

Established by the National Safety Council in 1936, the Committee on Alcohol and Other Drugs (CAOD), first known as the Committee on Tests for Intoxication, is celebrating its 75th anniversary. Since its inception, the Committee has been active in making recommendations for the control of alcohol and drug impaired driving, including legislation, enforcement, education, chemical testing equipment, training of testing personnel, and other aspects of alcohol and drug countermeasures programs.

Numerous contributions have been made by individual members of the CAOD, such as the development of breath testing devices and methods for blood and urine tests that have been widely used in both commercial and government venues. These contributions, which include numerous scientific articles and papers on the subject of chemical tests, have added greatly to the total sum of knowledge in this important scientific effort.

Annually, the CAOD selects the recipient of the National Safety Council Robert F. Borkenstein Award. The award recognizes individuals who have made outstanding contributions in the area of alcohol/drugs in relation to traffic and transportation safety through a lifetime of service consistent with the ideals and achievements of Dr. Robert F. Borkenstein, a former CAOD member and inventor of the Breathalyzer®.

Listed below are some of the CAODs more notable recommendations:

- “Motor Vehicle Intoxication Report” form was developed for use by investigating officers and examining physicians to record the results of the examination of the drinking driver – 1937
- A concentration of 0.15 percent is definite evidence of “under the influence” – 1938
- Committee assisted officials in Indiana and Maine in the development of first legislation dealing with the use of evidence obtained through chemical tests for alcoholic intoxication – 1939
- Committee developed, and the National Safety Council distributed, a sound film entitled “Testing the Drinking Driver” which encouraged the use of scientific tests to measure blood alcohol concentrations – 1940
- Committee developed “Model Legislation on Driving Under the Influence” which was adopted by the National Committee on Uniform Traffic Laws and Ordinances and “Setting Up Chemical Tests for Intoxication” which outlined the steps necessary to initiate a chemical test program and a step by step process for examining drivers believed to be under the influence. – 1944
- Available information indicates that the alveolar air blood ratio is approximately 1:2100 – 1952
- Enactment of the first Implied Consent law by the State of New York, based on 1952 resolution of the Committee – 1953
- Committee member, R. F. Borkenstein, demonstrated his newly developed breath test device, the Breathalyzer® – 1954
- Committee’s first discussion of the need to look into the influence of drugs on driving behavior – 1956
- Committee recommended lowering “under the influence” to 0.10 – 1960

- Committee finalized its recommendations for a "Model Program for the Control of Alcohol for Traffic Safety"– 1967
- A concentration of 0.08 percent in any driver of a motor vehicle is indicative of impairment in his driving performance – 1971
- Urged appropriate legislation to establish 21 as the minimum drinking age – 1982
- If analytical results are to be used as legal evidence in drug impaired driving cases, both the analyst and the method of analysis should be approved by the appropriate state agency and interpretation of the results should be made by knowledgeable qualified scientists – 1983
- When conducting evidential breath alcohol tests, at least two separate breath samples should be collected and the two results must be within 0.02 g/210 L – 1986
- Urged jurisdictions to enact legislation providing for the administrative suspension of driving privileges following an arrest for driving under the influence of alcohol or other drugs in cases where the driver either refuses to submit to chemical testing or fails such testing – 1988
- Urged all States to adopt 0.08 as the legal definition for driving under the influence – 1989
- Breath alcohol ignition interlock device appears to offer a useful countermeasure to reduce recidivism of a convicted alcohol driving offender – 1995
- All presumptive positive drug screen results in samples obtained following transportation accidents should be confirmed by an alternate analytical method prior to issuing a report. The practice of reporting presumptive positive results in these cases should be abolished – 2008
- Access to the Source Code of the software of an evidential breath-alcohol analyzer is not pertinent, required, or useful for examination or evaluation of the analyzer's accuracy, scientific reliability, forensic validity, or other relevant characteristics, or of the trustworthiness and reliability of analysis results produced by the analyzer – 2009