TEXAS SHSP

Impaired Driving Emphasis Area

2022 – 2027

**TEXAS
TOGETHER**
on the Road to Zero

The development of the *Texas Strategic Highway Safety Plan* was led by the Traffic Safety Division of the Texas Department of Transportation working in conjunction with the Center for Transportation Safety at the Texas A&M Transportation Institute. Hundreds of safety stakeholders from across the state representing local, regional, and state agencies, law enforcement, industry and advocates, engineers, clinicians, and educators actively participated in the process.


Texas Department of Transportation

Save a Life™
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Center for Transportation Safety
Texas Transportation Institute

Texas A&M Transportation Institute

Section 6.6 Impaired Driving

Background

The mission of a Safe System is to design and maintain a transportation system that both proactive and redundant. Although much of the Safe Systems language seems to focus on infrastructure, critical parts of redundancy and being proactive are the continued inclusion of behavioral traffic safety to advance the journey towards zero deaths in Texas.

One element of the Safe System is safe road users. Proactively addressing unsafe driving behaviors such as impaired driving through multi-prong behavioral safety countermeasures. As we wait on additional technology to address the element associated with safe vehicles, the state will continue to employ educational and enforcement countermeasures.

Impaired Driving

18%
% of Total Fatal & Serious Injury Crashes

19%
% of Total Fatal & Serious Injuries

Overlapping behavioral factors such as speed, intersections, roadway, and lane departure as well as lack of restraint compound the issue of impaired driving. Although statutes currently prohibit some of the countermeasures proven effective in other states, Texas is addressing impaired driving with infrastructure and behavioral strategies along with assessing potential options for technology-based interventions on the system and in vehicles.
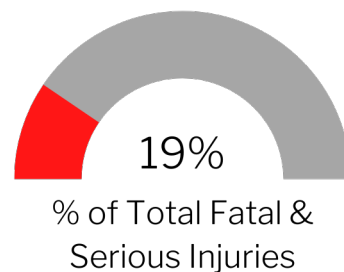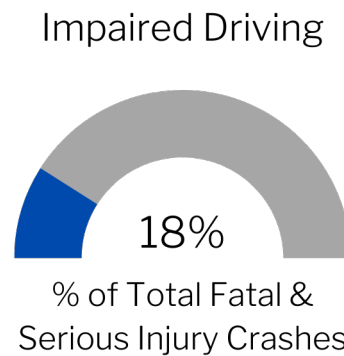
Historical & Trend Crash Data Analysis

