



MaineDOT Flash Facts

Topic: Alcohol, Drugs and Medications

Crash Facts

- Nearly 2,000 crashes a year in Maine result from a driver being under the influence of alcohol or drugs. About 50 people die and 1,400 more are injured each year.
- In Maine, the percentage of alcohol related fatal crashes is highest for 21-24 year olds.
- Under-age drinking is a concern. About 300 alcohol-related crashes a year involve 16-20 year old drivers and result in an average of 9 fatalities and 300 injuries.
- About one half of Maine's alcohol and drug related crashes and resulting fatalities occurred between 9PM and 3AM.
- Although few people are on the road between Midnight and 3AM, that is the deadliest time for alcohol and drug related crashes. One fourth of Maine's alcohol/drug related crashes and fatalities occur during these three hours.

In Maine, from 2002 though 2004:

- 22% of the traffic fatalities occur in crashes where at least one driver (or involved pedestrian or bicyclist) was under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- 70% of alcohol/drug related crashes occur during hours of darkness.
- 56% of the alcohol-related crash fatalities occur on weekends (5pm Friday through midnight Sunday).
- About 25% of weekend crash fatalities are alcohol-related.
- About one out of five pedestrians over 16 years old killed in traffic crashes are intoxicated.

Alcohol-related crashes are much more likely to result in a fatality than other crashes.

This week, Maine DOT's Flash Facts reminds us how alcohol, drugs and medications can affect your driving.

This information is provided by MaineDOT, for further safety information contact 207-624-3278



We all know that alcohol increases your chance of a fatal crash. But what time of the day or night do these fatalities most commonly occur?

One-fourth of all alcohol-related fatalities occur between midnight and 3 AM - even though that's also when the fewest people are on the road.

- Don't drink and drive
- Watch for erratic driving behavior in other vehicles that may indicate alcohol or other driver problems. Report dangerous driving at your earliest opportunity.

Other facts:

- Alcohol can slow your reaction time.
 - 22% of all traffic fatalities are attributed to drugs or alcohol.
 - One in five adult pedestrians killed in Maine traffic crashes are intoxicated.
 - Although they are under the legal drinking age, 16 to 20 year old drivers are involved in nearly 300 alcohol related crashes that result in 9 fatalities annually.
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Drinking and driving is reported in only 5% of all crashes, but results in 22% of the fatalities.

Designated drivers are becoming more common here in Maine. And there's good reason for it. Maine has one of the toughest drunk driving laws in the country. Here's what you can expect from an Operating Under the Influence (OUI) conviction:

- If you're over 21 and have a blood alcohol content of .08% or higher, you lose your license for at least 90 days and pay a fine of at least \$400 on the first offense and significantly more on any subsequent offenses. This has consequences for your family as well as yourself.
 - If you're UNDER 21 and are convicted of **ANY** blood alcohol content, you lose your license for at least a year and pay a fine of at least \$400 on the first offense and significantly more on any subsequent offenses.
 - Your insurance rates will skyrocket.
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This week, Maine DOT's Flash Facts are reminding us how alcohol, drugs and medications can affect your driving. Just because a drug is non-prescription doesn't mean it's not powerful. Some of these drugs can affect your driving as much as alcohol.

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These days, prescription drugs come with a long list of warnings. But what about non-prescription drugs? Can they really affect your driving? The answer is yes. A number of over the counter drugs can cause side effects that affect your ability to react to the unexpected - or even stay awake.

What are some of the effects of medications?

- Antihistamines can be very sedating. These are common in cold medications and allergy pills.
- Ask your pharmacist or doctor about effects from medications you are not familiar with.
- The time to be most cautious with any medication is when you're taking it for the first time - prescription or not. Don't take any new drug before a road trip.
- Never mix medications with alcohol. The combined effects can be devastating.

Be a Road Model- Alcohol and driving do not mix. Stay safe and sober