

Drunk Driving in America

- Each year in the U.S., drunk driving claims more than 10,000 livesⁱ and costs approximately \$194 billion.ⁱⁱ
- About 31% of all traffic crash fatalities in the United States involve drunk drivers.ⁱⁱⁱ

Drunk Driving in Connecticut

- From 2020 to 2022, Connecticut reported more than 8,000 DUI crashes in the state, including 190 deadly crashes and 300 crashes involving a serious injury.^{iv}
- Connecticut ranks third nationally for the highest percentage of traffic deaths caused by a drunk driver, with 46% of all CT traffic fatalities involving a driver with a BAC of at least .01%.^v
- In a statewide phone survey conducted in 2023:^{vi}
 - More than a third of CT residents (34%) say they know someone who has been in a crash involving a drunk driver or have been in a crash themselves.
 - Nearly one quarter (24%) of CT residents report they have driven when they thought they had too much to drink to drive safely.
 - Three out of four drivers say addressing drunk driving should be a high priority when compared to other issues in the community.

A Technological Solution

- The **Driver Alcohol Detection System for Safety Program (DADSS)** is a public–private partnership between the U.S. Department of Transportation’s **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)** and the nonprofit **Automotive Coalition for Traffic Safety (ACTS)** which represents the world's leading automobile manufacturers.
- Its mission is to bring to market a first-of-its-kind alcohol detection technology that will passively detect when a driver is intoxicated with a BAC at or above the legal limit and prevent the vehicle from moving.
- The program is developing both a breath system and a touch system to measure and precisely quantify BAC levels. Extensive testing is ongoing to ensure the systems are fast, accurate, reliable, and affordable — and small enough to be integrated into a vehicle.
 - The breath system is being designed to measure alcohol in a passive, non-invasive way as a driver breathes normally, when in the driver's seat. Unlike existing breathalyzers, a forced deep lung sample into a mouthpiece is not required, making the system seamless and tamperproof. The breath system is also being designed to distinguish between the driver’s breath and any passengers.
 - The touch system aims to measure blood alcohol levels under the skin’s surface by shining an infrared-light into the fingertip or palm of the driver. It is being designed to take multiple, accurate readings in a matter of seconds, and could be integrated into current vehicle controls, such as the gear shift, starter button or steering wheel.

Driven to Protect in CT

- Driven to Protect is an initiative of the DADSS Research Program, which empowers states to join the fight against drunk driving by advancing lifesaving vehicle technology. Powered by the public-private partnership between automakers and the federal government, Driven to Protect offers states the opportunity to test the DADSS alcohol-detection technology on their roads, bringing it closer to widespread commercialization and encouraging consumers to consider advanced sensor technology as a solution to this deadly problem.
- Connecticut joined the Driven to Protect Initiative in 2023, becoming the third state to join this effort. These state collaborations have helped advance the technology from an early prototype to one intended for widespread use in vehicles of the future. As importantly, the Driven to Protect Initiative is building consumer awareness, confidence, and trust in these new technologies.
- Driven to Protect | Connecticut represents the state's commitment to combatting drunk driving through ground-breaking solutions that complement existing, tried-and-true traffic safety initiatives to save lives.



CT Residents View the DADSS Technology Favorably

- The DADSS technology is a new driver alcohol detection technology that will measure a driver's BAC when their vehicle is started. If a driver's blood alcohol level is over the legal limit, the vehicle will not shift into gear and will not move.
- After hearing this description, 69% of drivers surveyed have a favorable opinion of the technology. This holds true for CT drivers who admit to driving after drinking (64% have a favorable opinion), and drivers who say they have driven when drunk (67% have a favorable opinion).
- CT drivers surveyed viewed this technology more favorably than other advanced technologies, such as distracted driving camera technology (52% favorable) biometric vehicle access technology (44%) and self-driving technology (35%).
- Some reasons drivers say they view the technology favorably include that it will save lives and deter people from driving impaired by stopping the problem before it starts.
- Roughly half of CT drivers (51%) surveyed say they would be "very" or "somewhat" likely to want the DADSS technology (as described) in their next vehicle. That increased to 53% among those who had driven after drinking in the last year or reported driving after drinking too much; and increased to 56% for parents with kids under the age of 21 and to 62% among Connecticut moms.

You can learn more about Driven to Protect in Connecticut and the DADSS technology by visiting

www.DrivenToProtect.org

ⁱ National Center for Statistics and Analysis. (2023, June). Alcohol-impaired driving: 2021 data (Traffic Safety Facts. Report No. DOT HS 813 450). National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Available at: <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813450>

ⁱⁱ National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). "The Economic and Societal Impact Of Motor Vehicle Crashes, 2010." Washington (DC), May 2015 (Revised), DOT HS 812 013. Available at: <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/812013>

ⁱⁱⁱ National Center for Statistics and Analysis. (2023, June). Alcohol-impaired driving: 2021 data (Traffic Safety Facts. Report No. DOT HS 813 450). National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Available at: <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813450>

^{iv} NBC Connecticut. Bill aimed at curbing drunk driving heads to state legislature, February 2023, <https://www.nbcconnecticut.com/news/local/bill-aimed-at-curbing-drunk-driving-heads-to-state-legislature/2983646/>

^v Stewart, T. (2023, April). Overview of motor vehicle traffic crashes in 2021 (Report No. DOT HS 813 435). National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

^{vi} Public Opinion Strategies conducted a Connecticut statewide mixed mode online survey of N=515 licensed drivers ages 21 or older from July 19-23, 2023. The margin of error for a sample size of N=515 is +/-4.9%.