The fatal and suspected serious injury crashes attributed to impaired driving represent 18% of all crashes. Since 2017, crashes attributed to impaired driving have decreased in the frequency of fatal crashes and deaths. The suspected serious injury crashes and injury frequency stayed relatively flat until 2021 crash trend has increased; therefore, it is important to reverse this trend to reach the state goal of zero deaths in 2050. The fatal and suspected serious injury crashes attributed to impaired driving are illustrated in Figure 6.6.1 and the fatal and suspected serious injuries are summarized in Figure 6.6.2.
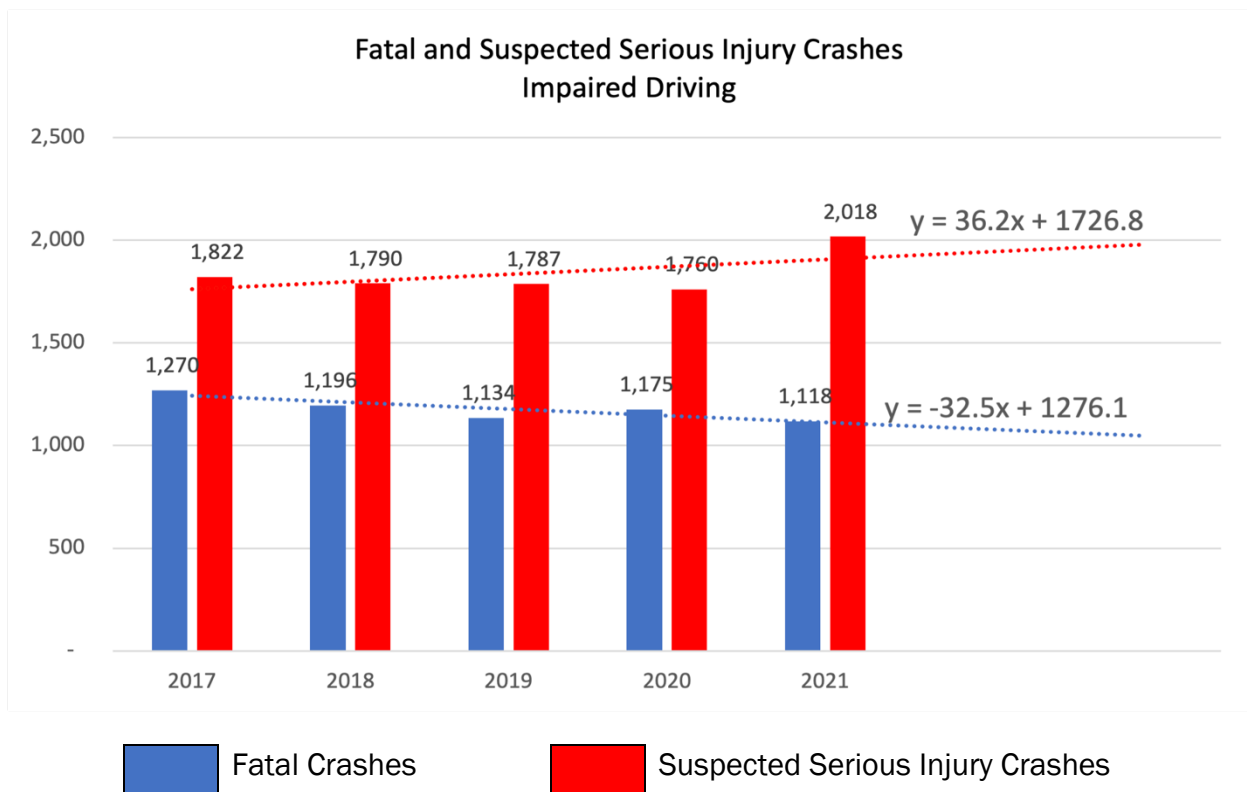

Figure 6.6.1. Impaired Driving EA: Fatal and Suspected Serious Injury Crashes (2017-2021)

