

100 Days and Nights of Summer” is a Success, Netting Thousands of DWI Arrests

Santa Fe - Governor Bill Richardson announced on September 13, 2007 that preliminary statistics indicate that New Mexico law enforcement agencies held 232 checkpoints and made nearly 2,200 DWI arrests during the recently concluded “100 Days and Nights of Summer” traffic safety campaign.

Additionally, officers issued 32,160 citations for speeding, 6,710 seat belt citations, 1,268 child restraint citations, 7,106 citations to uninsured motorists and just under 950 drivers were arrested for driving on a suspended or revoked license. In total, New Mexico law enforcement agencies made nearly 109,000 arrests or citations during the Department of Transportation sponsored campaign.

Unofficial numbers from the NMDOT indicate that there were a total of 115 traffic fatalities, including alcohol involved, in New Mexico in June, July and August this year, compared to 142 traffic fatalities for those same months last year, a decrease of 15 percent. The “100 Days and Nights Campaign” began June 1, 2007 and concluded on Sept. 8.

In addition to these successful traffic safety efforts, New Mexico police agencies made at least 182 felony arrests, apprehended more than 400 fugitives, recovered at least 10 stolen vehicles and made 111 drug arrests. Although the summer traffic enforcement crackdown has ended, New Mexico law enforcement agencies have begun conducting added DWI patrols, keeping New Mexico roadways safer.

How Much Booze Is Good For You?

Light Drinking Helps Health, But A Little Too Much Is Far Worse Than None

By Daniel J. DeNoon
WebMD Medical News
Reviewed by Louise Chang, MD

Sept. 4, 2007 -- Light drinking helps heart health. But more than one drink a day for women and more than two daily drinks for men are harmful.

That's the bottom line from a state-of-the-art review of drinking and health by University of Missouri cardiologist James H. O'Keefe, MD, and colleagues. The researchers note that study after study shows health benefits for moderate drinking. These benefits

appear to come not from the type of alcohol, but from the alcohol itself.

That's been seen as terrific news for tipplers. If a little is good, wouldn't a little more be better? No, O'Keefe and colleagues assert. More is not only not better -- it's harmful. Just a little too much is worse than none at all. And binge drinking, the researchers say, is harmful even for otherwise light drinkers.

A drink may be smaller than you think. O'Keefe and colleagues say a drink is a 12-ounce bottle of beer, a 5-ounce glass of wine, or 1.5 ounces of 80-proof distilled liquor which all have between 13 and 15 grams of alcohol. Despite the health benefit of moderate alcohol consumption, the researchers warn doctors against advising people to drink.

"Sobering statistics warn that moderate daily drinking is a slippery slope that many individuals cannot safely navigate," they note.

O'Keefe and colleagues report their findings in the Sept. 11 issue of the Journal of the American College of Cardiology.

Report a Drunk Driver!

Call the DrunkBusters Hotline on your cell phone at:

#DWI (394)

Employers Can Deter Risky Drinking On and Off Job, Study Suggests

Employees of firms that actively discourage drinking are less apt to drink on or off the job, according to researchers at the University of Texas.

MedPage Today reported that study author Benjamin C. Amick, Ph.D., and colleagues from the school's Institute for Work and Health surveyed more than 5,000 workers at Fortune 500 companies. They found that those whose employers did the most to discourage drinking were 45 percent less likely to be heavy drinkers, 54 percent less likely to drink frequently, and 69 percent less likely to drink at work, compared to workers at firms with the most permissive attitudes toward drinking.

Researchers said the study suggests that workplace social-norms campaigns aimed at problem drinking can have a positive impact that goes beyond the work hours of the day. Overall, 40 percent of the workers surveyed were drinkers, 19 percent were considered heavy drinkers, 8 percent were classed as frequent drinkers, and 11 percent drank at work. The study appears in the journal *Occupational & Environmental Medicine*.

Research



The DWI Resource Center is a tax-exempt 501(c)3 New Mexico organization formed to reduce the social and economic impact of DWI through public awareness, education, prevention programs and research. The Center also provides assistance to victims and serves as a central clearinghouse for information on DWI and victims' rights.

- Research and Statistics**
- Public Policy & Law**
- Victims' Rights Legal Assistance Project**
- Court Monitoring**
- Drug-Free Workplace Programs**
- Retailers For Responsibility**
- Victim Impact Panels**

For more information about the Center or to make a contribution, please call us at (505) 881-1084, or visit our website at www.dwiresourcecenter.org.

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Drive Safely to Work Week October 1 - 5, 2007

The Drive Safely to Work Week 2007 campaign runs October 1-5, and emphasizes three themes:

- Take Charge of YOUR Driving Behavior.
- Reduce YOUR Crash Risk.
- Avoid High-Risk Driving Mistakes.

Driving is something that almost every employee does, whether it's business-related travel during the workday, commuting to and from work, or during off-duty hours. But regardless of when, where, or why an employee is behind the wheel--- when an injury occurs, there is a devastating impact on their place of business.

With work-related roadway crashes the leading cause of death among the U.S. workforce and as more employers are being held accountable for their employees' actions while behind the wheel, it is increasingly important for the American business community to promote safe driving practices to all employees. Traffic safety campaigns educate drivers and raise their awareness about the consequences of unsafe driving. Better-informed drivers can make better decisions to keep our roadways safer. For the 11th year, the Network of Employers for Traffic Safety (NETS) is sponsoring Drive Safely Work Week (DSWW), a workplace traffic safety campaign created to help employers protect their employees behind the wheel.

