
Minnesota Impaired Driving Fact Sheet

Source: Minnesota Department of Public Safety Office of Traffic Safety

Alcohol-related crashes, injuries and fatalities continue to be a serious problem in Minnesota. Overall, males and young people are over-represented in alcohol-related crashes, with young people accounting for a disproportionate share of fatalities.

On August 1, 2005, the legal alcohol limit for drivers will drop to 0.08 from 0.10.

- § From 2000 to 2004, Minnesota averaged 614 traffic deaths per year — 225 (37 percent) per year were impaired-driving related.
- § Over the same five years, there was an average of 33,532 impaired driving incidents per year that resulted from a DWI arrest.
- § Mostly, impaired driving follows population density. The Twin Cities' metro area had 51 percent of the impaired driving incidents and the 80-county non-metro area 49 percent.
- § In 2004, males accounted for 77 percent of impaired driving incidents. Young persons — especially people in their 20s — account for a disproportionate share of all incidents. In 2004, 43 percent of incidents were committed by people in their 20s.
- § Of all Minnesota residents, 447,315 have a DWI on record. One in every nine persons in Minnesota with a driving record (including those with a license and those with a license revoked, cancelled etc.) has a DWI; 192,448 (one in 20) have two or more incidents; 90,533 (one in 43) have three or more; and, 1,027 have 10 or more.
- § Drinking and driving is especially a weekend occurrence. In 2004, 26 percent of impaired driving incidents occurred on Saturdays and 22 percent on Sundays. The months are about equal in regards to the number of impaired driving incidents.
- § Most impaired driving offenders are first-time offenders. Still, many offenses are committed by persons with prior incidents on their record. In 2004, 13,851 (40 percent) of violators had prior DWIs on record.