



A Campaign on Safer Driving With Technology

MAAD is Happy about New Drunk Driving Law

At your next employer safety talk, you might want to reserve some time to talk about the ramifications of a new drunk driving law that went into effect in Texas on Sept. 1, if only to reinforce safe driving habits on and off the job.

The law, which requires drunk driving offenders to install an ignition interlock on their vehicles before hitting the road again, is [aimed at curbing repeat drunk driving offenses](#), according to a KXXV-TV news report. [Mothers Against Drunk Driving](#) advocated for this new piece of legislation and MAAD officials let out a collective cheer after Gov. Abbott signed the bill into law.

Colleen Sheehey-Church, national president of MADD, said in the KXXV report, “We are relieved to add Texas to the growing list of states that have taken action to protect residents and visitors from the 100 percent preventable crime of drunk driving.”

In the state of Texas, there is [one DUI-alcohol crash every 20 minutes 37 seconds](#), according to the Texas Department of Transportation. Not surprisingly, Texas led the nation with 1,337 drunk driving deaths in 2013, as [indicated on Page 5 of this National Highway Traffic Safety Administration report](#).

NHTSA reports 40% percent of all traffic deaths in the state of Texas were caused by a drunk driver. And Texas ranked No. 1 in motor vehicle deaths by state in 2013, according to the most recent data in *Injury Facts*, a report created by the National Safety Council.

Of the 35,500 motor vehicle deaths nationwide, 3,385 occurred in Texas. California ranked second with 3,211, followed by Florida with 2,374.

How Does the New Texas Drunk Driving Law Work?

- The law requires in the installation of an interlock for first-time offenders with a BAC of .08 or greater if they choose to drive following a DWI arrest during a license suspension
- The previous law allowed arrested DWI offenders to obtain a non-interlock restricted license following arrest
- The law allows for drivers arrested for DWI to either apply for an interlock 15 days after arrest or to choose not drive
- The interlock-restricted license period is at least 90 days for first-time offenders and 180 days for repeat offenders



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- Courts also can order an interlock upon conviction per current law
- If an individual does not want the ignition interlock device installed, they will be [prohibited from gaining the ability of having a license](#) that allows them to drive while under suspension for the DWI, according to justipedia.com

What is an Ignition Interlock Device?

- It is [similar to a breathalyzer, according to DrivingLaws.org](#), however an IID is connected to the vehicle dashboard or other location inside the vehicle and requires that a driver breath into the device prior to starting the vehicle
- If the ignition interlock device detects the blood alcohol concentration of the driver to be above the programmed limit in the ignition interlock device, the engine of the vehicle will not work