



Safety Culture

2014 Impaired Driving Fact Sheet

Latest Impaired Driving Survey Findings Show Little Change in Motorist Behavior

Each year, the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety surveys Americans ages 16 and older about their driving behaviors and attitudes. The goal of this annual [Safety Culture Index](#) is to foster a social climate in which traffic safety is highly valued and rigorously pursued.

Though the complete 2014 survey will be released in January 2015, the AAA Foundation is highlighting the findings pertaining to alcohol- and drug-impaired driving in time for the busy holiday travel season.

Impaired Driving in 2014

"Do As I Say, Not As I Do" Attitude about Alcohol

- 91% of American drivers believe it is completely unacceptable for somebody to drive when they think they may have had too much to drink.
- 75% of drivers believe that "where [they] live, most other people" think it is completely unacceptable for somebody to drive when they think they may have had too much to drink.
- 92% of drivers think that people driving after drinking alcohol pose a somewhat or very serious threat to personal safety.
- 42% of drivers think drunk drivers are a bigger problem today compared with three years ago.

Despite the above findings:

- One in eight (12%) drivers (20% of licensed drivers who consume alcohol) admit to driving when they thought their alcohol level might have been close to or over the legal limit, at least once in the past year.
 - 13% of drivers who drink alcohol said they did this more than once in the past year.

Support for Countermeasures

There is majority support for various countermeasures to address drunk driving:

- 73% of drivers support requiring all new cars to have built-in alcohol ignition interlocks.
- 80% of drivers support requiring ignition interlock use by all drivers convicted of DWI, including "first-time offenders."
- 63% of drivers support lowering the legal BAC limit from .08 to .05.



Car crashes rank among the leading causes of death in the United States.



Drug-Impaired Driving

- There is somewhat less concern about drug-impaired than drunk driving. For example, compared with the 66% of drivers who said people driving after drinking pose a *very serious* threat to safety:
 - 56% said people driving after using illegal drugs posed a very serious threat, and
 - 28% said this about people driving after using prescription drugs.
- Nearly one in two drivers think drivers using drugs are a bigger problem today compared to three years ago.
- Eight in ten drivers feel it is completely unacceptable for a driver to drive one hour after using marijuana.
 - Fewer than six in ten drivers believe that “where [they] live, most other people” think it is completely unacceptable to do so.
- More than four in five drivers support having a law making it illegal to drive with a certain amount of marijuana in a person’s system, yet more than half (54%) didn’t know if their state had such a law.

Tips for Keeping Yourself and Your Family Safe this Holiday Season

- Commit to never driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Never get in a motor vehicle with a driver that you suspect has been drinking or using drugs.
- Call 911 if you observe a motorist on the road that you believe may be under the influence; warning signs can include drifting in and out of the travel lane, inability to maintain a consistent speed, or failure to obey traffic signs.
- Make transportation arrangements before you head out for the night, and consider all options:
 - Designate a driver;
 - Use public transportation;
 - Hire a taxi;
 - Plan to stay overnight; or
 - Check with your AAA Club about local towing services that may be provided.
- Since you can’t control the actions of other drivers on the road, the best protection is to **always buckle up**, every time, wherever you are sitting in the vehicle!
- Don’t forget that prescription drugs can impair your driving in similar ways to alcohol and illicit substances. The AAA Foundation’s **Roadwise Rx** tool (roadwiserx.com) is a great way to check on the side effects and potential drug interactions of any medications you may be taking.

Established in 1947 by AAA, the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety is a not-for-profit, publicly funded, 501(c)(3) charitable research and educational organization. The AAA Foundation’s mission is to prevent traffic deaths and injuries by conducting research into their causes and by educating the public about strategies to prevent crashes and reduce injuries when they do occur. This research is used to develop educational materials for drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists and other road users. Visit

AAAFoundation.org for more information.