

Law Enforcement Programs: A Key To Stopping Drunk Driving Fact Sheet

Sobriety Checkpoints & Saturation Patrols

- Sobriety checkpoints reduce alcohol-related crashes, injuries, and fatalities. Centers For Disease Control researchers showed crash and fatality reductions from 18 to 24%.⁶
- Sobriety checkpoints are a powerful deterrent to drinking and driving, especially when well publicized.⁷
- Generally, about 85-90 percent of Americans support sobriety checkpoints. ¹⁴Also, 62% of Americans want sobriety checkpoints to be used more often.¹¹
- 40 states and Washington , D.C. , allow sobriety checkpoints. All other states allow saturation patrols.

Definitions:

- Sobriety checkpoint: law enforcement evaluates drivers for signs of alcohol or drug impairment at certain points on the roadway. Vehicles are stopped in a specific sequence, such as every other vehicle or every fourth, fifth or sixth vehicle. Sobriety checkpoints must display warning signs to motorists. Police must have a reason to believe the driver stopped at a checkpoint has been drinking before a breath test can be conducted.
- Saturation patrol: concentrated enforcement effort that target impaired drivers by observing moving violations such as reckless driving, speeding, aggressive driving, and others. A saturation patrol is generally spread over a larger geographic area than a sobriety checkpoint.

Seat Belt Use/Mobilizations

- 70% of people who are fatally injured in impaired driving crashes are not wearing seat belts.⁹
- Seat belt use of 90% is found and exceeded in Canada , Australia , many Northern Europe countries, and some US states.³
- 25% of drivers who do not use seat belts also engage in high-risk behaviors, such as drinking and driving. Primary seat belt laws increase usage rates for higher-risk drivers to a greater extent than the average driver.⁴
- Wearing seat belts reduces the risk of fatal injury by 45% and the risk of serious injury by 50%.¹²
- Approximately 82% of Americans use seat belts. For every one percentage point rise in seat belt use, an additional 280 lives can be saved.¹³
- 25 states and Washington , D.C. have a primary enforcement seat belt law.
- The only proven way to significantly increase belt use is through strong and well-enforced laws.²

- In 2004, the average safety belt usage was 11 percentage points higher in states with primary laws than in states without (84 percent to 73 percent).^[1]
- The national “Click It or Ticket” mobilization campaign (May 2002) yielded an average increase in seat belt use of nearly 9 percentage points in states using the full implementation model.¹
- According to the Air Bag and Seat Belt Safety Campaign, seat belt use increased 19 percentage points (from 61% to 80%), 39 million more Americans buckle up and 3,780 lives have been saved each year ^[NDE1] since the campaign started in 1997.

Citations:

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