victims, families, community leaders and policy makers to fight to eliminate drunk driving. MADD intends to work with law enforcement agencies, judicial organizations, auto manufacturers, insurers, technology companies, safety advocates, health care professionals, and emergency technicians in order to push for comprehensive state-level policies and reforms that will ensure that drunk driving is finally abolished in this country.

The Campaign is not merely a slogan or tagline. It aims to do precisely what it says. We want to completely eliminate drunk driving at the illegal limit of .08 BAC and above. Eliminating drunk driving is more than our vision – with the tools at hand; we are able to make our *vision a reality*.