

Case Studies on Increasing Impaired-Driving Enforcement Visibility

Some communities are attempting to increase their impaired-driving visibility using a variety of strategies. It is the goal of this study to provide some examples of the methods used to increase impaired-driving enforcement visibility. The strategies and methods being used by communities and law enforcement agencies to increase the visibility of their impaired-driving enforcement activities are important to the successful completion of this project. These strategies include, as examples, the following:

- The use of **BATmobiles, trailers, or specially marked vehicles** that specify impaired driving or DWI enforcement. When the public sees these special vehicles, they know DWI enforcement is in progress.
- The use of **signs**, such as those placed ahead of sobriety checkpoints warning drivers that a checkpoint is ahead. Or the use of variable message signs on the highways warning of an impaired-driving enforcement effort ahead.
- The use of **mobile awareness, flexible**, or so-called “phantom” checkpoints where the police set up a checkpoint with the signs and cones, but move on and never actually conduct one. Some have one police car present to ensure the equipment is not vandalized and take action if a passing vehicle displays erratic driving behavior.
- The use of **“Happy Hour” checkpoints**, that is, conducting checkpoints earlier in the evening (e.g., 7 to 9 p.m.) to maximize the number of motorists who see the checkpoint.
- The use of **high-traffic volume** roadways for sobriety checkpoints or saturation patrols. Again, this maximizes the number of motorists actually seeing the enforcement activity.
- The use of branding and messaging for sustained enforcement through earned and paid media. **Billboards, decals, business cards, posters, social marketing tools (e.g. Twitter, FaceBook, etc), press events, media partnerships.** This component of visibility can enhance the awareness of enforcement.
- The use of **passive alcohol sensors** built into the standard police officer’s flashlights that can detect alcohol from 6 inches in front of the driver’s face and increases by 50 percent the number of over-the-limit drivers arrested at sobriety checkpoints. Their widespread use by police could increase impaired-driving enforcement visibility.

The objectives of this project are to determine the existence of impaired-driving (or DWI) enforcement programs designed to increase public **visibility**, then identify and document 10 to 15 examples of such programs operating at the State, County, community, or law enforcement agency level. We will then produce case studies of 5-7 of these programs and provide directions and guidelines on how other law enforcement agencies can implement these activities effectively and efficiently in their own communities.

If you are interested in participating or are aware of any innovative programs designed to increase impaired driving enforcement visibility, please contact Kari Kinnard with NHTSA via email at kari.kinnard@dot.gov or phone at 202-366-9980.