Campaign materials address five common "high-risk" driving mistakes and provide risk avoidance tips that each driver can take to ensure their safety and the safety of others sharing the road. Making the commitment to safe driving is an integral part of this campaign and employers drive home their concern for the safety of their workforce

and acknowledge their duty of care for employees while on the road.

For more information about the campaign, background information, and campaign materials, please visit the DSWW campaign site at:

<http://www.trafficsafety.org/dsww.asp>

U.K. Study Says Bar Workers At Risk of Alcohol-Related Death

Alcohol-related deaths are soaring in Great Britain, and bar workers are among the most likely to die, UPI reported Aug. 23.

The U.K. Office for National Statistics reported that 16,666 people in Britain died of alcohol-related causes between 2001 and 2005, and bar staff, young female office workers, and merchant sailors were among the most likely to die because of alcohol use and its consequences.

On the other hand, doctors -- who previously were counted as among those most at risk of dying from drinking -- are now among the least at risk, due to changes in the drinking culture and an influx of doctors from ethnic backgrounds where alcohol use is taboo. "What is important is whether the occupation has a drinking culture, the availability of alcohol and the toleration of drinking at work," said Martin Plant, an addiction expert at the University of the West of England.

The study was published in Health Statistics Quarterly.

2006 Drunk Driving Statistics Mixed Bag

Alcohol-related traffic fatalities fell slightly in the U.S. last year, but trends varied from state to state, the Associated Press reported August 20. Drunk-driving deaths fell in 28 states plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, but increased in 22 states, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). A total of 13,470 people died in crashes involving drivers with a blood-alcohol content of .08 percent or higher in 2006, down from 13,582 in 2005.

However, more people died in crashes where drivers had any detectable level of alcohol in their bodies, NHTSA reported. The number of drunk-driving deaths rose the most in Arizona, Kansas and Texas, while Utah, Kansas and Iowa had the biggest percentage increases. Florida, Missouri and Pennsylvania experienced the greatest number decline in drunk-driving deaths, while the largest percentage decreases were reported in the District of Columbia, Alaska, and Delaware.

Final data on 2006 drunk driving deaths and injuries in New Mexico has not yet been released as of September 15, 2007.

War Breeds Drinking and Violence in U.S. Military Towns

Alcohol-fueled violence has increased at bars and restaurants in towns near military bases and hospitals as the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have worn on, the Washington Post reported Sept. 2.

Some of the fights arise from interservice rivalries, and involve veterans recovering from combat wounds. Experts see the rising violence as a byproduct of repeated, extended tours of duty and unresolved mental and addiction issues. Binge drinking also has skyrocketed among service members in recent years, Pentagon surveys show, and more vets are returning with traumatic brain injury, a condition that leaves them prone to violent outbursts.

Soldiers exposed to the trauma of war "are often hyper-alert, quick to respond and susceptible to a loss of impulse control," said clinical psychologist Jeffrey Jay of the Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Studies in Washington. "The brain is actually altered by these experiences -- it's part of a survival mechanism, and it's very confusing for them."

Media reports have shown similar problems near Fort Stewart, Ga., Fort Lewis, Wash., Nellis Air Force Base in Las Vegas, and Fort Carson, Colo. In Washington, D.C., the bar Hawk 'n' Dove has banned Marines from entering unless they have female dates. The Norfolk County (Mass.) district attorney's office has been flooded with requests for its "Beyond the Yellow Ribbons" training program, aimed at helping police and others deal with returning veterans and their problems.

How Does Alcohol Affect Your Body And Your Driving?

The following chart contains common symptoms people exhibit at various BAC levels, and the probable effects on driving ability.

Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC)	Typical Effects	Predictable Effects On Driving
.02%	Some loss of judgment; relaxation; slight body warmth; altered mood	Decline in visual functions (rapid tracking of a moving target); Decline in ability to perform two tasks at the same time (divided attention)
.05%	Exaggerated behavior; may have loss of small-muscle control (e.g., focusing your eyes); impaired judgment; usually good feeling; lowered alertness; lack of inhibition	Reduced coordination; reduced ability to track moving objects; difficulty steering; reduced response to emergency driving situations
.08%	Muscle coordination becomes poor (e.g., balance, speech, vision, reaction time, and hearing); harder to detect danger; judgment, self-control, reasoning, and memory are impaired	Concentration; short-term memory loss; speed control; reduced information processing capability (e.g., signal detection, visual search); impaired perception
.10%	Clear deterioration of reaction time and control; slurred speech, poor coordination, and slowed thinking	Reduced ability to maintain lane position and brake appropriately
.15%	Far less muscle control than normal; vomiting may occur (unless this level is reached slowly or a person has developed a tolerance for alcohol); major loss of balance	Substantial impairment in vehicle control, attention to driving task, and in necessary visual and auditory information processing

Information in this table shows the BAC level at which the effect usually is first observed, and has been gathered from a variety of sources including the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, the American Medical Association, the National Commission Against Drunk Driving, and www.webMD.com.

Questions & Answers

Q: What can I do to stay safe when I plan on drinking?

A: If you plan on drinking, plan not to drive.

You should always:

- Choose a non-drinking friend as a designated driver,
- Ask ahead of time if you can stay over at your host's house, or
- Take a taxi (your community may have a Safe Rides program for a free ride home), and Always wear your seat belt – it's your best defense
- against impaired drivers.