

Numbers Now

Criminal Justice in Oklahoma

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**Oklahoma State Bureau of
Investigation**

Stan Florence
Director

Charles Curtis
Deputy Director

Angie Woodrow
SAC Director

John Flores-Hidones
Researcher

Nikki Lofftus
Researcher

Meredith Mouser
Researcher



By the Numbers: Impaired Driving in Oklahoma

John Flores-Hidones

In 2015, the Oklahoma Highway Safety Office (OHSO) reported 4,542 vehicle crashes caused by impaired drivers. The result: 2,896 injuries and 273 fatalities. Fatalities related to impaired driving increased 16% in Oklahoma when compared to 2014. On average, 12 impaired driving crashes occur each day in Oklahoma.

The Oklahoma Highway Safety Office implemented the ENDUI Program in November 2014. Comprised of local, county, and state law enforcement agencies, the program's mission is to educate citizens on risks associated with impaired driving. Program funds are also used to implement determent strategies, including saturation patrols and sobriety checkpoints. ENDUI Enforcement Teams coordinate multijurisdictional events on a regular basis. Officers working in the program strictly enforce state laws and abide by a zero tolerance policy for impaired drivers.

Governor Mary Fallin signed House Bill 3146 last legislative session. This new law, which went into effect November 1, 2016, requires all DUI cases to be prosecuted by a court of record. In the past, some DUI cases were prosecuted in municipal courts. This law aims to better track repeat offenders. Ultimately, this law will reduce impaired driving in Oklahoma.

For more information about ENDUI Program, please visit: <http://enduiok.com>

This Issue:
National Impaired Driving Awareness Month

State Programs Address Impaired Driving

Nikki Lofftus

December is National Impaired Driving Prevention Month. Drunk drivers kill more than 10,000 people annually, and about a third of traffic deaths involved a driver with a blood concentration above the legal limit. Most states have programs to address impaired driving. Recently, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) featured 12 state programs on its website, including:

Delaware

In Delaware, the Office of Highway Safety has implemented a campaign to raise awareness about the consequences – both legal and physical – for those who choose to drive impaired. Based on state-level statistics, officials are primarily targeting men and women between ages 36 and 54.

Iowa

In Iowa, the Governor's Office of Drug Control Policy implemented a comprehensive prevention campaign in 2014 designed to "enforce drug and drugged laws with law enforcement and other key personnel."

Washington

In Washington, the state's toxicology lab routinely test blood samples of those involved in suspected drugged crashes not only for alcohol, but also for marijuana and prescription pills.

Michigan, Oregon, South Dakota, and Wisconsin are addressing drugged driving by training officers to become Drug Recognition Experts (DRE). According to the North Carolina Office of Indigent Defense Services, DREs administer tests on suspected impaired driving to determine whether the individual is impaired and, if so, to categorize the type of impaired substance." Michigan also trains officers and prosecutors around the state.

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.samhsa.gov/capt/sites/default/files/resources/approaches-drugged-driving.pdf>

<http://www.ncids.com/forensic/dre/dre.shtml>

Happy Holidays!

Community-Based Practices to Prevent Impaired Driving

Meredith Mouser

With the holiday season rapidly approaching, many will soon be attending festivities that provide for the opportunity of increased alcohol consumption. As alcohol consumption increases during this time of the year, it also means those who drink in excess may be more likely to drive a vehicle while impaired. As this also tends to be a time of the year when travel increases, which not only means that those who drive while impaired are at an increased risk of injury or death, but so are countless individuals who are traveling to visit loved ones during the holidays. Even though there is not one catch-all solution to prevent impaired driving, some programs help to reduce the number of alcohol-impaired-driving crashes. For example, alternative transportation programs are just one of several programs communities can implement with the goal of reducing injuries and deaths due to impaired driving.

The overall goal of alternative transportation programs is to keep an impaired driver from operating their vehicle. The options for alternative transportation include personal vehicles, taxicabs, limousines, transit vehicles, and a tow truck. While these programs tend to be viewed as an alternative to existing modes of transportation, this program has the potential to be quite useful in areas that do not have expansive public transportation services. More information on developing alternative transportation programs can be found in the U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's report *Alternative Transportation Programs: A Countermeasure for Reducing Impaired Driving*.

Reminder

We can assist your agency
with crime research and
statistics or other research
requests

Just Released

The Oklahoma Crime Victimization Survey is
now available online. To access the report,
please visit:

[https://www.ok.gov/osbi/Statistical Analysis
Center/Publications/index.html](https://www.ok.gov/osbi/Statistical_Analysis_Center/Publications/index.html)