Fatalities and Suspected Serious Injuries
Impaired Driving

$$y = 54.8x + 2394$$

$$y = -30x + 1425$$

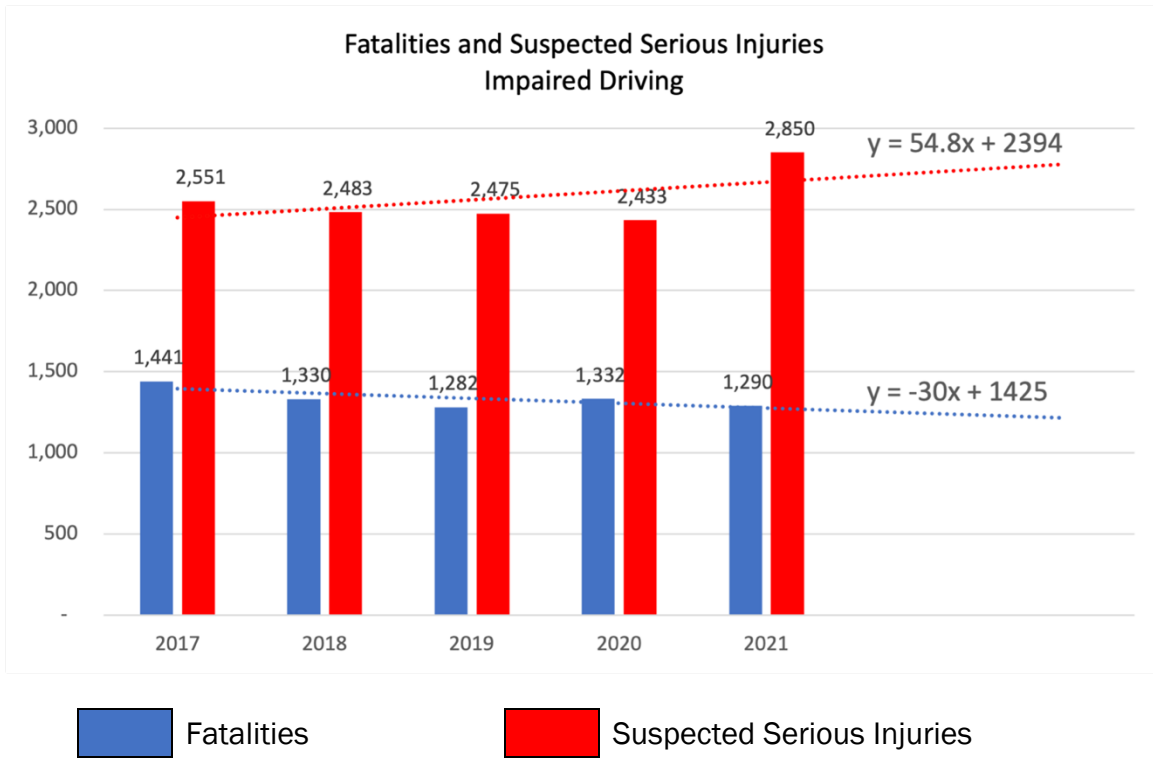|	Fatalities		Suspected Serious Injuries

Figure 6.6.2. Impaired Driving EA: Fatal and Suspected Serious Injuries (2017-2021)

The EA representatives used this and other data analysis that examined overlapping crash factors, depending on the emphasis area, as they identified strategies and developed implementation plans to address occupant protection related crashes.

Impaired Driving
% of Fatal & Serious Injury Crashes

Urban 50%   On-System 65%

Rural 50%   Off-System 35%
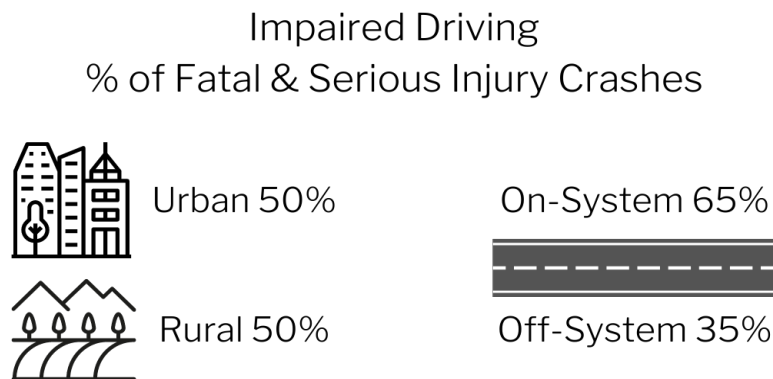
Impaired driving crashes do not occur exclusively at night, but as Figure 6.6.4 illustrates below, the greatest concentration of these types of crashes occur between 10pm and 2am.
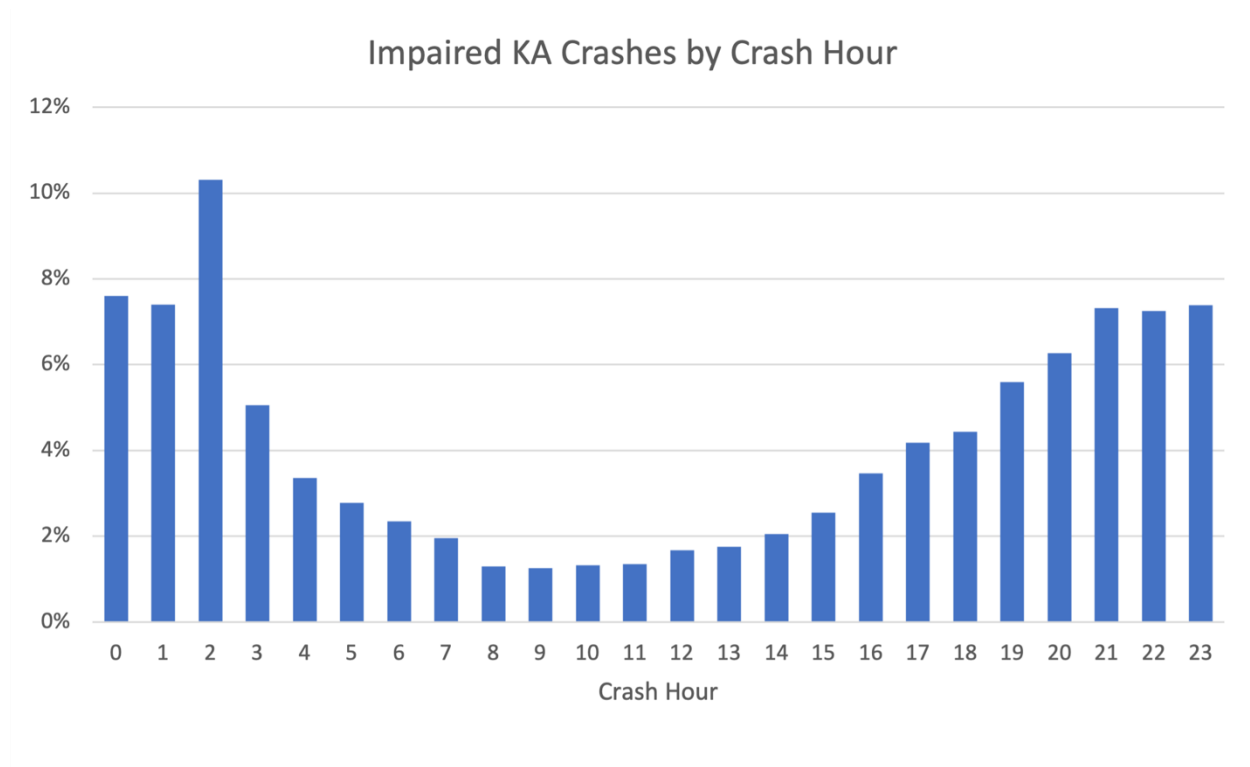

