

Drive Sober:

Drugs Impair, Law Enforcement Can Tell

Help the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) spread awareness about the importance of sober driving. Driving under the influence of drugs, whether legal or illegal, puts everyone on the road at risk. Impaired driving slows reaction times, impairs judgment, and reduces coordination, making it unsafe to operate a vehicle. Law enforcement officers are trained to detect drug impairment, ensuring impaired drivers face consequences. Understanding the risks and planning for a sober ride are crucial steps to keeping yourself and others safe on the road.

Overview

- You can't drive safely when you're impaired. Legal and illegal substances can impair drivers, including marijuana, opioids, methamphetamines, or any potentially impairing drug—prescribed or over the counter.
- Driving while impaired by any substance is against the law in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.
- Drugs can slow coordination, judgment, and reaction times, making it unsafe to get behind the wheel of your vehicle.
- 64.7% of drivers who were injured or killed tested positive for one or more drugs (including alcohol).
- Using multiple types of drugs at the same time, including alcohol, can amplify the impairing effects of each drug that's been consumed.
- Studies suggest that crashes with injuries and fatalities have increased since the legalization of marijuana.
- Drivers under the influence of marijuana have the dangerous misconception that their slowed reaction times make them "extra cautious."

Law Enforcement Can Tell

- A Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) is an officer specially trained to recognize impairment in drivers under the influence of drugs other than, or in addition to, alcohol.
- The DRE Program is active in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.
- Most traffic safety officers who are not DREs are trained in Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement and have additional training in drug-impaired driving.
- All officers have the ability to arrest drivers impaired by any substance, including alcohol, marijuana, prescription medications or other drugs.

Impairment from any drug—legal or illegal—makes it dangerous to get behind the wheel. Impaired drivers often can't accurately assess their own impairment, which increases the risk for everyone on the road. While law enforcement officers are trained to detect impaired drivers and enforce the law, the best way to ensure safety is to plan ahead. If you choose to use impairing substances, always arrange for a sober driver. Safe roads start with responsible choices.

For more information, visit:

www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov/safety-topics/drug-impaired-driving.