
Minnesota Impaired Driving Fact Sheet, 2014

Source: Minnesota Department of Public Safety Office of Traffic Safety, June 2015

In 2014, Minnesota recorded 91 impaired-related traffic deaths — accounting for 25 percent of all traffic deaths — about the same as in the recent past.

Impaired-related crashes, injuries and fatalities continue to be a serious problem in Minnesota. Overall, males and young adults are overrepresented in impaired-related crashes and account for a disproportionate share of fatalities. More than 600,000 Minnesotans with driver license records have a DWI.

- The legal alcohol limit for drivers in Minnesota is 0.08. It is always illegal to drive with an alcohol-concentration level of 0.08 or above. Motorists can be arrested under 0.08 if they demonstrate impaired driving behavior. If a motorist's alcohol-concentration is at 0.08 percent or higher, it is a criminal offense with penalties ranging from misdemeanor to felony. It is also a violation of civil law that triggers automatic driver license revocation for up to a year.
- During 2012–2014 in Minnesota there were 1,143 traffic deaths and 290 (25 percent) were impaired-related.
- Over the same three years, there were 79,936 DWI arrests. In 2014, 25,258 DWI arrests were made.
- In 2014, the Twin Cities' metro area had 52.4 percent of the impaired driving arrests and the 80-county non-metro area 47.6 percent.
- In 2014, males accounted for 67 percent of impaired driving arrests. However, from 2005 to 2014, female DWI offenses increased from 22 percent to 25 percent.
- Young persons — especially people in their 20s — account for a disproportionate share of all arrests. In 2014, people in their 20s represented 39 percent of DWI arrests.
- Of all Minnesota residents, more than one-half million— 607,885 — have a DWI on record. Thus, one in seven persons in Minnesota with a driving record (including those with licenses revoked, cancelled, etc.) has a DWI; 255,797 (one in 16) have two or more arrests; 118,995 (one in 35) have three or more.
- Most impaired driving offenders are first-time offenders. In 2014, 14,874 (59 percent of all violators) were issued their first DWI. Still, many offenses are committed by persons with prior DWIs on their record. In 2014, 10,384 (41 percent) of violators had prior DWIs on record.