Figure 6.6.4. Impaired Driving EA: Crashes According to Hour

From 2017 through 2021, there were 15,085 fatal and suspected serious injury crashes attributed to impaired driving. These crashes resulted in 6,675 fatalities and 12,792 suspected serious injuries. Impaired driving is only a behavioral crash factor. Therefore, other factors likely play a role in impaired driving crashes whether it be a location factor or user type. Impaired driving crashes are a significant part of the traffic safety challenges in Texas and represent 34% of the fatal crashes and 35% of the total fatalities. If the state can address the occurrence of impaired driving crashes, it will have a significant impact on our ability to reach zero deaths. After identifying prevalent crash factors with impaired driving crashes, there were several observations that the EA team considered during the strategy identification and development of implementation plans. These crash factors include:

Impaired driving crashes (15,085) by manner of collision:

- ⇒ 60% Single Vehicle Crash
- ⇒ 14% Same Direction Crash
- ⇒ 16% Opposite Direction Crash
- ⇒ 10% Angle Crash

Impaired driving crashes (15,085) by overlapping factors:

- ⇒ 56% of the impaired crashes were also roadway/lane departure crashes
- ⇒ 28% of the impaired crashes were also speeding related
- ⇒ 88% of the impaired driving crashes resulted in the impaired driver(s) sustaining a KA
- ⇒ 4% of the impaired driving crashes resulted in multiple fatalities (1,403 killed)

Objective for Emphasis Area

Reduce the occurrence of fatal and serious injury crashes attributed to impaired driving (alcohol and/or other drugs).

Strategies & Implementation Plans

Strategy 6.6.1   Increase education for all road users on the impact of impaired driving and its prevention.

Implementation Action Plan
6.6.1.1   Deploy robust, longitudinal survey activities to measure attitudes related to impaired driving and the impact of educational and/or media *campaigns* on target audiences. Publish results to stakeholders and program partners.
6.6.1.2   Educate road users on how alcohol and/or other drugs negatively impact driving behavior.
6.6.1.3   Implement effective countermeasures (education and enforcement) specifically addressing DUI (drivers under 21 with any detectable amount of alcohol) with an emphasis on zero tolerance.
6.6.1.4   Demonstrate to all types of road users the consequences associated with violations including the magnitude of the impact of impaired-driving crashes on fatality rates by making comparisons with other causes of death (e.g., murder rate). Emphasis on target audience based on data/community.

