



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. These technologies must be moderately priced, absolutely reliable, set at the illegal BAC limit and unobtrusive to the sober driver; and
- **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. If we truly want to eliminate drunk driving, we must use all the tools in our arsenal. Alcohol 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, interlocks are up to 90 percent effective in preventing drunk driving when on the vehicle. 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 100,000 interlocks currently in service in the United States. The Campaign is committed to 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.



Highly visible law enforcement crackdowns, including checkpoints and saturation patrols, are proven to remove drunk drivers from 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. Sixty-five percent also support the mandatory installation of interlocks for first-time offenders.

Future technology will eliminate drunk driving for good. Beyond interlocks, there are several advanced technologies currently under development including infrared beams to measure BAC non-invasively through the soft forearm tissue; transdermal technology to measure BAC through skin contact with vehicle surfaces such as the steering wheel; algorithms to detect weaving; and biometric identification such as thumbprint screens.

MADD, NHTSA, the auto industry and the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety are forming the Blue Ribbon Panel for the Development of Advanced Alcohol Detection Technology, which will focus on several key imperatives: the technology must not affect or interfere with the sober driver; it must be absolutely reliable and accurate; it should be set at .08 BAC for adult drivers not convicted of drunk driving; and the cost should be reasonable. The Panel will focus on the development of new technology in the next 10 years through a non-regulatory, voluntary and data driven effort.

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, distilled spirits companies, 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*.