Facilitator(s)	TxDOT Behavioral Traffic Safety (BTS)
Participating Organizations	TxDOT BTS, DPS, Sheriffs' Departments, Local law enforcement agencies, Advocacy organizations
Effectiveness	***
Cost to Implement	6.6.1.1 $$, 6.6.1.2 $, 6.6.1.3 $, 6.6.1.4 $
Time to Implement	6.6.1.1 Medium, 6.6.1.2 Short, 6.6.1.2 6.6.1.3 Short, 6.6.1.4 Short (Currently Ongoing)
Barriers	Lack of sufficient funding

Strategy 6.6.2   Increase officer contacts with impaired drivers through regular traffic enforcement.

Implementation Action Plan
6.6.2.1 Educate the police, community leaders, the public, and traffic safety partners on the role of regular traffic enforcement stops as a primary tool in detecting impaired drivers and encourage their use to reduce impaired crashes. Focus on agency administration and local government entities to establish local priorities.
6.6.2.2 Use a data-driven approach to optimize areas and timesfor enforcement. Increase the deployment of Data Driven Approaches to Crime and Traffic Safety (DDACTS) training and local implementation.
6.6.2.3 Educate communities with data through earned media and other means to communicate the impact of impaired driving in the local areas.
6.6.2.4 Identify training opportunities for law enforcement at the state and local levels in locations with high probability for alcohol and/or other drug use frequently leads to impaired driving (including events, communities, entertainment districts, etc.)

Facilitator(s)	TxDOT Behavioral Traffic Safety (BTS)
Participating Organizations	TxDOT BTS, DPS, Sheriffs' Departments, Local law enforcement agencies, Advocacy organizations
Effectiveness	***
Cost to Implement	6.6.2.1 $, 6.6.2.2 $, 6.6.2.3 $, 6.6.2.4 $
Time to Implement	6.6.2.1 Short, 6.6.2.2 Short, 6.6.2.2 6.6.2.3 Short, 6.6.2.4 Short (Currently Ongoing)
Barriers	Lack of sufficient funding

Strategy 6.6.3   Increase data, training, and resources for law enforcement officers, prosecutors, toxicologists, judges, and community supervision personnel in the area of alcohol and/or other drugged-driving.

Implementation Action Plan
6.6.3.1   Train law enforcement in effective DWI detection including Standardized Field Sobriety Testing (SFST), Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement (ARIDE) training, and Drug Evaluation and Classification (DEC) Program. Include preparation for testimony.
6.6.3.2   Train prosecutors in the DWI trial process & presentation of evidence. Implement joint training for law enforcement, prosecutors, and laboratory personnel (forensic toxicologists) to assist in presenting scientific evidence of alcohol and/or drug impairment in court.
6.6.3.3   Educate Judges on the DWI process with joint training for judges and appropriate court personnel on the impairing effects of alcohol and/or other drugs on driving, DUI processes (under 21), DWI detection process, and monitoring options (ignition interlock devices, testing, etc.).
6.6.3.4   Train Community Supervision Personnel on the impairing effects of alcohol and/or other drugs on driving and the use of ignition interlock devices/testing (condition of probation).
6.6.3.5   Provide additional resources for laboratories to address testing capacity for evidence associated with DWIs and availability to provide expert testimony.
6.6.3.6   Identify methodologies and resources for improving the identification of drugged driving as a contributing factor in impaired-driving crashes.

Facilitator(s)	TxDOT Behavioral Traffic Safety (BTS)
Participating Organizations	TxDOT BTS, DPS, Sheriffs' Departments, Local law enforcement agencies, Advocacy organizations
Effectiveness	***
Cost to Implement	6.6.3.1 $, 6.6.3.2 $, 6.6.3.3 $, 6.6.3.4 $, 6.6.3.5 $$$, 6.6.3.6 $
Time to Implement	6.6.3.1 Short, 6.6.3.2 Short, 6.6.3.3 Short, 6.6.3.4 Short, 6.6.3.5 Medium, 6.6.3.6 Short (Currently Ongoing)
Barriers	Lack of sufficient funding

Impaired Driving Emphasis Area Team		
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EA Team Members current as of September 2022